
Executive Summary

Mission

City of Trees Public Charter School (City of Trees PCS) fosters children's love of learning and nurtures their physical, emotional, intellectual and social capacities by applying Waldorf-inspired principles of developmentally-staged, arts-oriented, and nature-focused education within a framework of proactive parent engagement to create an inclusive and collaborative learning environment that extends beyond the classroom.

Philosophy and Methods

City of Trees PCS will implement a philosophy and pedagogy inspired by the rich tradition of Waldorf education where students are engaged in learning in three distinct ways: actively, emotionally, and thoughtfully. We seek to develop, through this approach, creative and caring persons capable of higher order thinking and leading self-determined, meaningful lives. With nearly 1,000 Waldorf schools worldwide, it is one of the fastest growing educational movements. City of Trees PCS will join an established group of public Waldorf schools in this country and a growing body of pioneering schools that are engaged in successfully bringing Waldorf -inspired education into public urban education contexts.

Our school will serve DC students in pre-K-8th grade (pre-K-2nd in Year One). It is designed to serve a diverse population of students where we posit that students' intellectual, social-emotional, and physical needs are not currently being met and we will garner school resources and structures to meet their needs. The foundation of our educational approach is integrating Waldorf-inspired standards based content in conjunction with rigorous ongoing assessment to support each student's healthy, balanced growth and development. Key to meeting this goal is applying developmentally appropriate teaching that taps into children's innate curiosity and interests and the employment of staff that believe in every student's ability to achieve at high levels.

City of Trees PCS will be a dynamic learning community in which strong relationships are built and honored. Students' learning will be supported by a team of teachers using multi-year looping, which provide students and teachers opportunities to establish strong bonds and increase teachers' ability to tailor instruction to students' individual needs. Teachers will be supported by a full-time Curriculum Director and on-site, ongoing teacher professional development provided by Nova Institute, whose mission is to build a bridge between Waldorf education and contemporary educators. As a school, we will strive to build not just a classroom community, but also a school community extending beyond the classroom to include students' families and our school's neighbors. Central to our educational focus, City of Trees PCS will build a school culture in which all participants engage in learning.

To support students' healthy and balanced intellectual, social-emotional and physical growth, our entire curriculum will be infused with essential features of Waldorf-inspired education: culturally rich and relevant teaching, learning within and through the arts, and harnessing of student's emotional and physical engagement in learning, healthy eating, and other physical activities. The school's living curriculum grounded in students' own experiences and cultural heritages, offers an array of opportunities for teachers to bring into the classroom relevant perspectives, folktales, myths and stories. Every lesson and activity will draw from the arts, enhancing students' sense of accomplishment and wellbeing as a support for higher achievement. Our near century old Waldorf-inspired pedagogy is also driven by its deep understanding that children learn best when they connect emotionally and deeply to materials and when they engage physically through song, crafts, games, and movement. These methods provide students with

multiple entry pathways into the curriculum and learning.

Goals

City of Trees PCS sets high targets for performance across a holistic set of goals, with a strong commitment to evaluation according to both standardized and other broader indicators. To that end, City of Trees PCS, in partnership with research evaluators at Howard University's Center for Urban Progress, aims to develop indicators beyond standardized testing to drive ongoing and improved teaching and learning goals.

Student goals include both high-level literacy and mathematical competency by graduation as well as capacities for independent thinking, problem solving, understanding scientific complexities, and learning from and respecting others. Faculty goals include creating a vibrant and active learning community, building strong, multi-year relationships with students, and drawing upon both exciting educational materials and Washington DC's rich unique context to successfully implement a Waldorf-inspired instructional approach.

Organizational goals include student and teacher satisfaction, effective parent involvement, and a joyful school community where both children and adults feel a sense of belonging and a commitment to Waldorf-inspired best practices and lifelong learning. Another important school goal is strong fiscal and operational management aligned with best practices in governance and accountability.

Implementation

Our Founding Group, working hard for over a year, includes parents, teachers, and community members whose combined personal and specialized experiences have shaped our school's mission and vision and demonstrate the skills necessary for further actualizing City of Trees PCS' educational, business and operational plans. Our deliberate, thoughtful planning process has included establishing robust partnerships with people and organizations to support and sustain City of Trees PCS now and in the future. Our nationally renowned Waldorf educators possess a unique blend of experience with successfully implementing Waldorf education in a variety of contexts and have demonstrated the ability to integrate Waldorf methods in public schools, especially for students placed at-risk for educational challenges. Moreover, our Founding Group has expertise in early childhood and elementary public school education, financing charter school facilities, legal, organizational development and governance, non-profit management, grant writing, data analysis, and over 20 years of experience of community activism unique to our community's prospects and challenges.

As the only DC area charter school applicant to receive pre-authorization funds from the Walton Family Foundation this year, we have proven that we have concrete, promising plans set for implementing a successful school. Our facility search in the Shaw-Logan Circle neighborhood is well underway with several strong leads, and we have a committed Board supported by sound non-profit governance structures, ready to meet the upcoming challenges inherent in opening a school.

We can demonstrate a clear demand for Waldorf-inspired instruction based on initial interest in the school, including almost 250 names on a City of Trees PCS community listserv, wait lists for our Waldorf-inspired parents/young children classes, and several community letters of support. Nearly all of our committed Founders are DC residents, and all are prepared to work diligently over the next year and beyond to fulfill our mission of creating an empowered, inclusive, and collaborative learning environment and school organization.

A. Educational Plan

1. Mission and Purposes of the Proposed Public Charter School

a. Educational Needs of the Target Student Population

City of Trees PCS will actively recruit Washington DC pre-K to 8th grade students who are racially, ethnically, socio-economically, and culturally diverse. We will seek a geographically central location and accessibility to public transportation. We are therefore seeking facility options in the Washington, DC Shaw-Logan Circle neighborhood.

City of Trees PCS is guided by the basic belief that the most effective curriculum and pedagogical approaches are based on a holistic model of child development, which recognizes intrinsically connected health domains: intellectual, social-emotional, and physical. Many children's needs in one or more of these three domains are not being met at their homes or school and we anticipate serving a large percentage of these students at City of Trees PCS.

Intellectual Health: The intellectual needs of DC's children are not being respected and met. The status of children's intellectual health is indicated by both citywide student performance on the DC-CAS and data on household indicators that are correlated with academic deficiencies:

2010 DC-CAS Results Citywide Traditional Public and Public Charter Elementary Schools (Office of State Superintendent of Education, 2010)					
		Below Basic	Basic	Proficient	Advanced
All Children	Literacy	17%	38%	37%	7%
	Math	19%	38%	33%	9%

Fewer than half of DC's children scored Proficient or Advanced on the literacy or math sections of the DC-CAS, and the high number of children who scored Below Basic points to the severity of children's unmet intellectual needs. These results are coupled with the apparent lack of interest that many students take in their schoolwork, shown by a survey of DC students in which 17.1% reported never or rarely caring about doing well in school and 48% of children spend fewer than thirty minutes daily reading for pleasure.¹ To get a wider view of children's academic health, it is useful to consider conditions important to children's academic needs at home: 33% live in poverty, 53% live in female-headed families, and 15% live in homes where the head of the household did not graduate from high school.²

Poverty is one of the most significant correlates of poor educational outcomes, with children more likely to underachieve academically, have low standardized test scores, and drop out of school. Children in families headed by single mothers, adolescent mothers, or parents with less than high school degrees are less likely to have school readiness skills.³ Academic readiness and achievement are likely influenced by

¹ National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH). 2007. Center for Disease Control.

² DC Kids Count Collaborative. 2010. Kids Count 2010 Annual Fact Book.

³ Hernandez, A. (2010). Academic Achievement in Minority Children. In Caroline S. Clauss-Ehlers (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Cross-Cultural School Psychology*. New York: Springer; Hildebrand, Phenice, Gray, & Hines (2007). *Knowing and Serving Diverse Families* (3rd).

poverty and family factors that influence children's exposure to stories and reading. In DC, 9% of children under age five were never read aloud to at home and 13.5% were only read aloud to one to two days weekly.⁴

Another determinant of intellectual health is whether children's individual learning needs are taken into account in their school program. The diverse intellectual needs of DC's children include 13% with special education needs and over 8% English Language Learners, both of which groups face an even greater likelihood than racial minorities of arriving at school with significant educational gaps.⁵ Compounding the problem, the parents of children from homes where English is not the primary language are less likely to engage in school activities or feel comfortable advocating for their children's school needs.⁶

Social-Emotional Health: From intellectual health we turn to children's social-emotional health, where the needs of many of DC's children are not being nurtured and met. This area of children's health is impacted by family, community, and broader citywide environments. Parents' recognition of the need for greater social-emotional support in school (in addition to physical safety), is indicated by the fact that 20% of DC parents report that their children are not always safe in school.⁷ Children are impacted by varying kinds of meaningful and lasting relationships in their lives—their connectedness in their families, among peers and neighbors, in schools with classroom teachers and other school staff members, and with people in larger community settings. However, these data indicate that a high percentage of children in DC live in neighborhoods where there is not a sense of connectedness. According to parental views, 32% of children lack a supportive neighborhood as defined by neighbors' willingness to help and look out for each other and 33% report that their children are only sometimes or never safe in the neighborhood.⁸ These research results suggest that children's emotional health in the city has not been effectively addressed by their public schools where children (over 13%) consistently exhibited bullying, disobedience, lack of respect for teachers, and failure to get along with others.⁹

Physical Health: From children's social-emotional health, we turn to children's physical health, where, again, the needs of many of DC's children are not being respected and met. Children's physical health is reflected in how they spend their free time during the week. In DC, over 17% of children age 6-17 do not engage in any significant physical activity during the day. Moreover, 15% of children in this same age group and 11% of children age 1-5 spend over four hours each day watching TV or playing video games.¹⁰ Close to 59% of children in the city have a T.V. in their bedroom and over 40% of children do not get enough sleep every night.¹¹ These facts suggest that many children are coming to school being influenced by excessive media and commercialized content that is likely inappropriate for children and

Edition), Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall

⁴ National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH). 2007. Center for Disease Control.

⁵ DCPS Enrollment Projections 2010-2011, OSSE; Metz, 2009).

⁶ Hernandez, 2010.

⁷ National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH). 2007. Center for Disease Control.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ NSCH, 2007; National Initiative for Children's Healthcare Quality, 2007.

¹¹ National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH). 2007. Center for Disease Control.

that may contribute to children being tired, restless, and irritated. The national obesity epidemic is particularly high in DC with 35% of children age 10-17 diagnosed as overweight or obese.¹² Obesity is especially present among very young children in DC's low-income families. Over 29% of children age 2-5 are diagnosed as overweight or obese with rates of obesity twice the rate among Black girls aged six years through 19, rates lasting throughout adulthood, compared to their white counterparts.¹³ This combination of being overweight or obese, having low physical activity, and watching excessive hours of screen time daily suggests a damaging trend for children's long-term health. In addition to the known health risks, research indicates that being overweight or obese has an adverse effect on social relationships, school engagement, and confidence.¹⁴

Methods to Address Student Needs: In order to fully engage children in school and promote meaningful participation in society, we must address children's health holistically. City of Trees PCS is founded on a Waldorf-inspired pedagogy that brings unique benefits to our projected student population. Our educational philosophy is based on the belief that it is critical to educate the whole child by recognizing and nurturing children's intellectual, social-emotional and physical health.¹⁵

Many public school educators respond to students' low-test scores and other academic challenges, especially among low-income minority students, with a single focus on intellectual health to the exclusion of both physical and social-emotional health. Nationally, nearly half of all children do not attend physical education classes and 40% of schools have eliminated or are considering eliminating recess.¹⁶ Moreover, schools continue to "push down" an academic curriculum designed for older children into the early childhood classrooms without adequately adjusting for developmental appropriateness.¹⁷ City of Trees PCS recognizes the significant and diverse academic needs of our target population, and believes that in order to support their academic growth and long-term personal success, the educational program cannot ignore the very real and unmet social-emotional and physical needs of children. Indeed, we believe that meeting these needs is vital to academic and personal success. To that end, City of Trees PCS will educate each and every student in a manner that promotes his or her intellectual, social-emotional and physical health:

- **Intellectual health:** Intellectual capacities will be tapped and cultivated by engaging children in activities that result in learning academic skills, competency and higher order thinking skills, and a sheer joy of learning;
- **Social-emotional health:** Connected and meaningful relationships will be cultivated by allowing children to feel grounded and safe to express themselves internally and with teachers, peers, and

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Pediatric Nutrition Surveillance System, 2008; Alleyne, SI and LaPoint, V. 2004. Obesity among black adolescent girls: Genetic, psychosocial, and cultural influences. *Journal of Black Psychology* 30 (3): 344-365.

¹⁴ Alleyne and LaPoint, 2004.

¹⁵ Petrash, J. 2009. *Understanding Waldorf education: Teaching from the inside out*. Gryphon House Publishers.

¹⁶ National Association for Sport and Physical Education 2009; American Association of Child's Right to Play, 2009.

¹⁷ Gropper, N., and Hinitz, B. and Sprung, B., and Froschl, M. 2011. *Helping Young Boys Be Successful Learners in Today's Early Childhood Classrooms*. NAEYC Young Children, 2011, 34-41.

others where they learn various personal and social skills (e.g., empathy, confidence, motivation) and resolutions of tensions and conflicts; and

- **Physical health:** Opportunities for activities (e.g., healthy eating, physical movement) are provided so that there is energy balance at school. By enhancing parents' knowledge of healthy child development through an effective school and family partnership these behaviors can be reinforced at home (e.g., reducing screen time, encouraging active play).

Some of the important ways that our school program is designed to meet the needs of all students, particularly those who need intense intellectual, social-emotional, and physical support include:

Intellectual Needs and Social-Emotional Needs

- **Play-based Early Childhood Curriculum:** A method of instruction in the early childhood classrooms that provides an important foundation for more explicit abstract learning later in core academic subjects such as literacy and math. It is an evidence-based model for closing the achievement gaps in math and literacy often faced by children in low-income families with undereducated parents and other adults.¹⁸ It is also critical for children's cognitive and socio-emotional growth.¹⁹
- **Interdisciplinary and Inquiry-Based Curriculum:** A method of instruction, rooted in an interdisciplinary and inquiry-based approach to learning, uses multiple intelligences and modalities to provide all students with diverse pathways to learning with success.
- **Strong Family Partnerships:** A focus on building strong partnerships with families will allow schooling and supports to extend beyond our school day.
- **Strong Teacher-Student Relationships:** Our multi-year looping model, by keeping each teacher with a cohort of students as the students advance through multiple grades, will promote strong relationships between teachers and students for greater individualized instruction, focused assessments, and deeper understanding of each student's strengths and weaknesses.
- **Mixed-Age Early Childhood Classrooms:** The early childhood classrooms are mixed-age, combining pre-K and kindergarten students. Mixed-age classrooms have been shown to have remedial benefits for children placed at risk of falling behind in academic, emotional and social skills.²⁰ Mixed-age classrooms create an environment in which teachers are more likely to address differences not only between children, but within each child. In this environment, children's needs can be met if they excel in one area and need extra support in another area.²¹ A mixed-age classroom provides the opportunity for children to observe and imitate a wide range of social competencies and to find peers who match or complement their own social competencies.²²

¹⁸ Greg Duncan, Jens Ludwig, Katherine Magnuson. 2007. Reducing Poverty through Preschool interventions. *The Next Generation of Antipoverty Politics*: 17 (2)

¹⁹ Almon, Joan. The Vital Role of Play in Early Childhood Education. 2000. Alliance for Childhood.

²⁰ Ludeke, R.J., and Hartup, W.W. "Teaching Behavior of 9- and 11-Year-Old Girls in Mixed-Age and Same-Age Dyads." *JOURNAL OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY*, 75(6), (1983): 908-914.)

²¹ Katz, Lilian G., Demetra Evangelou, and Jeanette Hartman. 1990. The Case for Mixed-Age Grouping in Early Education. Washington DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children. ED 326 302.

²² Katz, 1990.

- **Robust Student Support Staff and Low Student-Teacher Ratio:** Recognizing the diverse learning needs of our student body, City of Trees PCS will employ a robust student support staff starting in Year One. A Special Education Coordinator, Literacy Specialist, and Curriculum Director will support teachers and work directly with children to meet their individual learning needs. City of Trees PCS, as a part of its intensive academic plan and methods, will be vigilant in the early identification of students with observed and diagnosed learning challenges, and of English Language Learners. We will then implement comprehensive plans to address students' individual needs.
- **Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum:** The early childhood, elementary and middle school grades are designed with careful consideration of child development. Research indicates that, particularly in early childhood classrooms, schedules have become so focused on traditional academic learning that they do not attend to the developmental needs of young children.²³
- **Qualified Teaching Assistants:** There are two teachers in every classroom from pre-K to 5th grade. Assistant Teachers provide individualized attention to students and small groups within the context of full class activities.

Physical Needs

- **Physical Activity:** The curriculum focuses on physical activity, both in the classroom with a kinesthetic approach to academic learning and in outdoor free play and structured physical activity.
- **Emphasis on Healthy Foods in School:** Students will learn about healthy eating habits. Our school will contract with a healthy school lunch provider with an emphasis on whole grains and fresh vegetables and fruits. School festivals and exhibitions will highlight healthy foods, meals, and other healthy habits.
- **Parent Education:** A component of our school-parent partnership includes parent education workshops that will include supporting the physical health of children with decreased screen time, increased physical activity, and increased healthy meals.

Demonstrated Success of School Model: City of Trees PCS will join a small, but growing group of pioneering schools that are engaged in the movement of bringing Waldorf education, a nearly century-old pedagogy, both into the 21st century and into diverse, urban contexts. Similar to our colleagues in this movement, to meet this high target we will combine the rich tradition of Waldorf pedagogy, with research based instructional materials, standards of learning and assessments that align with our core beliefs. The Waldorf approach to education is one that embraces cultural diversity and the rich diversity of learning and socio-emotional needs present in an urban classroom. This coupled with the inherent best practices of individualized teaching and recognition of students' differing temperaments and learning styles, makes it a natural educational model for an urban setting. At City of Trees PCS, we believe students educated in this approach will not only perform strongly on externally validated measures, but more importantly, will become engaged, creative, and academically competent learners. Substantiating our position, we have identified several research studies on the effectiveness of the public Waldorf model in improving test scores and other indicators of academic success, particularly for Black and economically disadvantaged children. Additionally, through phone interviews with eight public Waldorf principals in California and visits to two California public Waldorf schools, we gathered data showing the effectiveness of public Waldorf schools in educating students who outperform their peers in the district and the state upon reaching middle school. Although the schools below are not exact replicas of our student population, they

²³ Gropper, 2011.

serve as examples of how our model has been effective in a wide range of settings.

Milwaukee's Urban Waldorf Elementary School, serving a high percentage of children in poverty and a 90% African American student body, showed positive student outcomes after the school changed to Waldorf methods. One study found that within three years, the Urban Waldorf School showed third grade students improving their scores on standardized tests from 26% in 1992 to 63% in 1995.²⁴ Other studies concluded that Waldorf methods were associated with increased parental involvement, decreased suspensions, reading and writing improvements on standardized measures (counter to the district trend), and higher creativity--all while maintaining lower per pupil costs compared to many regular district programs.²⁵

The T. E. Mathews Community School in Yuba County, CA, serves juvenile offenders, many of whom have learning disabilities. After introducing Waldorf methods to the school in the 1990's, studies showed that the school had improved students' attitudes toward learning, better social interaction, and excellent academic progress. There were significant improvements in reading and math scores, student participation, focus, openness and enthusiasm, emotional stability, civility of interaction, and tenacity. The integration of the arts into every school component was identified as the most effective tool to help students overcome patterns of failure.²⁶

Alice Birney, a Waldorf-inspired K-8 traditional public school in California where 40% of students qualify for free/reduced price lunch, is the largest public Waldorf school in the country. The school's continued popularity with families caused the student body to grow and maintain extensive wait lists for all grades and necessitated three moves to larger facilities. The 8th grade literacy and math scores on the California STAR test for the economically disadvantaged subgroup exceeded CA State averages for the same subgroup. All the interviewed public Waldorf principals emphasized the trend shown by this data, that their students far outperformed peers at non-Waldorf schools upon entering middle school. This data points to the effectiveness of the elementary school curriculum in preparing students for more complex math and literacy skills. The literacy scores of low-Socio-Economic Status (SES) students at Alice Birney are of particular note:

California STAR Results, Grade 8 Low SES Students California Department of Education, 2010			
	Literacy Proficient or Above	Math Proficient or Above	
Alice Birney	64%	55%	
State	24%	40%	

Given that several public Waldorf-inspired schools posted positive student outcomes on standardized tests and other measures, one researcher criticized the lack of efforts to implement Waldorf methods in public

²⁴ Ray McDermott, Mary E. Henry, Cynthia Dillard, Paul Byers, Freda Easton, Ida Oberman, Bruce Uhrmacher, "Waldorf education in an inner-city public school", *Urban Review*, June 1996

²⁵ Earl J. Ogletree, *The Comparative Status of the Creative Thinking Ability of Waldorf Education Students*, 1996; Dr. Richard R. Doornek, Educational Curriculum Director with the Milwaukee Public Schools quoted in Phaizon Rhys Wood, *Beyond Survival: A Case Study of the Milwaukee Urban Waldorf School*, dissertation, School of Education, University of San Francisco, 1996

²⁶ Arline Monks, "Breaking Down the Barriers to Learning: The Power of the Arts", *Journal of Court, Community and Alternative Schools*

education.²⁷ It is noteworthy that this critique was heeded with a new charter approved for a Waldorf-inspired school, scheduled to open this fall in Oakland, CA under the leadership of Ida Oberman, one of our Founding Contributors at City of Trees PCS.

School Location: As a public charter school in the geographical center of Washington DC, City of Trees PCS will serve students from the entire city, but as is the case with many of the District’s public charter schools, we expect to attract a disproportionate number of students from our school’s surrounding area. To this end, we have chosen to locate in the Shaw-Logan Circle neighborhood, which is not currently served by a similar school, where children could greatly benefit from a Waldorf-inspired, relationship-based, and rigorous curriculum that values active, emotional engagement and a depth of academic study. The Shaw-Logan Circle neighborhood includes Wards 1, 2, 5 and 6 and is roughly bounded by 16th Street on the West, North Capital on the East, L Street NW on the South, and Euclid Street on the North. In addition to attracting families from the Shaw-Logan Circle community, we expect to attract families from across Washington, DC interested in the unique Waldorf-inspired educational approach offered at City of Trees PCS. To meet the transportation needs of these families, we intend to locate our school near Metro or bus routes.

School Enrollment Plan: City of Trees PCS will open its doors with 122 students in pre-K to 2nd grade, and our school will grow to eventually serve 244 students at capacity in pre-K through 8th grade. In order to grow our school with a strong foundation, we plan to open with a slow growth model starting with one class per grade, except in Year One when we will enroll a second class of pre-K. Our school will open with 52 students at the pre-K level, 26 students at the kindergarten level, and 22 students each in first and second grade. A grade will be added each subsequent year. The smaller class size in the 1st and 2nd grades in our school’s first year will allow for greater class development and individualized attention to ensure the successes of the lead classes which did not experience the early childhood classes at our school.

The pre-K and Kindergarten program will include mixed-age classrooms (4, 5, and 6 years old) with a 9:1 student-staff ratio in each of four early childhood classrooms. When the 26 kindergarten students in the four mixed-age classrooms transition to 1st grade, they will come together into one class of 26 students with a 13:1 student-teacher ratio. Based on the experiences of other DC public charter schools, we expect to experience about 10% attrition each year. New students will be welcomed to our school to fill empty class seats at every grade level. However, in an effort to maintain established classroom dynamics, the baseline class size is allowed to drop slightly between first and eighth grade to minimize the number of new students added to a class each year. Class sizes will be allowed to drop from 26 to 24 students in the 4th grade and to 22 students in the 6th grade. The target enrollment numbers for each grade are a baseline. Teachers and administrators will decide on a class-by-class basis whether a particular class would benefit from adding students beyond the baseline or whether the educational needs of the current students would be better served by a smaller class size in the upper elementary grades. Unlike a language immersion school, where introducing a new student without prior language knowledge would be challenging, adding a few new students to a classroom at City of Trees PCS each year can invigorate the class, while the individualized and differentiated teaching inherent in the Waldorf approach facilitates a smooth transition for new students.

²⁷ Phaizon Rhys Wood, *Beyond Survival: A Case Study of the Milwaukee Urban Waldorf School*, dissertation, School of Education, University of San Francisco, 1996

Although our intention is to grow the student body slowly with only one class per grade, in order to open with only four grades in 2012-2013, but with enough students to afford a high quality facility and robust staff, we will start with fifty-two pre-Kindergarten students. This larger cohort will eventually form two first grade classes and will then rise to the 8th grade, preceded and followed by grades with only one class. We chose to double the size of the pre-Kindergarten rather than one of the other grade levels both for programmatic reasons (i.e., benefit of beginning with young students) and because we believe recruitment of fifty-two new students will be most feasible at this level. The multi-loop model mitigates the staffing issue due to a one-time increase to two sections.

This slow growth model is intentional and allows our school to open with a school community where every student and family can be known and the critical importance of supportive relationships is recognized.

	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	TOTAL
2012-13	52	26	22	22							122
2013-14	26	52	26	22	22						148
2014-15	26	26	52	26	22	22					174
2015-16	26	26	26	52	26	22	22				200
2016-17	26	26	26	26	52	24	22	20			222
2017-18	26	26	26	26	26	48	24	20	20		242
2018-19	26	26	26	26	26	24	48	22	20	20	264
2019-20	26	26	26	26	26	24	24	44	22	20	264
2020-21	26	26	26	26	26	24	24	22	44	22	266
2021-22	26	26	26	26	26	24	24	22	22	44	266
2022-23	26	26	26	26	26	24	24	22	22	22	244

School’s Impact on the Surrounding Community: High quality public charter and traditional public schools can have positive impacts on communities where schools can serve as the anchors for family and community engagement and neighborhood revitalization.²⁸ As a dynamic learning organization, City of Trees PCS will offer high quality, unique educational opportunities to the surrounding community. An underlying value at City of Trees PCS is to educate children to become physically, socially and emotionally healthy adolescents and young adults capable of imparting meaning and direction to their own lives. When applied to families, this value speaks to several growing national movements to improve

²⁸ Tough, P. (2009). *Whatever it takes: Geoffrey Canada’s quest to change Harlem and America*. New York: Mariner Books

the health of our children.²⁹

We believe these movements will resonate with families representing a wide range of backgrounds (e.g., diverse in SES, racially, ethnically) in our community who are already interested and working to encourage healthy attitudes and behaviors such as reducing obesity, bullying and violence, and parent child conflict. These movements include: creative play in homes and neighborhoods; reduced screen time; improved nutritional health; increased time outdoors and in nature; and increased physical activity. By developing a school community and school culture that is inclusive, we will support parents in forming an organized community of families to support each other in their pursuit of raising healthy children.

We believe that students learn best in an environment where relationships are valued, learning is shared, and the community gathers to celebrate meaningful student learning. Our school will work to authentically live these values by encouraging parents and members of the surrounding community to participate in and help organize school sponsored activities. We will be cognizant of cultural diversity and work to maintain a balance of cross-cultural events and to promote inclusion and cultural responsiveness. City of Trees PCS will encourage family and community participation in school activities such as: seasonal celebrations and cultural festivals and celebrations focusing on diverse backgrounds of families; student exhibitions of academic and artistic works; forums and workshops on child and family health; arts and craft activities among students, teachers, parents, and other stakeholders; and parent and community membership on the Board of Trustees and Board advisory committees.

As a small school with a unique educational philosophy, we expect to have high quality relationships with the public charter and traditional public schools in the neighborhood. We do not expect negative relationships as all schools seek to expand high quality educational opportunities for children and their families. We believe that we can eventually partner with both neighborhood and city-wide schools to learn from each other in implementing best practices such as multi-disciplinary theme units, play-based early childhood learning, arts infused learning, whole-child development approaches in teaching and learning, and the use of outdoor activities to promote student learning and achievement.

Although City of Trees PCS would be the first Waldorf-inspired school in the city, there are elements of the Waldorf philosophy that are shared with other educational approaches such as Montessori and Reggio Emilia. These schools hold the same values of considering the impact on the whole child, fundamental respect for children, and strong partnerships with families. It is clear from the wait lists of Montessori and Reggio Emilia schools in the city that there is demand for this school choice. Enrollment at City of Trees PCS will impact these competitive schools by reducing their wait lists and giving students another choice. Our school will ensure that more students will get the quality, individualized education they desire and make progress towards providing DC students with a wider range of educational options. (See Section I - Demographic Analysis).

b. Mission and Philosophy

Mission: City of Trees Public Charter School (City of Trees PCS) fosters children's love of learning and nurtures their physical, emotional, intellectual and social capacities by applying Waldorf-inspired principles of developmentally-staged, arts-oriented, and nature-focused education within a framework of proactive parent engagement to create an inclusive and collaborative learning environment that extends

²⁹ Campaign for Commercial Free Childhood, www.commercialexploitation.org

beyond the classroom.

Philosophy

"Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire." -William Butler Yeats

City of Trees PCS believes that a primary goal of education is to produce individuals capable of leading self-determined, meaningful lives and to develop in students the emotional, social and intellectual capacities necessary for maintaining healthy relationships and actively participating in their community. To achieve this, students must be engaged in the learning process in three distinct ways: actively, emotionally, and thoughtfully, with a prerequisite that teaching be developmentally appropriate. City of Trees PCS embraces this 'head, heart, hands' philosophy of Waldorf education, along with its conviction that learning is a dynamic process, experienced by the student through relationships with others. Through a rich and rigorous curriculum and within a context of trustworthy relationships, teaching and learning is imbued with meaning. This multi-dimensional approach to teaching will enable students to develop a multiplicity of talents, good moral character, and a well-rounded intellect while being introduced to a rich array of subjects and materials. The following basic tenets will guide the academic and organizational decision-making process of City of Trees PCS:

- A rigorous curriculum is most effective when it is infused with arts;
- The healthy individual is essential for the creation of a healthy society;
- Each child possesses a unique blend of academic and social gifts, namely, multiple intelligences;
- Creating an inclusive, respectful and humanistic environment, in which each student is truly known, is necessary for effective learning, achievement, and assessment;
- It is necessary to teach students in developmentally appropriate ways if we are to support them in meaningful learning;
- Equipping children from diverse backgrounds with the capacity for literacy across multiple disciplines is essential to thriving in the 21st century;
- All children possess an innate sense of wonder and desire to learn; and
- Learning and teaching is most effective when students and teachers are engaged in a meaningful, trusting relationship.

c. Educational Focus

City of Trees PCS' educational focus is based on the practices and principles of Waldorf education, which is both a philosophy and methodology. Practiced in over 1,000 schools worldwide, Waldorf education is a highly respected approach that allows for child-centered, individualized instruction within a supportive social context. "Regardless of the child's background race, or language, the intent of Waldorf education...[is] to support children and youth to develop their individual abilities and become aware of and constructively active in the world toward greater benefit of all humanity."³⁰ In addition to the educational focus on Waldorf education, City of Trees PCS is committed to building a dynamic learning community and dedicated to school evaluation.

1) Essential Features of Waldorf Education:

³⁰ Oberman, I. 2008. *The Waldorf Movement in Education from European Cradle to American Crucible, 1919-2008*. Edwin Mellen Press.

- a. **Developmental Appropriateness:** In the first seven years of life, the child’s active nature requires an instructional focus on concrete, experiential lessons, rather than abstract concepts. A love of learning and a strong foundation in literacy is created by providing children with ample opportunities for creative play, purposeful activity, and storytelling. Beginning around first grade, the curriculum reorients itself toward children’s growing emotional capacity, using art, music, and movement as an effective means of exploring and acquiring core academic knowledge in reading, writing, mathematics, sciences and history. With this early and middle school preparation, Waldorf students matriculate to high school with a uniquely broad foundation for a more intellectually oriented curriculum, primed for self-reflection, confidence and truly creative, independent thinking.
- b. **Sequential Cycling (Whole to Part to Whole):** A robust body of research has signaled that unduly test-driven teaching promotes an unwise tradeoff between teaching basic skills and knowledge and teaching higher order thinking skills³¹. At City of Trees PCS, lessons will move from the whole, or the big picture, through a story or image, to the part, or the specific skills to be acquired or practiced, and then back to the whole, through artistic activity designing graphic organizers or essays to reflect on the whole. This movement from whole to part and back to whole means a lesson begins with synthesis and analysis and then moves to practicing recall and repetition, to come back to synthesis and analysis in the integration.
- c. **Relationships:** “A high quality education starts with relationships.”³² City of Trees PCS is dedicated to creating an environment in which every student is truly known. Students will be supported in their learning by a team of teachers (main class teacher and specialty teachers) who meet weekly to determine progress in all areas of their development. Through multi-year looping, students and teachers have opportunities to grow together and establish strong bonds. These bonds are particularly important when children may not have meaningful, healthy adult relationships. As a school, we will strive to build not just classroom community but school community that includes families and neighbors. Students move through the grades as a cohort, also establishing strong bonds with each other. Inter-personal conflicts become learning opportunities in how and why it is important to live peacefully together. In such a context, “a class can offer a rich and interesting curriculum full of powerful ideas and experiences aimed at inspiring its students with the desire to know more, a curriculum that sustains students’ natural drive to make sense of the world and trusts in their capacity to have an impact on it”.³³ Such a focus is not just limited to other persons. The child’s relationship to its natural environment can also matter a great deal, especially for traditionally underserved children – as research shows that a significant portion of the ‘achievement gap’ can be attributed to an ‘experience gap’ between low-income learners and their more affluent peers.³⁴ Moreover, affluent parents have always used supplementary education experiences that provide a “hidden curriculum of high achievement.”³⁵

³¹ Darling-Hammond, L., et al. 2008. *Powerful Learning: What We Know About Teaching for Understanding*. San Francisco: John Wiley and Sons.

³² Darling-Hammond, L. and J. Bramford, eds. 2005. *Preparing teachers for a changing world: What teachers should know and be able to do*. San Francisco: John Wiley and Sons.

³³ Meier, D. 2002. *The Power of Their Ideas: Powerful Lessons from a Small School in Harlem*. Boston: Beacon Press.

³⁴ Lieberman, GA. and L. Hoody. 1998. *Closing the achievement gap: Using the environment as an integrating context for learning. Results*

- d. **Arts-immersion:** Curricula drawing on the four art forms – art, music, theater and dance – are more likely to be, and feel, relevant to the wide range of learners than do curricula that focus on more narrow forms of instruction. An interest in the arts leads to a high state of motivation that produces the sustained attention necessary to improve performance and the training of attention that leads to improvement in other domains of cognition.³⁶ A growing body of research suggests that curricula that include classroom drama build verbal skills for students who might otherwise not engage in that learning. Involvement in arts builds critical thinking and social skills, including discipline, self-esteem and a desire for excellence and is shown to be particularly effective among highly diverse student bodies.³⁷ For all students, current research shows that learning “in and through the arts” enhances the student’s sense of accomplishment and wellbeing and leads to higher achievement.³⁸ Learning a subject through the arts produces achievement by enhancing the self-efficacy and confidence of students who may previously have been alienated by our school experience, by a lack of continuity in subjects and teachers, or by fear at school. Research, from the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, confirms that education through the arts has many important results. “From fine-tuning muscular systems to integrating emotion and logic, the arts have important biological value. For their unique contributions to brain development, the arts must take center stage in schools.”³⁹
- e. **Culturally Rich and Globally Relevant:** Waldorf has been distinguished as the only education reform initiative officially endorsed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) for its commitment to cultural and cross cultural bond building; 15 Waldorf schools from a range of countries are partner schools in the UNESCO Project Schools Network.⁴⁰ This humanistic, dynamic approach to education has been applied, over the nearly hundred years since inception, in a wide range of cultural contexts, from an integrated school in apartheid Africa to peace education programs in Israel between Arab and Jewish students. Thinking both locally and globally, the need for a student to see themselves both within our school’s culture and the larger global culture is met through storytelling, festivals, and performances. Waldorf curriculum offers an array of opportunities for our teachers to bring in folktales and lore from the diverse national and global cultural heritages represented by our students.
- f. **A Living Curriculum:** City of Trees PCS will utilize the well-established framework of the Waldorf curriculum, which is designed for academic rigor, cultural relevance and social and emotional learning opportunities for the student. City of Trees PCS will empower, train and support its teachers in actively shaping the curriculum to provide the most meaningful and

of a nationwide study. State Education and Environment Roundtable.

³⁵ Gordon, Edmund, Bridgiall, Beatrice, Meroe, A. Supplementary Education: The Hidden Curriculum of High Academic Achievement, 2004.

³⁶ The Dana Foundation. 2008. Learning, Arts, and the Brain: The Dana Consortium Report on Arts and Cognition. Available at www.dana.org.

³⁷ Brice Heath, S. 2004. Learning language and strategic thinking through the arts. *Reading Research Quarterly* 32 (4).

³⁸ Fiske, EB. 1999. Champions of change: The impact of arts on learning. Washington, DC: President’s Commission on the Arts and Humanities.

³⁹ Sylwester, R. 1998. Art for the Brain’s Sake. *Educational Leadership*.

⁴⁰ Oberman, Ida. 2008. *The Waldorf Movement in Education from European Cradle to American Crucible, 1919-2008*. Edwin Mellen Press.

relevant learning experiences for their students. Waldorf education works specifically to value and promote local cultural qualities in the context of true internationalism.

- 2) **Dynamic Learning Community:** Central to the educational focus of City of Trees PCS is the creation of a school community in which all participants engage in the learning process. Through partnerships with community organizations, City of Trees PCS aims to provide opportunities for parents, teachers, administrators, students, leaders and community members to engage in learning about the educational approach of our school to the direct benefit of the students. Learning occurs best when adults who aim to help their students learn see themselves on a path of lifelong learning.⁴¹ Acknowledging the benefits of adult learning communities for student achievement, we will intentionally create opportunities for learning among our families (e.g., parent education nights, early-childhood classes), our teachers (e.g., on going professional development, study groups), and our surrounding community (e.g., involvement in school wide festivals and performances; community member-led workshops).
- 3) **Dedication to Evaluation:** The Waldorf method prizes a deep understanding of each child’s learning profile; City of Trees PCS therefore is committed to a comprehensive approach to assessment and evaluation. In addition to the DC-CAS and an array of high-quality interim and formative assessments, City of Trees PCS is exploring several avenues for school evaluation and longitudinal study of student outcomes. This is of particular importance in our diverse learning environment so that teachers can accurately identify students who need additional academic support and intervention. Acknowledging the importance of evidence-based study for influencing reform, City of Trees PCS, in partnership with research associates such as Howard University’s Center for Urban Progress and Chesapeake Coalition of Essential Schools, aims to develop indicators to measure what standardized testing cannot – such as “initiative, creativity, imagination, conceptual thinking, curiosity, effort, judgment, commitment, good will, [and] ethical reflection.”⁴²

d. Goals

City of Trees PCS’ goals are intricately linked to the mission and philosophy of our school. The goals represent the importance of both strong academic achievement and the development of mind, heart, and hands necessary for students to have access to and future success in a breadth of academic and artistic endeavors. We believe all students, when given adequate support, can achieve to high academic standards. We also believe all children deserve to develop their own competencies and interests. Our programmatic focus on educating the whole child and the underlying theory of knowledge that informs our approach leads to the following student and organizational goals:

Student Goals

1) Excellence and Rigor in Academics

Students’ intellectual health is a primary goal at City of Trees PCS. Specific areas in which teachers and students will be held to high standards include:

- 1a. *High levels of literacy:* Students will comprehend and analyze level-appropriate text.
- 1b. *Effective communication:* Students will demonstrate the skills of effective communicators:

⁴¹ Darling-Hammond, L. 1997. *Doing what matters most: Investing in quality teaching*. San Francisco: John Wiley.

⁴² Ayers, W. 1993. *To teach: A teacher’s journey*. New York: Teachers College Press.

speaking, and listening, and reciting literature from memory at age-appropriate levels.

- 1c. *High levels of mathematical competence:* Students will demonstrate computational and problem-solving skills, using both procedural fluency and conceptual understanding
- 1d. *High levels of content knowledge:* Students will demonstrate understanding of the complexity of the social and scientific worlds.

2) Creativity and Artistic Expression

Arts infusion is a key instructional approach, supporting the development of the whole child. Specific sub-goals include:

- 2 a. *Divergent Thinking:* Students will demonstrate a strong capacity for divergent thinking.
 - 2 b. *Artistic Expression:* Students will demonstrate self-expression through music, movement, and the visual arts.
- 3) **Strong Habits of Mind and Heart**
 - 3 a. *Habits of Mind:* Students will demonstrate planning, perseverance, clarity, accuracy, and attention to detail in their work.
 - 3 b. *Habits of Heart:* Students will demonstrate empathy, open-mindedness, and caring, as well as the disposition to act confidently according to their values.

Organizational Goals

Many of the organizational goals center on the organizational structures necessary to support meaningful and lasting relationships – between our school and community, school and families, and teachers and students.

- 4) **Professional Learning Community:** Our school is a vibrant and active learning community where all adults in our school are given the necessary support to continuously improve and invigorate their work.
- 5) **Meaningful and Effective Family Engagement:** Our school will structure parent education, outreach and communication in such a way that fosters and encourages meaningful family involvement.
- 6) **Sustained, Positive Student-Teacher Relationships:** Teachers build strong, multi-year relationships with students.
- 7) **Fidelity to Waldorf-Inspired Best Practices:** Classroom instruction will be characterized by inclusive, individualized, interactive learning experiences that reflect the Waldorf philosophy and approach.
- 8) **Strong Fiscal and Operational Management:** Our school will exercise sound fiscal management and put into place best practices in governance and accountability.

2. Charter School Curriculum

a. Student Learning Standards

City of Trees PCS has selected standards that set high expectations for all students to ensure that teaching is anchored to rigorous skills development across the curriculum. Teachers will be trained to use Waldorf methods of instruction to teach children the skills and content outlined in the standards. This curricular framework will guide teachers to determine the academic level to which students are taught and should be

assessed. The standards ensure that graduating eighth graders are prepared to excel in college preparatory high schools, college and careers in the 21st century. The standards will provide a framework for the curriculum that will equip students to succeed academically as measured by the DC-CAS and other assessments. We recognize that since the DC-CAS is not aligned with the newly adopted Common Core Standards (though the expectation is that in the future the state mandated test will be brought into alignment with the state adopted standards), the Curriculum Director and teachers will need to ensure that pacing in the curriculum and framework of our chosen standards is kept in line with how students will be assessed on the DC-CAS.

City of Trees PCS has selected to use a combination of the Common Core Standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics and nationally acclaimed discipline specific standards that meet or exceed Washington DC standards of learning. The National Research Council's National Science Standards and the National Council for the Social Studies Standards (NCSS) will be used for their respective disciplines. In addition, we are considering using the National Standards for Arts Education as a framework for both the arts infusion in the curriculum and the specialty classes in art and music. In selecting our standards, it was important to take into consideration how students at City of Trees PCS would transition if attending a different DC public school in addition to how the standards align with our core belief that learning should involve inquiry based, experiential engagement within a framework of developmentally appropriate pacing in order for students to acquire a strong foundation of understanding for future academic success.

The National Research Council's National Science Standards align with the mission and philosophy of our school with its commitment to high standards for all students and its vision of science education as an inquiry based experience where students develop a deep understanding of science by combining scientific knowledge with reasoning and thinking skills. The National Council for the Social Studies Standards offer a set of principles by which content can be selected and organized to build a rigorous and cohesive study. The comprehensive learning expectations provide a framework for teachers to ensure that their curriculum design ties back to critical skills and content knowledge recommended for each grade level.

Both the Common Core Standards and the selected Science and Social Studies standards address issues of implementation with English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with special educational needs. At City of Trees PCS, these students will be held to the same academic standards outlined for all students in each grade level and challenged to excel within the general curriculum. We recognize that students with disabilities will require supports and accommodations as called for in their individualized education plans (IEP). Similarly, ELLs will more effectively access the curriculum through the use of instructional diagnostics, adaptations, and close monitoring of progress. We will utilize the full range of supports appropriate for ELLs and for students with special needs in order to give them the opportunity to learn and meet the same high standards by ensuring maximum participation in the curriculum.

City of Trees PCS' strategy for student achievement is to utilize a combination of instructional approaches designed to graduate students with the skills and tools for success that meet or exceed Common Core Standards and our chosen standards for science and social studies. To do this, City of Trees PCS' students must not only acquire a strong foundation in literacy and numeracy, they must also acquire multiple competencies centered on self-awareness, cultural consciousness, critical thinking, and problem solving.

b. Resources and Instructional Materials

City of Trees PCS' instructional academic program is a strong blend of Waldorf-inspired instructional strategies and structures coupled with the most effective research-based instructional practices and framed by our chosen standards.

Waldorf pedagogy is at the heart of the methods of instruction and the theories of knowledge and child development and provides an interdisciplinary, spiraling thematic sequence of topics. The scope and sequence of skills is not proscribed by Waldorf philosophy and for these we turn to our chosen standards. At its very essence, Waldorf depends upon a great level of teacher creativity and sensitivity to the unique needs of each school population. We recognize the critical importance of providing high quality resources for our teachers that are based on the most recent educational research, are proven effective for our likely population of students, and can be delivered within our methods of instruction.

City of Trees PCS recognizes that the success of our school depends on the strength of our teaching—and starting in Year One, we will have a full-time Curriculum Director whose position is to support teachers in both their curriculum development and the art of teaching. As detailed in section 2b1 of the Plan of Operations, the Curriculum Director will provide the foundational underpinning for the ongoing professional development and teacher support in our school. The Curriculum Director will serve as a mentor to teachers and will act as a bridge to connect Waldorf curriculum and pedagogy to proven best practices in education. As a public Waldorf-inspired school serving a diverse student body, it is critical that we hire classroom teachers not just from the pool of trained Waldorf teachers, but more importantly, from the pool of experienced urban educators. The Curriculum Director will enable teachers with or without Waldorf teaching experience to be successful by giving ongoing support in Waldorf-inspired lesson planning and delivery. The Curriculum Director will fully support teachers in using the curricular resources to follow the chosen standards within a Waldorf method of instruction and philosophy. Due to the importance of this position, we have researched the qualifications and comparable salaries in a California public Waldorf school and feel confident that the role can be filled by an experienced Waldorf teacher who is ready to apply her expertise to support an entire school faculty. Teachers will also be supported by a three week summer professional development program, a teaching assistant in every early childhood and elementary grades classroom, and weekly professional development opportunities one day per week when student are dismissed early.

Although the subjects are discussed independently in the section below, the curricular approach at City of Trees PCS is at its core interdisciplinary. The core educational program takes a thematic approach to the disciplines, pairing two or more core disciplines such as science and mathematics or language arts and social studies, infusing each thematic, interdisciplinary unit (called blocks) with authentic listening, reading and writing tasks along with movement, drama, painting, music, drawing, and handwork to enhance learning.

Criteria for Selection of Resources: City of Trees PCS' teachers will have access to a wide assortment of high quality curricular materials to guide their teaching. They will utilize best practices and research-supported curricular materials to enhance their lessons. In addition, teachers will also have access to a wealth of curricular resources that are shared among teachers in the vibrant Waldorf community such as compilations of relevant stories for each unit, arts activities, developed block lessons, assessment rubrics and relevant student plays. In our review of materials, we consider whether the resources will support our students in developing the following skills:

- Communication: Ability to articulate thoughts and ideas in written and spoken language with ease and confidence.
- Numeracy: Ability to use a foundation of skills to understand, explain and apply mathematics as it relates to the real world.
- Self-Expression through Art: Ability to communicate, with ease and confidence, ideas through a variety of art forms.
- Emotional Intelligence: Ability to perceive and appraise emotions; access and evoke emotions when using cognition; comprehend emotional language and use emotional information; and regulate one's own and others' emotions to promote growth and well-being.
- Connectedness to Natural Environment: Ability to have a strong sense of the relationship among all living things and a sense of stewardship of the earth.
- Divergent, Original Thinking: Ability to see more than one solution in problem solving and more than one answer to complex questions.
- Symphonic Thinking: Ability to integrate the knowledge and understandings through inter-curricular teaching and be able to recognize recurring motifs and the overarching patterns and sense that occur in nature, with people, and in world events.

When selecting instructional resources, their symmetry with and support of the following key pedagogical approaches of City of Trees PCS' curriculum were considered:

- It is possible to accelerate learning and close students' learning gaps within a Waldorf developmental frame. Waldorf activities, tools, structures, rhythms and routines uniquely position City of Trees PCS to do this;
- Lessons should engage the heart—the emotional; the hands—the physical/kinesthetic; and the head—the cognitive. The power to advance and develop capacities need not artificially force students into their intellect, away from their heart and hands;
- Instruction should use multiple modalities to provide multiple entry points for student learning; and
- It is possible to balance the notions of “part to whole and whole to part” in the service of supporting students' learning (see Methods of Instruction for more complete description).

In addition, in our review of materials we will consider whether they meet the following criteria:

- Allow teachers flexibility in offering individualized instructional experiences that support all students in the classroom.
- Material is presented thoughtfully and beautifully.
- Allow for multiple and varied learning formats (individual, small group and whole class experiences).
- Allows for children to observe and experience new concepts before synthesizing new learning.
- Proven effectiveness in reaching students with different academic readiness and supporting students acquisition of necessary foundational skills.
- Includes meaningful assessments that support teachers in tracking student progress and understanding.
- Culturally relevant material that supports the diversity of our student body.

With the guidance of the Curriculum Director, teachers will draw from resources to develop their lesson

plans. The Curriculum Director will also ensure that teachers receive appropriate training in the use of the curriculum resources and assessment measures (either on site or at professional development workshops). Appropriate and carefully selected textbooks are seen as valuable resources for teachers and students. Depending on the grade and subject matter, City of Trees PCS uses textbooks as teacher resources for lesson preparation, and as important research tools for students to augment their lessons. It is important to note, however, that textbooks do not drive decisions about what is essential for students to learn. Rather, teachers select an array of resources, including textbooks, to deliver standards-based lessons in an imaginative way.

The traditional Waldorf sequence of units within each discipline is also included where applicable. The carefully developed sequence of units has been implemented and adapted in Waldorf schools for almost a century and these units will be used as a springboard for our teachers. The important task for our teachers, with the help of the Curriculum Director, will be to find in the local cultural heritage the appropriate fairy tales, legends, myths, festivals and plays to bring to our students.

During the planning year, the curriculum will be developed fully, first by the Waldorf and urban educators in the Founding Group, then by the school Principal who will be hired by December and eventually by the Curriculum Director. traditional Waldorf units will be carefully evaluated and adapted to make culturally relevant to our school and to bring into alignment with our chosen standards of learning. Teaching resources will be acquired and integrated into the curriculum and assessments will continue to be mapped into the calendar year.

The following section describes the teaching resources and curriculum for each of the core disciplines within each level of our school (early childhood, elementary grades, middle school). Because the teaching resources selected are best understood within the context of the methods of instruction and classroom environment, the following curricular overview includes descriptions of the classroom structures in the early childhood classrooms and elementary and middle school grades.

1) Early Childhood (pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten)

"I am struck by the fact that the more slowly trees grow at first, the sounder they are at the core, and I think that the same is true of human beings. We do not wish to see children precocious, making great strides in their early years like sprouts, producing a soft and perishable timber, but better if they expand slowly at first, as if contending with difficulties, and so are solidified and perfected. Such trees continue to expand with nearly equal rapidity to extreme old age."
-Henry David Thoreau

Our early childhood program is designed to keep children healthy. It offers a peaceful environment with caring teachers, engaging activities, and ample time for play. Childhood is a most precious developmental period, yet in this day and age it is rare that an educational program allows children to be children. Our early childhood program is designed to support the healthy development of young children by building strength, perseverance, and good habits; developing social awareness and sensitivity; and awakening a life-long enthusiasm for learning and for work.

Teachers will turn to the following resources, in addition to drawing from the rich resources that have been developed and shared by teachers over the past century of Waldorf education and up to the present:

Literacy/ English Language Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compilations of age appropriate stories, songs and poems
------------------------------------	--

Math Science Social Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enki Curriculum • Live Education Curriculum! (Living Kindergarten Introduction; The First Seven Years; Folk and Fairy Tales for Kindergarten)⁴³
-----------------------------------	---

Teachers will use the Enki Curriculum and Live Education Curriculum as references for how to immerse students in all subject areas, through storytelling, arts, and activities. These resources include songs, poetry, stories and rhymes to share with children across the disciplines.

Direct academic instruction is noticeably absent from our early childhood program; a conscious effort is made to provide concrete rather than abstract learning experiences and to keep academic pressures out of the young child's world. A national study by the Gesell Institute comparing child development milestones over the past fifty years found that despite an increase in overtly academic work in Kindergarten, results indicate remarkable stability for the ages at which most children reach cognitive milestones.⁴⁴ The study indicates that while young children can be trained to perform certain tasks at a young age, there is a significant difference between performing and knowing.

One of the fundamental elements of education in the Waldorf-inspired classroom is rhythm. Through rhythm a feeling of security is developed in the children so that they can move through the complex world in which they live feeling more confident and at ease. A typical daily rhythm in the early childhood classroom includes structured circle time, free play, cooking and baking, snack, group activity such as painting, beeswax modeling, drawing/writing or watching a puppet show, lunch, rest, listening to literature/books/reading, and practical work activities. In addition, a sense of seasonal rhythm is built throughout the year by integrating festivals, birthdays and national holiday celebrations and seasonal stories into the curriculum, inspiring a sense of wonder and appreciation for nature.

Significant learning of all kinds takes place in the classroom. Through self-directed, active play, children learn to problem solve, to think innovatively, and to experience the satisfaction of carrying their "plans" through to completion. They are allowed to give themselves completely to their work. The early childhood classrooms will be a mixed-age learning environment combining students from pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten. In a multi-age setting, older children may gradually assume leadership roles, but all learn important social lessons about caring, cooperation, compromise, and responsibility. The classes will have a low student to teacher ratio of approximately 10:1 with two teachers in each classroom. This class size, mixed-age grouping, and student to teacher ratio will allow students to be supported by their teachers and guided in their focused play. Early childhood teachers will loop with their students, thus creating stability from year to year, a feature that is of particular importance in the early childhood classes. Both the low student to teacher ratio and multi-year looping will also help identify children needing additional supports (academic or otherwise). The development of children's social and emotional skills is emphasized in the early childhood classroom.

The early childhood classrooms and activities are carefully designed to respect the developmental stage of the young child who inherently imitates adults. It is the early childhood teachers' task to create an environment worthy of a small child's imitation and to educate the child through the warmth, rhythm, and

⁴³ Both the Enki Curriculum and Live Education! curricula include resources for math, science, social studies and English Language Arts.

⁴⁴ Pappano, Laura. 2010. Kids Haven't Changed; Kindergarten Has. *Harvard Education Letter*, 26 (5)

harmony in the classroom with which the child identifies. The early childhood classroom teachers will be purposeful in their actions and speech, knowing that their students will imitate their behaviors. Teachers will be engaged themselves in purposeful activities in the classroom and will encourage the students to join them in their baking, painting, gardening and handcrafts. The welcoming and safe spaces encourage children to reconstruct the world around them through imaginative play. There are few "learning toys" but rather open-ended natural materials that allow children to reconstruct the world around them. The play materials are chosen so as to allow the greatest room for the child's own imagination to come into play; blocks and logs become geometric shapes, incline planes and fulcrums become see-saws, while simultaneously engaging the children with the basic laws of physics in a preconscious, sensory experience. The creation of this classroom environment is particularly important for students whose homes or communities do not provide them with a sense of security.

The intention of the early childhood program is to build a strong social foundation, which is also instilled within a rich literature, art and music-based curriculum. Students will be assisted in developing representational structures so that there are bridges rather than gaps between early and later school learning. In this way, a story might introduce children to concepts, characters and experiences that will be studied in greater depth in later grades. This is accomplished by integrating foundational elements of science, mathematics, geography, and social science into the daily routine through stories, rhyming games, poems, circle movement routines and puppet plays. Carefully selected stories are told with exacting grammar and articulation giving the children from preschool onward, an ever evolving and expanding "language shower." This exposes them deeply to the richness and beauty of language—the foundation for any form of culture.

Literacy: Literacy instruction in the early childhood classroom begins with the strength students already bring to school: oral language. The focus on oral language development takes the form of daily listening to artistically told stories, drawn from anthologies of fables, fairytales, and nursery rhymes and passed on from teacher to teacher. In the Waldorf tradition, teachers use alliteration in verses, songs, riddles, tongue twisters, and poems as well as games to encourage phonemic awareness development with the whole class.

Through listening to stories, children develop listening comprehension, build vocabulary, and practice following a sequential story line. Mental picturing is a foundation for later reading comprehension. Students will be led through rhymes and circle games, songs and rhythmic movements as a way to build their foundation of literacy and math. As research shows, it is this play that is a child's work. As Dr. J. E. Daniel, the Executive Director of the National Association for the Education of Young Children said, "Above all, young children need time—time to manipulate objects and ideas, time to make the information their own." By allowing children in the early childhood classes to strengthen their imaginative capacities, they build the foundation to become creative and flexible thinkers as they transition into the elementary grades and beyond.

City of Trees PCS' early childhood students will also learn a multitude of lessons from the stories they are told. Children learn to understand the sequential, organized thought that is modeled in a story and to read the facial cues and intonation of the storyteller. They intuitively come to understand plot and character development. Their vocabularies and imaginations are enriched, and above all, they acquire a love of stories that becomes the foundation of literacy. Storytelling is the foundation of literacy in the early childhood classrooms. The child's imagination is active when listening to a teacher telling a story because

the pictures need to be created inwardly as the story unfolds.

Math: In all of the grades, but especially in the early childhood classrooms, teachers will aim to teach mathematics so that its intimate connection with life is clearly and joyfully brought to the children where they experience its living and growing quality. The basic principles for teaching mathematics in the early grades include:

- Engage the physical body in rhythmic activity as an important component to each math lesson as well as when integrating math concepts within other activities and lessons, such as practical handwork, science and literacy lessons, role plays, puppet plays, and recapitulations of stories;
- Relate everything to the human being so that the child has a sense of direct connection to numbers;
- Teach from the “whole to the parts and back to the whole (context)” and establish a “feeling connection” to the whole before exploring the details;
- Use story to introduce number concepts and qualities of numbers (mathematical *thinking* not just mathematical facts);
- Begin with activity – experience comes before abstraction – use of natural objects/classroom manipulatives for the purpose of establishing a strong “object/ number relationship;” and
- Make the lesson practical, concrete and useful so that the young child can experience the connection with his/her world.

Children will experience counting, sorting, adding, subtracting, sequencing, and dividing as they collect toys, remove items from baskets, set up houses, set up chairs for story time, or set the table. These activities are part of the early childhood day through hands-on manipulation of objects during free play and the practical work that children do. Simple finger plays and counting rhymes are sometimes done at circle time and feed children’s natural interest in the world of numbers.

Science: Science, from children’s perspectives, is the world around them and how that world works. The child learns about the world the same way as she learns to talk: through direct proximity, observation and imitation. The more rich interaction with nature and the world around them, the more children have the opportunity to develop sensory impressions in the brain. These will provide bridging to concepts when they come to language and deepening experience. Science is all about “sensing” where young children are the master sensors. The conscious awareness and analysis of what has been sensed occurs in children at a later stage of development.

In early childhood, the task is to keep children’s natural sense of wonder and reverence alive. The children’s interest in the world around them is the foundation for later scientific study. During guided play, both indoors and out, children are given ample opportunity to directly observe, explore, and manipulate their environment. Through their play, they experience such things as the elements of nature, weather, growth, gravity, biology and mechanics. Children are further introduced to science through nature stories, nature walks, gardening, and a focus on the basic understanding of the changes that take place across the days of the week and seasons. The skills of observation and experimentation are the focus of hands on explorations.

Social Studies: Children are introduced to social studies in the early childhood classrooms through multicultural stories from around the world as well as discussions about the importance of family. All of the subjects related to “social studies” such as history, geography, sociology, civics, and anthropology are

woven into the great fairy tales within world cultures. It is through the well-told fairy tale that young children are transported to “lands far away” and to “once upon a time.” All of the tension, craft, customs, terrains, climates and tribal moods and taboos are unveiled for young children on a pre-conscious level. Because each character in the story is really part of each of us, the teacher as the storyteller presents all, even the not-so-nice ones, as friends. The children “get to know” the characteristics of humanity through the fairy tale.⁴⁵ Fairy tales shine on the path of human development and prepare youngsters for the coming of particular stages in the journey of their own lives. City of Trees PCS’ early childhood curriculum provides young children with a rich experience of classical, world fairy tales, and by doing so, shows the children a universal kernel of our humanity and the way to live in the world—the goal of all credible social studies programs.

Specialty Classes: Students will take part in a number of specialty classes. Handwork will be introduced with finger knitting and hand sewing. Students will have a Spanish class twice a week through circle games, rhymes, and songs. In addition to the introduction to the language, children will take part in celebrations as well as other cultural traditions in order to better understand the cultures where the language is spoken. Arts instruction will include weekly watercolor painting, beeswax modeling, coloring, sewing, and various crafts, including woodworking. In order to maintain rhythm and consistency in the early childhood classrooms, students will engage in specialty classes with both specialty teachers and one of their classroom teachers.

Waldorf is most known for its unique approach to early childhood education and the importance it places on guided play. There is a significant transition, however, in the curriculum between Kindergarten and first grade, a change that is responsive to the developmental change that occurs at this same time.

2) Elementary and Middle Grades (1st-8th)

City of Trees PCS’ elementary and middle school curriculum is oriented toward children’s growing emotional capacity, and uses art, music, movement and handwork to explore and acquire core academic knowledge in reading, writing, mathematics, science and social studies. The Waldorf sequence of units in 1st through 8th grade informs what students are taught. Our school’s underlying theory of how children learn best informs how students are taught. Teachers will use a variety of well-researched best practices and methods to guide their teaching. Teachers will be supported with a breadth of high quality resources from which to form their lesson plans. Lesson plans across the disciplines blend cognitive, auditory, kinesthetic, visual and tactile approaches to address the students’ various dominant learning styles.

As students enter upper elementary and middle school grades, they are developmentally ready to increase the instructional time dedicated to each of the disciplines. While all students in 1st to 8th grade will engage in an interdisciplinary block period each day, when students reach 4th grade, they will also have both a discrete math and an English Language Arts period each day to supplement the lessons in the interdisciplinary block. With the onset of adolescence in the middle school, a dramatic developmental change occurs, giving rise to the heightened development of critical thinking. City of Trees PCS’ curriculum meets these emerging capacities with a thoroughly integrated approach emphasizing an engaging balance between “head, heart and hands.” The middle school curriculum challenges students’ new intellectual capacities with a focus on complex and critical thinking across the disciplines. This developmental shift and curricular shift prepares students to graduate and succeed in a rigorous academic

⁴⁵ Bettelheim, Bruno. *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales*. 1989.

high school environment.

A second change in the Middle School grades is that the 6th, 7th and 8th grade classroom teachers will also be specialists in math, humanities or science. While the classroom teachers will continue to loop with their class and teach other periods to them during the day, the Middle School teachers will teach the interdisciplinary block to whichever grade is currently focused on their specialty subject. For example, if the 6th grade teacher's specialty is math, they will teach the math-focused interdisciplinary blocks for each of the grades (staggered during the year). This structure allows teachers to have greater depth of knowledge in their specialty field and provides students with the opportunity to be taught by teachers beyond their looping classroom teacher, a feature of particular benefit to adolescents.

To clearly articulate instruction across the disciplines in our school, the resources being considered are followed with a narrative description for the grade levels. The chosen learning standards for each discipline will frame the skill development at each grade level.

English Language Arts

City of Trees PCS believes learning to read well is the cornerstone of creating equitable outcomes for all children. While listening, reading, and writing are integrated into every aspect of the curriculum, they are cited here to highlight how City of Trees PCS will develop students' literacy skills. Writing will be integrated into all subject matter. Because the students create their own portfolios for each unit, they will be writing original compositions for their work in science, history, geography, social studies, and even mathematics.

To help ensure that students will be fully supported in literacy development, City of Trees PCS will employ a half-time Literacy Specialist in its first year of operation which will quickly increase to a full-time position in Year Two, one and a half time position in Year Four and two full-time positions by Year Five. The Literacy Specialist(s) will work with individual students and in small groups with students who need more individualized literacy instruction. The Literacy Specialist(s) will also serve as a resource to teachers, in collaboration with the Curriculum Director on literacy instruction and support in the classroom.

Teachers will have access to a vast array of Waldorf resources including compilations of age appropriate stories for story telling in the classroom, poetry books, and songs. These resources will be combined with rigorous and thorough teaching tools to help guide skill development and instruction in the classroom. The use of teaching tools across our school will allow a common language to develop around the teaching of reading and writing. Curricular resources being considered include:

English Language Arts	
Elementary Grades	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calkins, L. <i>The Art of Teaching of Reading.</i> • Calkins, L. <i>The Art of Teaching of Writing.</i> • Fountas, I. and Pinnell, G. <i>Guided Reading: Good First Teaching for all Children</i> • Fountas, I. and Pinnell, G., <i>Guiding Readers and Writers: Teaching Comprehension, Genre, and Content Literacy</i> • Fountas, I. and Pinnell, G., <i>The Continuum of Literacy Learning Grades K-8: A Guide to Teaching</i> • Compilations of Stories (such as the <i>Enki Curriculum Nature Stories, Sage and</i>

	<i>Tricksters Series, Folk and Fairy Tales)</i>
Middle School Grades	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fountas, I. and Pinnell, G., <i>The Continuum of Literacy Learning Grades K-8: A guide to teaching</i> • Fountas, I. and Pinnell, G., <i>Guiding Readers and Writers: Teaching Comprehension, Genre, and Content Literacy</i> • In the Middle, Nancie Atwell

Beginning in early elementary school and continued through eighth grade, Writer's Workshop will be used to support the teaching of writing and used in both the interdisciplinary units and English Language Arts class. Writers' Workshop is an instructional model for differentiated teaching of writing that combines explicit instruction in writing mechanics and creative use of language with the ongoing practice of writing. Students learn the skills of the writing process, prewriting, drafting, revising, editing and publishing; and the approach itself includes a constant process of assessment by both the student and the teacher. The goal of Writers' Workshop is to produce independent writers who are able to write across the curriculum to both convey knowledge and express themselves creatively.

We will have a literature-based approach to reading as advocated by balanced literacy proponents such as Fountas and Pinnell. Teachers will use techniques including explicit instruction in comprehension strategies, exposure to multiple genres of literature, differentiated levels of texts and student response to literature within interdisciplinary units and English language arts periods. In addition to the regular English Language Arts periods during the day, literacy is integrated into all disciplines in the curriculum.

• **Elementary Grades (1st-5th Grade)**

Throughout the elementary grades, children do much written and oral language development work in the form of songs, poems, and games in addition to the more traditional speech and drama. This multi-faceted approach helps establish a joyful and living experience of language. Additionally, texts from world literature provide material for reading as well as a foundation for the study and acquisition of grammar skills. The English Language Arts curriculum moves from the mechanics of learning to read, to honing comprehension skills, to creative writing. Students' ability to pay meticulous attention to rich, sequential detail serves them well as they venture off into their own creative writing in upper elementary and middle school grades.

Children begin first grade by re-examining their understanding of the alphabet through a series of stories that kindle the imagination. Letters are explored in the same way they originated in the course of human history. Human beings perceived, then pictured, and out of the pictures abstracted signs and symbols. Students hear stories, draw pictures and discover the letter in the gesture of the picture. Instead of reading from commercial textbooks, each child creates personal books that they illustrate themselves, writing down the stories they have heard from the teacher. As students' literacy skills develop, the spoken word is still emphasized in verses, choral readings, and songs, but there is more time spent on strengthening the children's reading and writing abilities. Teachers will use differentiated levels of text across the disciplines to engage children both in the subject matter of the text and the process of learning to read. Original compositions and grammar are a part of the curriculum starting in third grade.

Another aspect of the English Language Arts curriculum is the class play, often one of the highlights of the year for children. Typically each class will perform a play each year, which in the case of the first and second grade, is a simple choral reading of a fairy tale with a few children each taking a solo part, as

opposed to the eighth grade class which celebrates the end of their many years together with the production of a class play.

- **Middle School Grades (6th-8th)**

Writer’s Workshop and a literature-focused approach to reading will continue in the middle school grades. In addition to the continued development of literacy skills through literature such as *Cry My Beloved Country*, *The Giver* and compilations of short stories, creative writing, formal compositions and literary analysis will take on a more central role in the curriculum. Students will continue their development of grammar skills, vocabulary and writing styles while engaged in writing across the disciplines. Students will read novels and stories as a whole class, in addition to reading independently. English Language Arts will continue to be taught in the interdisciplinary block and as a discrete discipline in an English Language Arts” period every day.

Mathematics

The focus of mathematics instruction will be on students applying their ever-increasing mathematical knowledge and skills to novel contexts and increasingly sophisticated mathematical problems. Students will then use those skills to further their understanding of other related curricular areas, such as science, social science, the arts, and physical education. The emphasis is on conceptual understanding, not just procedures and practice of them. Students practice mental math in the early grades through circle games and movement and gain a strong facility in computation that allows them to solve complex problems in the later years. The many kinds of manipulatives used help create a strong object/number relationship for the students. The goal is for students to develop a true understanding of mathematical processes, not simply the ability to correctly solve equations.

Math instruction is characterized by teaching children to solve problems, use skills, apply math to real-world situations, and understand and apply the knowledge of numbers. In alignment with the Common Core Standards, mathematics instruction will focus on mathematical understanding and students’ ability to justify why a particular math statement is true or to explain the basis for a mathematical rule. The learning standards will frame the City of Trees PCS’ math curriculum, but as is expressed in the standards, our teachers will need to base instruction and skill development on students’ current understandings. Teachers will work to develop students’ expertise in the standards for mathematical practice stated in the Common Core Standards, including situations where mathematically proficient students:

- **Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them** by explaining to themselves the meaning of a problem and looking for entry points to its solution.
- **Reason abstractly and quantitatively** by making sense of quantities and their relationships in problem situations.
- **Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others** by understanding and using assumptions, definitions, and previously established results in constructing arguments.
- **Model with mathematics** by applying the mathematics they know to solve problems arising in everyday life, society, and the workplace.
- **Use appropriate tools strategically** by considering the available tools when solving a mathematical problem.

- **Attend to precision** by trying to communicate precisely to others.
- **Look for and make use of structure** by looking closely to discern a pattern or structure.
- **Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning** by noticing if calculations are repeated, and look both for general methods and for shortcuts.

The teaching resources being considered include:

Mathematics	
Elementary Grades	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contexts for Learning Mathematics (Firsthand/Houghton Mifflin Harcourt) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Investigating Number Sense, Addition, and Subtraction (K-3rd)</i> ▪ <i>Investigating Multiplication and Division (3rd-5th)</i> ▪ <i>Investigating Fractions, Decimals and Percents (4th-6th)</i> • <i>Enki Curriculum Mathematics Stories</i> • <i>Everyday Math</i> (Wright Group) • <i>Making It Happen: A Guide to Interpreting and Implementing Common Core Standards for Mathematics</i> (National Council of Teachers of Mathematics)
Middle School Grades	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Contexts for Learning Mathematics</i> (Firsthand/Houghton Mifflin Harcourt) • <i>Everyday Math</i> (Wright Group) • <i>Discovering Algebra</i> (Key Curriculum Press)

The **Contexts for Learning Math**, created by Mathematics in the City, and providing curricular resources, embody City of Trees PCS’ belief that math must be taught with carefully crafted math situations to foster a deep conceptual understanding of essential mathematical ideas, strategies, and models. Building on the ideals of a math workshop, each unit provides a two-week sequence of investigations, mini lessons, games, and other contexts for learning. The many features that distinguish the **Everyday Math** curriculum are inherently in line with the educational philosophy and instructional methods of City of Trees PCS. These features include (a) real life problem solving (e.g. numbers, skills and mathematical concepts are linked to situations and contexts that are relevant to everyday lives and not presented in isolation); (b) balanced instruction (e.g., balance of teacher-directed instruction with opportunities for open-ended, hands-on explorations, long-term projects and on-going practice); and (c) multiple methods for basic skills practice and an emphasis on communication (e.g., students encouraged to explain and discuss their mathematical thinking to give children the chance to clarify their thinking and gain insights from others).⁴⁶

- **Elementary Grades (1st-5th)**

Within the math curriculum, the focus is not only in the children’s mastery of the practical aspects of mathematics, but also in developing flexibility of thought and a curiosity about the world as it is revealed through mathematical thought. Great emphasis is placed on working with numbers in multi-sensory ways. Numbers practice in the lower grades is lively. It involves manipulation of natural objects and rhythmical counting and memory games. Children speak and clap loudly and softly, walk, jump, and hop to number

⁴⁶ everydaymath.uchicago.edu/about/curriculum

rhymes and games. In the upper grades, seeing and drawing geometric forms in a way that emphasizes their beauty is an example of the multi-sensory approach.

Imaginative stories, games, and rhythmic movement form the basis for the arithmetic in the early grades. Teachers emphasize the development of a sense for numbers, asking questions such as “What feels different when I hold three apples in my hands or eight?” In addition, teachers will also bring forth the qualities of numbers. The number 2 may be presented as a pair of shoes, a set of twins, or as two individual things or people who came together to form a pair. The number 5 may be presented as the classic pattern of a flower. Math instruction begins by teaching from the whole to the part. For example, a question might be “what is 12?” Possible answers or approaches may include: $12=3+9$, or $12=4 \times 3$, or $12=144/12$. This encourages flexible thinking and discourages the one “right” answer mode of thinking. Emphasis is on mastering the four processes and learning the times tables up to 12 by heart. Mental arithmetic is practiced and children solve simple equations arising from imaginative stories presented by the teacher. As students gain experience and confidence, they are introduced to measurement in all of its forms: time, volume, length, height, weight and distance.

Major concepts, such as measurement and time, are introduced to the children when they are developmentally ready to understand the concepts. Mathematical processes like multiplication, division, and fractions are introduced through stories and then move on to abstractions, a progression that aids deep understanding of the concepts. Children are then ready to take things apart and explore fractions and decimals. Developing good work habits, including organization and completion of work, becomes a central theme. Students continue to work with mental arithmetic, estimation, rounding, even and odd numbers, borrowing and carrying, times tables up to 12, expanded notation, combined computation and freehand geometric drawing.

The following are some essential strands and skills for mathematics at City of Trees PCS:

Number Sense: Students use estimation and strategies in computation and problem solving that involve numbers that have ones, tens, hundreds, thousands places; students compute with very large and very small numbers, positive integers, decimals and fractions and understand the relationship between decimals, fractions and percents.

Algebra and Functions: Students use and interpret variables, mathematical symbols, and properties to write and simplify expressions and (mathematical) sentences; students write verbal expressions and sentences as algebraic expressions and equations; they evaluate algebraic expressions.

Measurement and Geometry: Students understand perimeter and area; students deepen their understanding of the measurement of plane and solid shapes and use this understanding to solve problems; students choose appropriate units of measure and use ratios to convert within and between measuring systems to solve problems.

Statistics, Data Analysis, and Probability: Students organize, represent and compare data by category on simple graphs and charts; students make predictions.

Mathematical Reasoning: Students make decisions about how to set up a problem; students move beyond a particular problem by generalizing to other situations; students evaluate the reasonableness of the solution in the context of the original situation.

- **Middle School Grades (6th-8th)**

The primary focus of middle school math continues to be on developing a deep understanding of mathematical thinking, not just mathematical facts. The methods of instruction described for the elementary school grades will continue to be used in the middle school. Math will be taught as a topic in Main Lesson through expeditions and projects and also, once students are in 4th grade, in a dedicated math practice period each day. For example, students learn the story of Pythagoras and discover through practical experiments and observation how he arrived at his famous theorem (Common Core Standard 8G 6-8 Understand and apply the Pythagorean Theorem). Then they launch into a detailed study of measurement, reflecting back on their precision geometric drawing blocks of Sixth Grade and their freehand geometric drawing they did in Fifth Grade only now with theorems, calculations and axioms (Common Core Standard 8G 9 Solve real-world and mathematical problems involving cylinders, cones and spheres).

In grade six, the teaching of geometry mirrors the adolescents’ growing need and affinity for precision. The geometric constructions that are done in class with serious mechanical drawing tools support the acquisition of new skills and new understandings. Terms like circumference, radius, diameter, perpendicular, and parallel become meaningful through hands-on constructions. These constructions are intricate and demanding, combining technical accuracy with artistic ability. This is an unbeatable combination for the twelve year-old: engaging them fully while enabling them to work with marked focus and uncharacteristic quiet. The result is the acquisition of technical skill and know-how that is lasting and sound. Percent, formulae and business mathematics are also introduced. Sixth Grade students create their own business in the classroom, keeping the books and developing “investment portfolios”.

Science

The study of Science through the grades will call upon children to carefully investigate, experiment and observe in order to discover and understand scientific concepts. Science resources under consideration:

Science	
Elementary Grades	• Full Option Science System (FOSS)
Middle School Grades	• CPO’s Focus on Earth, Life and Physical Science (School Specialty Science)

FOSS is a research-based science curriculum for grades K–8 developed at the Lawrence Hall of Science, University of California at Berkeley. We are choosing this resource because of its alignment with our belief that the best way for children to gain scientific knowledge and skills is through the opportunity to inquire, experiment and synthesize concepts with what they already know about the world.⁴⁷ FOSS is aligned with The National Research Council’s National Science Standards. **CPO’s Focus on Earth, Life and Physical Science’s** guided inquiry approach aligns with City of Trees PCS’ approach to teaching science. Investigations and experiments are performed to allow students to discover and explore concepts rather than have them proven or demonstrated. New concepts are connected to real world applications.⁴⁸

The traditional science rotation of units in a Waldorf school, which our teachers will use as one of the many resources guiding their lesson development, include:

⁴⁷ www.fossweb.com

⁴⁸ www.cpo.com

- Grade 1: Nature exploration
- Grade 2: Nature, astronomy, water
- Grade 3: Ecosystems, weather and terrain formations, textiles, mechanics
- Grade 4: Comparative zoology, geology, local geography
- Grade 5: Botany, geography (poles, climatic zones), organic chemistry
- Grade 6: Astronomy, mineralogy, geology, physics (acoustics, mechanics, magnetism, heat)
- Grade 7: Physiology and health, mechanics, electricity, inorganic chemistry
- Grade 8: Organic chemistry, physics, muscular and skeletal anatomy

• **Elementary Grades (1st-5th)**

The science curriculum in the early grades introduces students to the natural world, focusing on the basics of physical science—gravity, balance, movement—becoming more exacting with the study of density and force through the study of levers and pulleys, constructed by the students when they are in Sixth Grade, for example. Life science and earth science focus on the five senses, the change of seasons, and environmental issues. Students experience the cycle of growth through gardening, from seed to harvest to transformation through cooking. Students use their growing literacy skills to communicate their observations orally and through writing and drawing. In the upper elementary grades, students expand this foundation to include rigorous experiments based on the scientific method in zoology and botany.

• **Middle School Grades (6th-8th)**

In the Middle School grades, students experience botany, biology, geology, zoology, meteorology, astronomy, chemistry, physics, anatomy/physiology, and health/nutrition. The teacher sets up experiments and arranges field observations that call upon the children to observe carefully, ponder, discuss, and write up scientific observations. Through the process, rigorous, independent thinking and sound judgment are developed. Students learn about the scientific method from a phenomenological basis—starting with the exact observation of the phenomenon, constructing carefully designed experiments, developing and testing a hypothesis, and discovering the scientific laws or theories. The students make their own lab books and record the experiments in their own rendered drawings that accurately represent the sequence of events.

The Middle School units reflect a young person’s growing preoccupation with their physical bodies. Whether the subject is human physiology with a study of the circulatory, digestive, and reproductive systems, or the anatomy of the skeletal system, students are captivated by this work in a way that could not have been possible prior to their puberty and engagement with their own bodies.

Social Studies

The Waldorf principle that underlies the social studies curriculum is that it not be taught as a topic thoroughly integrated with subjects as diverse as mathematics, handwork and singing, rather than as a specialized subject. The social studies curriculum acknowledges that the cultures of the past have influenced humanity throughout time and continue to influence the values and morals of today’s world. Students at City of Trees PCS explore the world through the presentation of peoples, legends, and the literature of the world. The social studies curriculum at City of Trees PCS is designed to accomplish two outcomes: (a) student learning about the people and events that have shaped the development of man around the world; and (b) student development of analytical thinking and critical literacy skills.

An historical period is never taught in a Waldorf classroom without being accompanied by poetry and song from that particular period. Waldorf students routinely learn long poems by heart, and, through the grades, sing increasingly demanding musical pieces. No less important are the class teacher’s efforts to embody the historical period as a class play, which is performed for the entire school at the end of the year. Students not only learn their parts; they are also responsible for helping to design costumes, props and sets, so that all that they have learned now takes palpable physical form. Teachers, when possible, use primary source materials and artifacts to teach social studies. Students learn to differentiate between primary and secondary sources. Students learn to identify the human and physical characteristics of the places they are studying and explain how those features form the unique character of those places. In addition to primary sources, humanities/social studies resources being considered include:

Social Studies	
Elementary Grades	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>TCI History Alive</i> • <i>Enki Curriculum</i> • <i>Live Education Curriculum</i>
Middle School Grades	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>TCI History Alive</i> • <i>Facing History and Ourselves</i>

The traditional rotation of units in a Waldorf school which our teachers will use as one of the many resources to guide their lesson development include:

- Grade 1: Fairy Tales
- Grade 2: Legends and stories of heroes
- Grade 3: History of house building, farming and textiles
- Grade 4: Norse mythology and geography of local surroundings
- Grade 5: Ancient History: the peoples of India, Persia, Egypt, Babylonia and Greece
- Grade 6: Roman History, from Aeneas to the decline of the Roman Empire and the crowning of Charlemagne as Holy Roman Emperor
- Grade 7: The Late Middle Ages and the Renaissance; The Age of Exploration
- Grade 8: American History: from the Reformation to the Age of Revolution; 20th Century

The **Enki** and **Live Education Curriculum** each offers a compilation of Waldorf units and lessons with appropriate stories, songs and activities for the interdisciplinary study of history. Both curricula provide resources for each of the traditional Waldorf units across the grades.

TCI History Alive is a unique social studies curriculum that recognizes that all students learn differently and all students benefit from learning in multiple ways. TCI curriculum is developed around the student use of “interactive notebooks,” a method of instruction and assessment that is closely aligned with City of Trees PCS’ use of the Main Lesson book. The five central theory and research-based methods are closely aligned with the instructional methods at City of Trees PCS. The TCI methods include: understanding by design (teaching for deep understanding depends on beginning with the big ideas students will learn); nonlinguistic representation (teaching with nonlinguistic activities helps improve comprehension); multiple intelligences; cooperative interaction (cooperative group work leads to learning gains); and spiral curriculum (students understand increasingly difficult concepts through step by step discovery, spiraling from simple memorization to analysis and evaluation). TCI History Alive guides teachers to many

approaches of assessment (individual and group, formal and informal) that is in line with the City of Trees PCS' assessment model.⁴⁹ **Facing History and Ourselves** delivers classroom strategies, resources and lessons that inspire young people to take responsibility for their world. The emphasis on teaching history through understanding the thinking of the actual people involved and on how individuals can take personal responsibility is aligned with City of Trees PCS' mission of educating students to be contributing members of their communities. The Facing History and Ourselves resources explore the historical consequences of hatred and present exemplars of courage and compassion in the face of injustice. The underlying mission of the curriculum is to help young people learn how their daily choices can have a major impact on creating a better, safer future.⁵⁰

- **Elementary Grades (1st-5th)**

Unique to Waldorf education, the history curriculum mirrors the developmental stages of the child. In the early grades, children experience history through myths, legend, verse, and imagery. Students use dramatization through the performing arts as a medium for understanding history and social studies. Teachers lead students through the culture of a people using other Waldorf-inspired strategies such as form drawing. For example, in Fifth Grade, to support the study of ancient history, students draw designs based on Greek and Egyptian styles as an introduction to talking and thinking about how a civilization's beliefs and values are reinforced and revealed in its art and architecture.

- **Middle School Grades (6th-8th)**

The adolescent studies history with a deeper understanding and a new capacity for discussion and reflection. An integrated historical perspective informs much of the curriculum. Science classes study the biographies of great scientific thinkers; a math class may examine Greek assumptions about geometry. The goal is to get students to fully experience the changes in thought and consciousness that have occurred over time so that they will have greater perspective of their own time.

Sixth grade offers extensive study of the rise and fall of Rome. Many academic subjects and practical and fine arts are woven around an ancient Roman context. Mathematics lessons are formed utilizing everyday items found in the ancient city; calculations are made in Roman currency, and historically accurate goods are bought and sold, as it might have happened. Roman engineering feats are studied and drawn in exact detail. The students make first-person journals as if they were on a campaign with Julius Caesar in Gaul. They record in detail aspects of their adventures according to what they learned through their research and the stories told by the teacher.

In seventh grade, the historical study of the Renaissance is the perfect subject for the thirteen year-old. At a time when young people are ready to redefine themselves, they resonate with the changing world of Michelangelo, Leonardo, and Copernicus. Old ideas and ways of thinking have lost immediacy and power for the seventh grader. Their world is changing as rapidly as the world of Columbus and Gutenberg. In history classes, as in all subjects, students create their own books to document their learning. They write compositions to summarize in a clear and concise manner the important information that has been studied and carefully illustrate their work through demanding modes of self-expression.

City of Trees PCS' eighth grade curriculum offers a richly relevant experience for young people. Studying

⁴⁹ www.teachctci.com

⁵⁰ www.facinghistory.org

the modern era is a moving undertaking for adolescent students. At this age, they are busy with their own declaration of independence, conducting their own Civil War, or contemplating acts of civil disobedience in school and at home. What could be more stimulating and healing for them than to study the lives and actions of courageous individuals like Lincoln, Gandhi, King, and Rosa Parks? In order for the study of humanities to truly engage children, teachers must bring people, rather than abstract concepts, to students.

Specialty Subjects

Special subject classes are an integral part of the curriculum from pre-Kindergarten through 8th grade. **Art:** Drama, painting, music, drawing, calligraphy, and modeling are integrated into the entire curriculum throughout the grades, including mathematics and the sciences. Most of the arts are anchored in the students' lessons in historical or biographical contexts. Art will also be offered as a special subject. Students work in the visual arts of watercolor painting and beeswax modeling in the lower grades. Upper grades continue advancing in watercolor painting and move into perspective and geometric drawing, clay modeling and sculpture, and works in charcoal and oil pastel.

Handwork: The practical arts, handcrafts and woodwork balance and complement the student's academic and artistic work. By learning to knit, crochet, sew and work with wood and clay, students develop manual dexterity, patience, coordination, skill, appreciation for natural materials, a feeling for color, form and design, and a personal sense of achievement. Learning such skills as knitting and crocheting in the early grades develops the motor skills that enhance intellectual development. For a more detailed description, see Practical Work in Methods of Instruction.

Music: In the first grade, children are taught to play the pentatonic flute, the third graders will play the diatonic recorder and other instruments are gradually introduced such as violin in fourth grade, leading to choir and orchestra in the later years. Coordination, patience, perseverance and imagination are improved through practical and artistic work. Again, the intrinsic development of motor skills supports intellectual development.

Spanish: The Waldorf approach to language instruction is based on the common-sense idea that children should learn a foreign language the same way they learn their own. In the early grades they hear it, sing it, and play games with it the way children at home would. Gradually they come to understand the new language, to perform plays in it, and to converse in it. Finally, they learn to read and write it. At our school, Spanish is the chosen second language. While learning a foreign language the children are also gaining an understanding of human nature from the perspective of another culture. Students will have Spanish class three times per week in elementary and middle school.

Physical Education: Physical activity and time outdoors is integral to every school day. Students will be physically active across the curriculum and movement activities, dance, cooperative games, and other forms of creative physical expression are infused into the everyday curriculum. Research indicates that sensory experience and physical movement are crucial to the full and healthy development of the brain especially during the early childhood years.⁵¹ Physical activity promotes balance, coordination, and gross motor skills as well as promoting healthy living, a critically important lesson in a society plagued by obesity and the health risks of inactivity. Recognizing that the qualities of physical fitness and health enhance the students' overall well-being, each child is encouraged to rise to individual physical potential.

⁵¹ Neuman, Susan. Readiness for Reading and Writing—What Do We Mean? Early Childhood Today, v20, n2, p8, Oct 2005.

An interdisciplinary approach is also taken to physical activity at City of Trees PCS. For example, a traditional feature of the fifth grade curriculum, when the children study Greek culture, is to practice the five events of the Greek Olympiad and to compete in games with others schools. This is a tradition that we hope to take part in with other Waldorf schools in the geographic area.

c. Methods of Instruction

Distinctive Instructional Methods

“The fullest development of intelligent, imaginative, self-confident and caring persons is the aim of Waldorf education. This aim is solidly grounded in a comprehensive view of human development, in an intellectually and culturally rich curriculum, and in the presence of knowledgeable, caring human beings at every stage of the child’s education.” - Douglas Sloan, Professor Emeritus, Columbia University

The instructional methods used at City of Trees PCS are inspired by Waldorf education. Waldorf teaching methods stress a nurturing, multi-sensory, ecologically-oriented learning environment. The stimulation of the child’s imagination and creativity, as well as the development of healthy habits and strong memory skills, are high priorities. Daily, weekly and seasonal rhythms help provide consistent structure to the educational process. Multiple learning modalities are integrated into daily lessons to create a learning atmosphere that is supportive, challenging, and meaningful to each student. Waldorf teaching methods emphasize imaginative and creative play in the early years and build in complexity as the child progresses. Opportunity for artistic expression abounds throughout the grades. Since these methods require a great deal from the teachers, one of our school goals is to maintain a vibrant and active learning community where all faculty and staff are given the necessary support to continuously improve and invigorate their teaching. This focus on providing teachers with the resources they need will ensure that we deliver the following methods of instruction in a highly effective way and in keeping with our mission and philosophy.

Developmental Methodology: For relationships to optimally matter, they should be developmentally appropriate. Developmentally appropriate is here defined as referring to educational and child care practices that are based on a developmental view of the child - an understanding of the stages of physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development that children move through as they progress from toddlers to kindergarten and to the early elementary grades. This view, central to Waldorf methodology, rejects the notion that children are miniature adults, as well as the assumption that the earlier children learn to do a task such as reading, doing arithmetic, or using a computer, the more successful children will be in school and in life.⁵² Teachers at City of Trees PCS will examine practices and programs as to whether they are developmentally appropriate and whether young children have due time for child initiated play.

The “Class Teacher” —Relationship to the Child: The heart of education is the loving, creative, trusting, and respectful relationship between students and teachers. Relationships matter.⁵³ Students learn optimally only once teachers have found structures and processes to convey that they *know* the student *and value* who and what they are. In our program, the teacher has the opportunity to stay with a class for

⁵² Miller, E., & Almon, J. (2009). *Crisis in Kindergarten: Why Children Need Play in School*. College Park, MD: Alliance for Childhood. Retrieved from: <http://www.allianceforchildhood.org/publications>.

⁵³ Bryk & Schneider, 2005.

multiple years, (early childhood loop pre-K-K, elementary loop 1-5, middle school loop 6-8), teaching the main lesson academic subjects. This time allows the teacher to get to know the children deeply (as well as their families) and help them unfold their gifts and to develop their unique capacities. This long-term relationship provides stability and enriched opportunities to assess students’ progress over a long period of time, allowing the teacher to meet the individual pedagogical needs of each individual child in consistent and deepened ways. This is of particular importance given the expected broad range of abilities on our student body.

Recognizing the critical importance of teachers’ development, Waldorf education professional development includes a focus on the teacher’s inner life and inner development.⁵⁴ All teachers have the responsibility to be deeply engaged in the pursuit of professional and personal development. This provides a powerful modeling of active learning and personal growth for students and is central to Waldorf methods.

The Main Lesson: A fully integrated, interdisciplinary two-hour period of instructional activities begins each school day, in which the core curriculum is presented. Main lesson topics include, for example, algebra, Greek history, botany, or acoustics, and involve storytelling, movement, art, biography, drama, mental math, recitation, music, writing, reading, computation and any activity which might help bring the topic of study to life. A particular subject is taught in main lesson for three to four week immersion blocks and then often resumed later in the term. This approach allows for enrichment and deepening in content and skills by integrating them together into a powerful, concentrated, in-depth experience. Once one subject has been advanced through its block cycle, another subject takes its place. The former course of study “rests” to resurface later in selected ways during practice periods and then resume its place as the key main lesson theme later in the term. This gives the students time to “digest” what has been learned from the subject and see it with fresh eyes upon its return, a format used in 1st grade through 8th grade. Throughout the block rotations there is a decisive and persistent focus on the teaching of reading, writing, listening and recapitulation skills. The interdisciplinary main lesson is followed each day by two practice periods in subjects such as Spanish, English Language Arts or math skills, which require regular repetition.

The carefully crafted sequence of blocks has a unique relevance because the subjects that are taught correspond to the developmental changes that are occurring within the children. Through this creative and innovative approach, it is possible to teach children the basic understandings they need in English Language Arts and mathematics in a way that serves their emotional development at the same time.

A core feature of the main lesson of the day is making a main lesson book. Each student produces a main lesson book for every block of study. What begins as a blank journal becomes an individual record of experiences, observations and gained knowledge, along with hand-drawn illustrations, and often original poetry or related excerpts from the world of literature. As a portfolio of work, a student’s main lesson books reflect key understandings and skills a student has learned, while also displaying the student’s inspiration, imagination and artistry. Multidimensional, complex and thoughtful, main lesson books are an important way in which learning is expressed and they become an authentic assessment tool for teachers. Main lesson books also become significant sources of pride in achievement and send the message to the

⁵⁴ Schon, Douglas. 1983. *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action*. New York: Basic Books; Palmer, Parker. *The Courage to Teach*. 1997.

student that “*our school is about my work!*” The breadth of specialty classes (e.g., Spanish, music, games and handwork), combined with the depth of the main lesson and the reinforcement of practice periods for academic subjects, creates a curricular offering reminiscent of a renaissance-based education.

Practice Periods: A pedagogical practice period of forty-five minutes will occur each day after the daily, two hour Main Lesson. These periods will focus on literacy and mathematics skills which require repetition. This will be a time when students receive individualized and small group attention to address any challenges that become evident from analysis of daily and weekly formative assessments. Teachers will have the opportunity to re-teach, offer more targeted intervention, provide for advanced students, or provide support for ELL students. In the early elementary grades, students practice periods will alternate between English Language Arts and math. Beginning in fourth grade, students will have two practice periods each morning for English Language Arts and math.

Arts Infused: Current research shows that learning “in and through the arts” enhances all students’ sense of accomplishment and wellbeing and leads to higher achievement.⁵⁵ City of Trees PCS’ curriculum is strongly interdisciplinary, integrating the arts, drama, painting, music, drawing, and handwork across all disciplines. Studies have shown significant correlations between academic success, enhanced critical thinking abilities, and positive attitudes towards community in students who are educated in arts-integrated curriculum. This model of arts infusion awakens imagination and creativity, bringing vitality and wholeness to learning. Curricula that include learning to play music offer extra opportunity to build spatial reasoning skills; listening to music builds spatial and temporal reasoning.⁵⁶ This model of educating through the arts awakens imagination and creativity, bringing wholeness to learning.

The Story- Teaching Through Image and Metaphorical Language: Developmentally specific stories linked to the academic concepts being taught during any given main lesson allow students to develop imaginative bridges to the material. The stories are told usually by heart by the teacher from pre-Kindergarten through grade eight. The students recapitulate the story in various creative ways before taking up the “embedded” academic standard. This process becomes more complex as the children progress through the grades. The practice of presenting “first the picture (metaphor/ image) then the concept”, followed the next day by class or single- student recapitulation are unique aspects to Waldorf education. This practice builds comprehension, memory, analytical skills, strengthens auditory and verbal sequencing and further “anchors” the concept being taught to an inner, pictorial (imaginative) experience of the student.

Whole to Part to Whole: While in traditional lesson design, the synthesis and analysis is held till later, the Waldorf method has the lesson beginning and ending with synthesis and analysis, moving between it and the development and honing of the cognitive skills on the lower rungs of Bloom’s ladder, when students practice, repeat, play word games and rehearse. Waldorf methodology’s signature feature is the design for rigor to always start with the whole, then bridge to the part, to always return back to the whole. The design feature means that in each lesson, following Bloom’s Taxonomy, a child has the opportunity to analyze and synthesize, because the lesson begins and ends with the big picture whole. The child also has the opportunity to master recall fact and build skills because the lesson bridges to the part, again deepening its opportunities to analyze and synthesize when the lesson integrates back to the whole.

⁵⁵ Fiske, E. *Champions of Change: The Impact of the Arts on Learning*, 1999.

⁵⁶ Oberman, 2010.

Spiral Curriculum: City of Trees PCS’ curriculum will be inspired by the Waldorf method of building the curriculum like a spiral, where you revisit basic ideas, building on them until the student has grasped the full formal concept. The spiral structure means that students can be encouraged to discover information and relationships and continually build on what they already know. By returning to materials and seeing them in a new way, the students are building on prior knowledge while they learn. Importantly, they are meeting themselves in new ways. This process supports the students’ meaning-making while also strengthening skills development.

Head, Heart and Hands: Another of Waldorf education’s signature features is its methodological focus on the head, heart and hands. This methodology balances and integrates academic with artistic and practical activities, always beginning with heart and hand then moving to the cognitive or the head; imaginative and active engagement bridges to conceptual understanding. First the encounter then the concept. Traditional education focuses on the head, the intellect. Waldorf education is always pedagogically multi-tasking. Curriculum is designed to engage the heart- the emotional; the hands- the physical/kinesthetic; and the head- the cognitive.

In addition, the core instructional program utilizes multiple modalities to help students access the curriculum and process key information. The use of multiple modalities to facilitate learning is central to Waldorf education. A growing body of research in cognitive science confirms that learning information through movement, drama, singing, and non-linguistic representations such as pictographs or drawing reinforces the students’ ability to retain and understand information and improve skills.⁵⁷ This strategy will support students with different strengths and weaknesses.

Play-Based Skill Development: Focused intentional play in the early grades builds oral language skills, concept comprehension, and key social skills. Intentional play is an extension of experiential learning. Research shows that students who engage in complex forms of socio-dramatic play have greater language skills, better social skills, and greater information processing skills than those students given little or no play-time.⁵⁸ Through play, children learn from each other, negotiate, and problem solve. They converse, do practical work of their own choosing, alone or in self-organized groups. These experiences contribute to a broad experience of the world and of life. They help create a store of conscious content knowledge, and it is these higher-order thinking skills, knowledge and dispositional capabilities that encourage children to question, discover, evaluate, and invite new ideas and enable them to become successful readers.⁵⁹ “Creative play that children can control is central to their emotional, physical, and cognitive growth. It contributes to their language development, social skills, and problem solving capacities and lays essential foundations for later academic learning.”⁶⁰ Recent studies indicate that limiting dramatic playtime limits literacy development, particularly in boys where dramatic play has a positive effect on comprehension and meta-linguistic awareness—both important precursors for reading and writing. A recent study highlights the need for early childhood classrooms to move away from academic seatwork and towards a more effective approach of learning through play.⁶¹ One impact of a developmentally

⁵⁷ Gardner, 2004.

⁵⁸ Almon, 2010.

⁵⁹ Roscoe and Newman *Journal of the National Association for the Education of Young Children*; July, 2005.

⁶⁰ Isenberg, J.P., *Why is Play Important? Social and Emotional Development, Physical Development, Creative Development*, Pearson, 2006.

⁶¹ Gropper, 2011.

inappropriate curriculum in early childhood classrooms is that boys, particularly African American and Latino boys are more often labeled as having behavior problems, prescribed medication, referred for special education services and suspended from early childhood classrooms.⁶² Our school aims to reverse this tendency

Practical Work: Recent research points to the crucial relationship that the hands and their activity have in relation to the whole human organism, particularly the brain.⁶³ City of Trees PCS' pedagogical methods regarding the practical arts hinges on the theory found in Waldorf education along with research cited above, that in human evolution and in the development of each individual child there is an interplay between manual skill, experience, and mental development. Activities involving the careful use of the hand such as handwork, playing of musical instruments, painting, drawing, beeswax and clay modeling, and wood carving all have a strong and central place in the City of Trees PCS curriculum.

Storytelling and Recitation: Strengthening the imagination is as important as developing the intellect and the memory. For this reason, the telling of stories is an important part of our curriculum. Stories or the recapitulation of the previous day's story are a core element of almost every main lesson from 1st through 8th grade. The stories are chosen to nourish the children at their particular stage of growth becoming more complex with each passing year. Listening to a story, *told by the teacher from memory*, the child creates inner pictures of the landscape, characters, and events. The child not only develops a strong capacity for memory but also the ability to form rich, inner imaginations and the longing to do so. The ability to have access to "inner pictures" is crucial for higher-level thinking and creative problem solving. It also provides a rich aural/oral ability upon which to strengthen auditory sequencing, reading comprehension, applied grammar and oral recitation.

Community Service: In order to give each child a sense of his or her place in the community and to promote public service and the value of volunteerism, we will make our community an extended classroom. Helping children develop the experience of human society as an aspect of themselves will give our students the compassion and skills needed to make responsible decisions and take meaningful action in their lifelong roles as citizens of the world. Teachers integrate into the curriculum developmentally appropriate service learning. As the students provide service to the community, they will develop a sense of personal respect, as well as a respect for the world around them. They will learn and practice the skills of compassion, social responsibility and resourcefulness. They will learn about the personal strengths in everyone, the importance of cooperation and teamwork, and they will experience the joys of giving.

Formative and Summative Assessments

Teachers will use both formative and summative assessments as part as an integrated approach to determining student learning and progress.

In order to remain in line with our vision, our assessment strategies and our use of assessments, both summative and formative, will reflect our commitment to:

⁶² Barbarin, O. & Crawford, G. (2006). Acknowledging and reducing stigmatization of African American boys. *Young Children*, 61(6), 79-86;

⁶³ Wilson, Frank.; *The Hand How It Shapes the Brain* 1998.

- Promote an individualized approach to education in that Waldorf pedagogy seeks to differentiate instructional methods according to the developmental needs of each child;
- Assess students in both academic and non-academic (core and non-core) domains in light of our philosophical commitment to support growth in both skills(knowledge) and capacities(understanding and ability to apply knowledge to novel situations);
- Provide broad, in-depth analysis of student understanding resulting from City of Trees PCS' strategies of (i) subject immersion through the three and four week academic block rotations, (ii) daily opportunities for students to engage with the subject matter visually, auditorily, tactilely, and kinesthetically through the integration of the arts and practical activities;
- Recognize students' individual strengths and weaknesses resulting from the long-term deep relationship established between the teachers at City of Trees PCS and their students as they move through several grades together as a class community;
- Avoid labeling students and staying true to the Waldorf practice of characterizing students' behavior, needs and emerging skills and capacities rather than labeling the children with one-faceted labels;
- Create a non-competitive environment for our students through cooperative learning opportunities and, especially in the middle school, collaborative learning opportunities as the teacher increasingly takes on the role of mentor.

Because City of Trees PCS recognizes *that instruction is not the same as learning*, formative assessments are critical to our model of lesson development and delivery. Teachers must know how students are internalizing the content and skills in the lessons each day to be able to appropriately tailor the lesson design to their needs. Formative assessments, obtained through of careful observation, oral response to questions, unit quizzes, reading out loud, class participation, daily oral recapitulation of the preceding day's lesson, assessment of daily writing and Main Lesson book work will provide teachers with a well-rounded immediately actionable view of students' learning. This view dictates how teachers design their lessons, what they re-teach in a different way, what they choose to emphasize during the practice periods each day and how they differentiate the learning opportunities in the classroom. Particularly in the early childhood classroom, assessment will be almost exclusively formative in kind, allowing teachers to continually assess student progress and development in order to create a continuous feedback loop for their daily lesson development.

In the elementary and Middle School grades, summative assessments will be used more extensively. Summative assessments, creating a measure of what students have learned, will most typically take place at the end of main lesson blocks. The use of writing portfolios, main lesson rubrics, unit quizzes and tests, performances and public exhibitions of learning serve two important programmatic purposes. First, they allow teachers to carefully track student learning and to closely tie achievement with benchmark standards aligned with our chosen standards of learning. In addition, summative assessments add another layer of ability to identify students who need academic intervention, sometimes in a more conclusive way than formative assessment. Of equal importance, these summative assessments serve an instructional purpose. Giving students the opportunity to engage in authentic assessments that measure depth of understanding is itself integral to the learning process. The key question asked by teachers at City of Trees PCS is: "Are the children learning what we think we are teaching?" The use of both formative and summative assessments supports teachers in ensuring that all children in their class reach their potential as learners.

Adaptations/Strategies/Models for Students with Exceptional Need (including Gifted & Talented)

Instructional Methods Benefiting Exceptional Learners: City of Trees PCS’ methods of instruction and curriculum incorporate many best practices for students with a broad spectrum of diverse learning needs. Students with special needs will participate fully in all aspects of the City of Trees PCS curriculum and we will maintain high expectations for the academic success of every student.

The following components of our academic program align with best practices for meeting the needs of a wide variety of students with special needs:

- **Universal Design in the Classroom:** Many principles of universal design are integrated into our classrooms. The developmentally appropriate curriculum and naturalistic instructional approaches support all learners and are especially important for students with special needs.⁶⁴
- **Interdisciplinary Focus:** Contextual and experiential learning in the classroom using interdisciplinary lesson plans has been shown to benefit students with a wide variety of learning styles;⁶⁵
- **Differentiated Instruction:** A low student to teacher ratio facilitates the individualized and differentiated instruction incorporated into the curriculum;
- **The “Class Teacher” – Looping and Relationship to the Child:** Looping facilitates stronger relationships between teachers and students, less regression of skills, and more time for professional growth to meet a student’s needs; and
- **Head, Heart and Hands:** Different instructional modalities support theories of multiple intelligences. A rich sensory environment allows students to optimize their different learning preferences, utilizing auditory, kinesthetic, visual, and tactile systems.⁶⁶ The handwork in a Waldorf-inspired environment, for example, strengthens motor sequencing, sequential memory, attention, and executive functioning skills by creating concrete visual and sequential scaffolding that support children with language-based learning difficulties or ADHD. Students are fully engaged through handwork, music, drama, and storytelling in the arts-infused curriculum.

Gifted and Talented Students: City of Trees PCS will seek to develop the traditional defining traits of the gifted and talented—inborn talents, combined with the highest level of performance and accomplishment in comparison to peers—in each student. The Waldorf-inspired pedagogy, with its early age emphasis on visual and performing arts process, emotional expression and complex story narration, builds on each child’s diverse talents and provides the cognitive terrain for children to fully expand their individual creative process. Teachers will come to intimately know each child’s strengths, challenges, and interests and will be able to individualize instruction to encourage them to achieve their full potential.

Many of the methods of instruction listed above which benefit students with special needs also benefit our students who would benefit from accelerated work. Multi-year looping, individualized and differentiated instruction, main lesson books and writing portfolios, and student performances all provide opportunities for students to excel at their own pace.

⁶⁴ Horn, E. & Banerjee, R. (2009). Understanding Curriculum Modifications and Embedded Learning Opportunities in the Context of Supporting All Children’s Success. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools*, 40 (406-415).

⁶⁵ Bower, B., Lobbell, J., & Swenson, L. (1999) *History Alive! Engaging all Learners in a Diverse Classroom*. Second Edition. Teachers Curriculum Institute.

⁶⁶ Gardner, H. (1999). *Intelligence Reframed: Multiple intelligences for the 21st century*. New York: Basic Books.

We will explore using a variety of formal and informal measures to identify unique strengths in students, including using screenings, referrals from classroom teachers and parents, and the Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking, which will be administered to our students in grades K through 2, 3, 5, and 7.

English Language Learners: City of Trees PCS will implement the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) for our English Language Learners (ELL). The model is research-based and validated and will complement the contextual and multi-sensory emphasis of our curriculum. The language and content objectives for an ELL student are intertwined with the curriculum, and these students will benefit significantly from the head, heart and hands approach of “first the encounter, then the concept”. Using multiple modalities for learning, such as hands-on lessons, visuals, and movement has been shown to be a successful instructional method for ELL students.⁶⁷

d. Students with Exceptional Needs

The methods of instruction and curriculum that City of Trees PCS will use incorporate multiple best practices for teaching students with exceptional needs. Multiple learning modalities are integrated into daily lessons to create a learning atmosphere that is supportive, challenging, and meaningful to each student. Students with special needs will participate fully in all aspects of the City of Trees PCS curriculum and we will maintain high expectations for the academic success of every student.

Students who face academic or behavioral challenges will be further supported by the City of Trees PCS Educational Support Team. This team will facilitate collaboration and the design of specialized instruction and intervention in the classroom and provide the classroom teacher with any additional support s/he needs.⁶⁸ The team will also be responsible for expediting a referral to our special education team.

Educational Support Team: City of Trees PCS will establish a plan for early identification, intervention and prevention for students who struggle academically or behaviorally. Our Educational Support Team will include the student’s classroom teacher, parent, and specialists experienced in the student’s area of difficulty, such as a literacy or behavioral specialist or speech language therapist. We will develop a multi-tiered program along the lines of the Response to Intervention (RTI) model. RTI programs have been shown to be successful by placing the emphasis on early intervention and prevention, rather than waiting for children to fail before intervening. This approach is child-centered and provides intensive assistance to students who are struggling rather than immediately referring them for testing. This method has been shown to be effective for culturally and linguistically diverse populations and for students at high risk for literacy difficulties. We will utilize screenings and benchmarks built into our curriculum and monitoring of student progress to determine the need for focused assessments and intensive, research-based interventions to help our students achieve their full potential. When students are experiencing difficulty, our team will: **identify** goals and desired outcomes; **implement** intensive instructional and behavioral interventions in the classroom; **monitor** the results of intervention; **review** and **refine** the targeted intervention; and **refer** a student to our special education team as needed

⁶⁷ Echevarria, J., Vogt, M. E., and Short, D. (2004). *Making content comprehensible to English learners: The SIOP Model*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

⁶⁸ Harwell, J. (2001). “Interventions for Specific Problems” in *Complete Learning Disabilities Handbook: Ready-to-Use Strategies & Activities for Teaching Students with Learning Disabilities* (2nd ed.). Paramus, NJ: Prentice Hall Direct.

Professional Development: In keeping with our school commitment to a vibrant professional learning community, faculty and staff will have continuous opportunities to learn more about a variety of special needs and the best practices available to address them. We will partner with organizations that specialize in special education instruction. The Lab School of Washington, a nationally recognized leader in addressing learning disabilities within an arts-integrated curriculum, will work with us to develop workshops on topics of special education. We will become a member of the DC Special Education Co-operative and utilize their professional development and consultation services. Additionally, City of Trees PCS will incorporate training in Waldorf remedial methods to support students with special needs. We will seek staff committed to ongoing professional development and committed to educating all students.

Special Education Services and Compliance: With respect to identification, evaluation, and provision of services for students with special needs, City of Trees PCS will function in full compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Educational Improvement Act (IDEA) as well as all district and federal regulations. We will meet all timelines throughout the process. Our school has chosen to function as an Local Education Agency (LEA) and to fully provide our students with the range of needed services. We will accomplish this utilizing our own faculty and staff along with the use of contracted services as needed. In our first year we will have a full-time Special Education Coordinator who will oversee the administration and integration of special education services. The Coordinator will be supported by a full-time Special Education Teacher who will provide assessment and intervention services.

Identification: The special education process may be initiated by teachers or parents, and will begin with our Educational Support Team. The pre-referral information gathered from the Educational Support Team will be used throughout the special education decision-making process. Once a referral is made, the Special Education Coordinator will lead the eligibility team that will include the classroom teacher, parents, and other appropriate specialists to determine and implement an appropriate course of action. Students entering City of Trees PCS with an active special education eligibility and/or Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) will also be reviewed upon admission by this team.

Evaluation: The special education team will determine the appropriate course for special education evaluations, if needed. All IDEA timelines will be met throughout the special education evaluation, decision-making, and service delivery process. All services will be provided by educational staff and specialists who possess the appropriate certification, credentials, and background. When the evaluation process has been completed, our team will meet to review the results, determine eligibility, and if appropriate, develop an IEP.

Service Delivery Model: City of Trees PCS will follow an inclusion model for the provision of special education services when that is the appropriate Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) given a student's needs on an IEP. The student's classroom teacher will collaborate and consult with the Special Education Coordinator, Special Education Teacher and other specialists, and support the student using the best practices already incorporated into the curriculum. Research has shown that general educators can effectively implement differentiated instruction to students with learning disabilities.⁶⁹ Additionally, our special education staff will provide differentiated instruction directly through co-teaching and individual

⁶⁹ Morocco, C. C. (2001). Teaching for Understanding with Students with Disabilities: New Directions for Research on Access to the General Education Curriculum. *Learning Disability Quarterly*, 24 (5-13); Tomlinson, C. A., & McTighe, J. (2006). *Integrating Differentiated Instruction and Understanding by Design*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

and small group instruction during the main lesson and practice period. We will also implement flexible service delivery models, including co-teaching, consultation, and transdisciplinary team intervention, with our related services such as speech language, occupational, and physical therapy. Research has shown significant gains in the pre-literacy skills of at-risk urban students when implementing collaborative service delivery models.⁷⁰

The aptitude of students with special needs will be assessed and their progress measured in core content areas using the same school-wide assessments as every student at City of Trees PCS. However, students with IEPs will be granted necessary and appropriate accommodations and modifications. In addition, IEP goals will be aligned with curriculum content and will be measured using annual goals and short-term objectives. Individual and small group instruction within practice periods will allow students with special needs the additional time they need to focus on content areas such as English Language Arts and math.

e. English Language Learners

City of Trees PCS welcomes cultural and linguistic diversity as beneficial to the growth of everyone in our school. Our Waldorf-inspired curriculum includes many characteristics that benefit English Language Learners (ELL). Students have the opportunity to learn English in a rich sensory environment where they make use of many learning styles, including auditory, kinesthetic, visual, and tactile. The emphasis on oral language and storytelling in the early educational years is consistent with the way children naturally learn their first and subsequent languages. As with students with exceptional needs, City of Trees PCS' policy of looping with the same teacher will further strengthen the language learning of an ELL student. The calm and quiet nature of the classrooms will ameliorate the stress that accompanies the challenge of being in an environment where one does not understand the language.

Identification and Evaluation: City of Trees PCS' enrollment procedures will not discriminate on the basis of English language proficiency or immigration status. We will acquire the necessary background information from new students to plan for screening assessments. A home language survey will be administered to every student upon enrollment, enabling us to identify students who may be ELLs. For those students, we will use the appropriate *WIDA Access* Placement Test to assess the need for services, and develop an individualized plan of support for each student with the assistance of our multi-disciplinary team. *ACCESS for ELLs* will be used for ongoing monitoring of language proficiency and for determining the point at which a student no longer needs support.

City of Trees PCS' Educational Support Team (detailed in the previous section) will also benefit students learning English. ELLs can be at risk for literacy difficulties and the research supports that there are benefits of emphasizing early intervention with ELLs at risk for difficulty with reading.⁷¹ Team members will be familiar with the challenges ELLs face and will be trained to distinguish between ELL and special education needs. Any standard test administration will utilize appropriate accommodations and exceptions and care will be taken to make sure any administered assessments are culturally and

⁷⁰ Hadley, P. A., Simmerman, A., Long, M., & Luna, M. (2000). Facilitating Language Development for Inner-City Children: Experimental Evaluation of a Collaborative, Classroom-Based Intervention. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools*. 31 (280-295)

⁷¹ Healy, K., Vanderwood, M. L., & Edelston, D. (2005). Early Literacy Interventions for English Language Learners: Support for an RTI Model. *California School Psychologist*. 10, 55-63; Linan-Thompson, S., Vaughn, S., Prater, K. & Cirino, P. (2006). The Response to Intervention of English Language Learners at Risk for Reading Problems. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*. 39 (390-398).

linguistically appropriate.

Delivery Model: City of Trees PCS will use the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) to provide an instructional framework. SIOP is a research-based and validated model that has proven effective in addressing the academic needs of ELLs.⁷² It provides teachers with an observation instrument that also serves as a tool for planning, implementing, and reflecting on lesson delivery. As noted above under methods of instruction, the model is consistent with the contextual and multi-sensory emphasis of our curriculum. Professional development in SIOP is available through the Center for Applied Linguistics, which participated in its development. City of Trees PCS will utilize a variety of high quality and dynamic professional development opportunities in order to train our educational team and specialists in the implementation of SIOP.

ELLs will fully participate in the City of Trees PCS curriculum. Through the use of SIOP our students will be able to acquire academic knowledge while developing their English language proficiency. Differentiated, individualized instruction and accommodations will allow students to access all content areas within our curriculum. Faculty and staff will receive training in instructional strategies, cross-cultural issues, and bilingual language development. The Waldorf-inspired curriculum is infused with multiple strategies to accommodate various learning styles. Strategies such as use of visuals and contextual, experiential, hands-on learning ensure that all of our students meet their educational goals, and are especially beneficial to ELLs. Additionally, specialized language acquisition instruction will be provided as needed.

Family Support and Communication: City of Trees PCS will take special care to make sure that we extend support to our families with limited English proficiency. This may include offering family counseling, outreach programs, and designing workshops for parents. Interpreters will be provided for families with LEP to ensure they are receiving accurate information. Printed materials will be made available in additional languages as needed.

f. Strategies for Providing Intense Academic Support

We expect the majority of our students will arrive at school either at high risk of being assessed as behind grade level in the future or already performing below grade level. This is based on citywide DC-CAS test scores as well as our review of the eleven traditional public and public charter schools in the neighborhood which showed eight out of eleven schools had a majority of students scoring below basic on math and reading. We believe that all children can learn at a high level. Therefore, it is critical that our core academic program be designed to serve those students placed at high risk. City of Trees PCS' methods of instruction include many best practices for providing intense academic support. These methods of instruction and classroom structures include:

- **The “Class Teacher” – Looping and Relationship to the Child:** By staying with the same class of students for between two and five years, teachers will have the opportunity to fully know each student's strengths and weaknesses and to better tailor instruction to their specific academic needs. In addition, the consistent relationship between teachers and students will help to dispel the effects of

⁷² Echevarria, J., 2004.

students who may arrive at school identifying themselves as academic failures. The looping classroom can be particularly beneficial for students with academic or social challenges.⁷³

- **Mixed-Age Early Childhood Classrooms:** Research shows the effectiveness of mixed-age classrooms due to: instruction aimed at a wide range of abilities which allow students to learn at their own rate with the guidance of “experts”; and the remedial benefits for at-risk children both socially and academically when learning with a mixed-age group of peers.⁷⁴
- **Increased Instructional Time:** Teachers' knowledge of students' strengths and weaknesses enable them to begin instruction immediately in the second year of a looping cycle.⁷⁵ As a result, it is estimated that at least a month of instructional time is gained in the second year of looping.⁷⁶ Over the five-year loop in elementary school, this results in an additional four months of instruction.
- **Focus on Whole Child:** Immediately upon enrollment at City of Trees PCS, a student's well-being is examined as well as their condition regarding physical health, living situations, family structure, previous school experience, attitudes and feelings, developmental issues, sleep, nutrition, home routines, and exposure to media. Teachers will conduct home visits to help gather this information and to begin an on-going partnership with each child's family.
- **Partnership with Families:** The structures in place to build partnerships with families will enable intensive academic supports to be continued in the home. Family education workshops will guide families in supporting their children's literacy development outside of school hours.
- **Arts Infused Curriculum:** Rather than treating art as a separate discipline, art is infused across all disciplines. A 1999 study concluded that an arts rich curriculum is an effective strategy to use as a gateway to learning and success in other skill and content areas, particularly for students who were not previously successful in a traditional academic classroom.⁷⁷
- **Focus on Literacy:** Literacy instruction will occur across the disciplines in the main lesson each day, in addition to during the practice periods. Literacy, math, social studies and science are integrated into all aspects of the curriculum.
- **Practice Periods:** The practice periods will be opportunities for teachers to provide focused literacy and math skills practice in a highly individualized and differentiated environment.
- **Low Student to Teacher Ratio:** There will be two teachers in each classroom at City of Trees PCS in the early childhood and elementary grades, creating a student to teacher ratio of approximately 10:1 and 13:1 respectively. Small class size or a low student to teacher ratio improves both math and literacy for all students, especially students who perform below grade level. These improvements are particularly significant when students start with a low ratio in early childhood classes and the impact is greater for low-income students.⁷⁸

⁷³ Laboratory at Brown University, Looping: Supporting Student Learning Through Long-Term Relationships, 1997; Cistone and Shneyderman, 2004.

⁷⁴ Ludeke, RJ, and Hartup, WW. 1983. Teaching Behavior of 9- and 11-Year-Old Girls in Mixed-Age and Same-Age Dyads. *Journal of Educational Psychology* 75(6): 908-914.

⁷⁵ Cistone, P. J., & Shneyderman, A. (2004). Looping: An empirical evaluation. *International Journal of Educational Policy, Research and Practice*, 5(1), 47–61.

⁷⁶ Gaustad, J. (1998). Implementing looping. *Eric Digest*, Retrieved December 5, 2011 from www.eric.ed.gov.

⁷⁷ Fiske, 1999.

⁷⁸ American Educational Research Association. 2003. Class Size: Counting Students Can Count. *Research Points* 1 (2).

- **Professional Development:** Teachers will have both a Curriculum Director and Literacy Specialist to advise them on lesson development and delivery to meet the specific academic needs of their students. In addition, on-going professional development will train teachers in differentiating instruction and accelerating student learning, particularly for students in need of intense academic support.

Although the design of our core educational program will provide an effective learning environment for all students, these methods will be complemented by the careful identification and support of students who would benefit from additional academic interventions. Our focus will be on the early identification of students at risk for academic difficulties. Upon enrollment, we will work to identify students who potentially could need additional academic supports through the home language survey, a health form, a home visit, academic assessments, review of cumulative record files and standardized testing results, and conversations with previous teachers. For currently enrolled students, teachers will carefully monitor student progress through formal and informal assessments to identify students who need additional academic supports.

Teachers and student support staff will have time each week to work together to discuss students of concern. For students referred by their teachers as candidates for intervention, the City of Trees PCS Educational Support Team will have established plans for early identification, intervention and prevention, as described above in the section for students with special needs. This team will include general and special educators and specialists, and will follow a multi-tiered program designed to provide intensive intervention for at-risk students before they fall further behind.

City of Trees PCS believes this approach to be child-centered, and designed to assist students who are struggling, to succeed. Through this inclusive model, with an emphasis on prevention and intervention within the classroom while maintaining structures to provide intervention outside the classroom when necessary, City of Trees PCS will provide each child with the opportunity to achieve his or her potential.

3. Student Performance

a. Student Progress and Achievement

City of Trees PCS is committed to the success of every student. The Waldorf-inspired approach relies on the teacher's knowledge of the full learning profile of each and every student. Our approach to student assessment is comprehensive, ensuring that teachers have the information they need to support both group and individual learning needs.

City of Trees PCS will participate in all required district-wide assessments including the WIDA Access Placement Test and ACCESS for ELL students. The **DC Comprehensive Assessment System (DC CAS)** will be administered yearly in 3rd-8th grades. The DC CAS includes tests of reading and math each year in 3rd-8th grades, a test of writing in 4th and 7th grades and a test of science in 5th and 8th grades.

In addition to the state mandated tests, City of Trees PCS will use a wide range of measures and instruments to help teachers track student progress. These measures and instruments will also be a critical tool in helping to strengthen and revise curriculum and instruction but also in identifying and supporting students that are in need of intensive intervention. In assessing student progress and achievement, teachers will use both externally validated measures and instruments and internally developed assessments. These are described in the sections below.

Assessing and Supporting Student Progress in Early Childhood: To assess the progress and development of young learners, we will adopt Creative Curriculum's Teaching Strategies **GOLD™**. GOLD is based primarily in structured observations, in which teachers observe children engaged in ongoing classroom activities – an authentic approach to assessment that is aligned with the City of Trees PCS instructional approach. Likewise, the research-based, developmentally-staged approach to early childhood is an excellent fit with Waldorf philosophy, as a whole-child approach to assessment. GOLD allows teachers to monitor developmental progress across the multiple domains: (a) social-emotional; (b) physical; (c) language; (d) cognitive; (e) mathematics; (f) science and technology; (g) social studies; (h) the arts; and (i) literacy. In addition, for ELL students GOLD has objectives for English Language Acquisition. These domains are clearly articulated in 38 distinct, measurable, observable objectives. Each objective is unpacked with well-articulated descriptors that allow observers to gauge a child's progress along the developmental continuum. A scale of 1-9 is used to indicate a child's current performance.

GOLD provides an array of tools for teachers to capture observations during the course of everyday classroom instruction, an assessment approach that is well-suited for the interactive, hands-on curriculum envisioned for our school. At specific checkpoints during our school year, teachers synthesize their observations and rate each child's performance on each objective along the developmental continuum. Language development in particular will be carefully assessed because it is an important predictor of academic success. Dimensions of pre-literacy early language skills assessed through GOLD include: (a) listens to and understands increasingly complex language; (b) uses language to express thoughts and needs; (c) uses appropriate conversational and other communication skills; and (d) demonstrates phonological awareness.

Assessing and Supporting Student Progress in Elementary and Middle School Grades (1-8)

For older grades, assessments need to not only inform teachers and families, but they also need to provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate knowledge. The many elementary-level assessment tools used by City of Trees PCS will balance these two needs. The standardized tests, text based quizzes and tests, and reading evaluations will communicate necessary information to guide teaching. At the same time, authentic assessment measures such as the Main Lesson books, writing portfolios, recitations and performances, and public exhibitions of individual and group work allow students to communicate their learning in a more complex and personally meaningful way.

Externally Created Assessments: Literacy assessment is of primary importance because (a) literacy skills are essential to overall academic success and (b) we expect that many students at City of Trees PCS will arrive in need of literacy support. Use of an externally validated test will support teachers in identifying students who would benefit from literacy support beyond what is being taught to all students in the classroom. It also allows teachers to track progress of students over the course of each school year. We are currently considering the following two highly respected assessment instruments:

- **Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA2):** an individual reading assessment designed to assess students' reading and performance. The DRA2 will be given twice annually to all students in grades 2-4. In grades 5-8, the DRA2 will be reserved for new students and students who have been identified as needing intensive academic support. The fall test establishes a baseline measure and the spring test serves as a summative assessment of student learning.

- **San Diego Quick Assessment:** an assessment that allows teachers to immediately determine a student's baseline reading level. It would provide a strategy for teachers to continually check student progress, particularly when it appears that a student may be struggling in literacy development.

To assess students' writing and to create a cohesive writing program across the curriculum and through the grades, City of Trees PCS will use the writing rubrics established by **6+1 Writing Traits**. This method fits well within the Writer's Workshop curriculum and the interdisciplinary approach to writing at City of Trees PCS. The rubrics will be used across the grade, beginning in 3rd grade, to assess student's writing in Main Lesson Books and a writing portfolio. Portfolios will be assessed twice per year and Main Lesson Books will be assessed with the rubrics when the content of the lesson book makes it appropriate.

Numeracy is also a key academic goal of our school. For math assessments, City of Trees PCS will consider the US Math Recovery Council's **Add + Vantage MR** assessment (1st-5th grades) and **Counting On** (6th grade-8th grade) because these tools provide a unique approach to assessing student understanding. The one-on-one assessments lead teachers to pinpoint student understanding with the help of a dynamic assessment tool that adjusts to students' previous answers. This allows teachers to truly understand the specific areas in which a given student needs additional instruction. The detailed feedback in the Add+Vantage assessments allows teachers to design lessons that are within students' grasp. Assessments will be administered individually and to the whole class 3-5 times per year because, like the San Diego Quick Assessment, the Add+Vantage MR assessment tools allow teachers to get a quick view of students' comprehension.

Inherent in City of Trees PCS' curriculum is a focus on creative expression and creative thinking. In order to measure whether this aspect of the curriculum is effective, we will administer the **Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking** (Scholastic Testing Service). It is the most widely used and respected battery of norm-referenced creativity tests used for identifying students for creative giftedness. It is a part of gifted matrices in the U.S. and globally, especially in multicultural settings and for special populations. Its two equivalent forms, Forms A and B, the **Figural** and **Verbal TTCT**, can be used for pre- and post-testing. TTCT consists of nonverbal and verbal sections; Thinking Creatively with Pictures and Thinking Creatively with Words are deemed suitable for levels kindergarten through graduate school. The two sections include: (a) nonverbal forms with three sets of activities which require subjects to draw lines to elaborate on a single shape, to draw lines to complete a picture, and to draw as many different pictures as possible using the same shape and (b) verbal forms with six activities that require subjects to generate questions, alternative uses, and guesses. Each of the activities in each of the nonverbal and verbal forms is timed and scored for: (a) Fluency: number of interpretable, meaningful, and relevant ideas generated in response to the stimulus; (b) Flexibility: number of different categories of relevant responses; (c) Originality: statistical rarity of the responses among the test subjects; and (d) Elaboration: amount of detail in the responses. To assess our school's progress toward its mission of developing students' imagination, the TTCT (nonverbal form) will be administered annually to all students in grades 1-2 and the verbal form will be administered to students in grades 3-8.

City of Trees PCS is committed to a holistic approach to education that supports children in developing strong habits of mind and heart. To assess these skills and dispositions, we will adopt the **Dimensions of Learning Checklist** instrument (Mid-Continent Resources for Education and Learning) and distributed

through the Association for Curriculum, Supervision, and Development (ASCD)⁷⁹. This tool, developed in response to the need for a measurable approach to the widely-used habits of mind approach, consists of 15 clear, observable categories of student behavior and interaction, with descriptors for four levels of student performance. This tool will greatly enhance teachers' and students' abilities to understand, recognize, and build the interpersonal and intrapersonal skills that are critical to success in both school and out-of-school settings by providing concrete, common definitions of abstract concepts such as ability to incorporate feedback or task perseverance.

In addition to these measures, as described above teachers will rely on grade level summative and formative assessments in many of the teaching resources used to support the curriculum. Our selected texts for English Language Arts, mathematics, science, and social studies all include formal and informal assessment strategies to measure student progress.

Internally Created Assessments: In addition to externally-validated, standardized assessments, classroom-based assessments can and should inform instructional decisions. The majority of the day-to-day assessment at City of Trees PCS is created by and monitored by our teachers. On-going student assessment is critical to student learning. It allows teachers to guide their lessons to be responsive to class needs, to quickly identify students who need extra academic support, and to better personalize students' educations.

While teachers will make judicious use of common assessment techniques such as independent exercises, quizzes, and tests, authentic assessments will serve as the primary assessment method in the elementary grades. Authentic assessment, application of knowledge, often to new situations, combined with the ability to explain or demonstrate mastery of subject matter, usually includes a task for students to perform and a rubric by which their performance is evaluated.

The "**Main Lesson Book**" serves both as text *and* test in the City of Trees PCS classroom and it serves a central role in student assessment. It is used both as a method to impart knowledge and skills and as a means for evaluating the depth of a student's mastery of the unit. Much in the same way as a portfolio, the Main Lesson Book brings together all aspects of a student's work in a given unit from descriptive writing to drawing to individual analysis. Each Main Lesson Book will be accompanied by a clear rubric by which students and teachers can assess mastery and, when appropriate, students will assist in the creation of the rubrics.

Overview of Assessments, Aligned with Student Goals: Below is a summary of the various assessments City of Trees PCS has adopted or is considering for adoption. The assessments are aligned to the major student goals (see section A1d), and to the Mission-Specific Goals outlined in the Mission Accomplishment Plan (see Section D).

Student Goal: Communication and Literacy			
Assessment Tool(s)	Focus of Assessment	Student Group	Frequency of Administration

⁷⁹ Robert J. Marzano, Debra Pickering, and Jay McTighe. 1993. *Assessing Student Outcomes: Performance Assessment Using the Dimensions of Learning Model*. Arlington, VA: ASCD.

GOLD™	Language development	PK-K	Ongoing; fall, winter, spring checkpoints
DRA2	Literacy development	Grades 1-5	Twice annually; fall and spring
San Diego Quick Assessment	Reading comprehension	Grades 1-8	Multiple times per year, as needed
Exhibition in Recitation	Literary knowledge and oral expression	Grades 1-8	Twice annually; schedule TBD
Main Lesson Books	Informational text composition; 6 Traits of Effective Writing	Grades 1-8	Multiple times per year, upon completion of units of study
Writing Portfolio	Composition; 6 Traits of Effective Writing	Grades 3-8	Annually; spring
DC-CAS Reading	Reading Comprehension	Grades 3-8	Annually; spring
DC-CAS Writing	Writing achievement	Grades 4 and 7	Annually; spring

Student Goal: Mathematical Competency			
Assessment Tool(s)	Focus of Assessment	Student Group	Frequency of Administration
GOLD™	Mathematic concept development	PK-K	Ongoing; fall, winter, spring checkpoints
Add+Vantage MR	Procedural knowledge and problem solving	Grades K-5	Ongoing/as needed
Curriculum-Based	Procedural knowledge and problem solving on chapter or unit tests	Grades 1-8	Ongoing/as needed
Counting On	Procedural knowledge and problem solving	Grades 6-8	Ongoing/as needed
DC-CAS, Math	Procedural knowledge and problem solving	Grades 3-8	Annually

Student Goal: Creativity and Artistic Expression			
Assessment Tool(s)	Focus of Assessment	Student Group	Frequency of Administration
GOLD™	Artistic Development Physical Development	PK-K	Ongoing; fall, winter, spring checkpoints
Torrance Tests of Creativity	Divergent Thinking	Grades 1-8	Annually; spring
Dimensions of Learning Checklist	Task perseverance; self-evaluation; divergent thinking	Grades 1-8	Ongoing; fall, winter, spring checkpoints
Main Lesson Books	Drawing/illustration	Grades 1-8	Multiple times per year, upon completion of units of study

Student Goal: Strong Habits of Mind and Heart			
Assessment Tool(s)	Focus of assessment	Student Group	Frequency of Administration
GOLD™	Social-emotional development; Cognitive development	PK-K	Ongoing; fall, winter, spring checkpoints
Dimensions of Learning Checklist	15 Habits of Mind	Grades 1-8	Ongoing; fall, winter, spring checkpoints

Use of Assessment to Guide Instruction: Drawing on a rich Waldorf-inspired curriculum, teachers will plan their academic programs with the support of rigorous curricula tools and resources, will implement their plans, and study the outcomes of assessments to determine next steps for instruction. We believe that effective teaching is driven by an intimate knowledge of students' knowledge and skills. Our instructional approach and staffing model are designed to allow for a rich, rigorous approach to evidence-based decision making.

The multi-year looping model is one structure at City of Trees PCS that will position our teachers to tailor their instruction to the needs of the students. Teachers at City of Trees PCS teach the same class of students for multiple years. Since teachers at City of Trees PCS teach the same class of students for multiple years, they are in a unique position to meaningfully assess student knowledge and growth.

A typical student at City of Trees PCS will have one teacher for pre-K and Kindergarten, a second teacher for 1st-5th grades, and a third teacher for 6th-8th grades. In addition to the social, community, and academic benefits of teachers looping, teachers who loop are able to more effectively assess student learning. The benefits of looping are that teachers: (a) can maximize their understanding of students' knowledge by staying with the same class for multiple years; (b) know what students were taught in the previous year; and (c) have established relationships with students so that time is not wasted in the first month of school to assess the previous years' learning.

A second structure is a school-wide focus on the development and use of effective assessment tools to truly understand students' learning and to drive instruction. The methods and tools of assessment in one of our typical classrooms will be multiple and varied, but certain qualities will be shared. Assessments will focus on identifying both academic and non-academic areas of students' strengths and weaknesses, with an emphasis placed on ensuring that students are not labeled by assessments. The Curriculum Director will support teachers in developing rubrics and assessment tools in their classrooms.

Classroom teachers will not be isolated in their efforts to evaluate student knowledge and growth. They will be supported by teachers of the specialized subjects who may come to know students in a very different way than classroom teachers. Teachers have a common meeting time each week to discuss students in each class as they carefully consider together how the teaching staff can support each student. It is through this collaboration amongst teachers that fosters a more complete understanding of each student. Since teachers will have the primary responsibility of assessing students, it is necessary for teachers to be able to effectively analyze assessments. This area will be a focus of on-going professional

development.

In addition, teachers will have access to support staff in order to conduct careful and useful data analysis of student performance on assessments. Beginning in our first year, we will hire a part time data analyst to help with the careful analysis of student progress. Teachers will also receive support from the Curriculum Director in design, implementation and analysis of their assessments. By providing adequate time, professional development, and targeted support, our school will thoroughly analyze student data to maximize its usefulness as a tool to drive continuous improvement.

b. Gateway Measures

Students at City of Trees PCS will be promoted to the next grade level based on the recommendation of the student's teacher and approval by the principal. Teachers will determine whether students have demonstrated grade-level knowledge and skills based on a broad array of external and internal quantitative and qualitative assessments over the course of the year. In addition, teachers will carefully consider whether a student who started the year below grade level have progressed sufficiently and whether the student will be best served by repeating the grade level or being promoted.

The multi-year loops at City of Trees PCS create clear "gateways" when teachers must assess whether a student is ready to make the transition to the next level of our school. These gateways will occur after Kindergarten, fifth grade, and eighth grade, the latter when considering a student for graduation. Given the benefits of the multi-year loop, in which students form a deep, supportive learning relationship with the class teacher, it is only in the most extreme cases that a student would be retained. A decision to retain a student would more likely be made when a student would be transitioning to the next level of our school and transitioning to a new teacher.

First Grade Readiness Assessment: The transition between the early childhood classes (pre-K and Kindergarten) at City of Trees PCS and the first grade is an important step for our students. The early childhood teachers and first grade teacher will carefully assess student readiness because the first grade experience is a significant change from the early childhood classes and requires a different level of developmental readiness. Students in the first grade must be ready to listen carefully to the storytelling and oral presentations of the teacher and focus during independent seat-work. Teaching methods at City of Trees PCS are based on a philosophy of child development so it is critical that students do not enter first grade if they are not ready.

Teachers will consider eight of the nine domains of child development outlined in the Creative Curriculum GOLD assessment. Language development will be weighted more heavily than traditional early literacy indicators of emergent reading or writing because formal literacy is not a hallmark of early childhood instruction in the Waldorf approach. Children who, on the 9-point rubric, are scoring below the class mean will be strongly considered for another year in the early childhood setting. In addition, City of Trees PCS faculty will develop internal assessments to determine first grade readiness. First grade readiness rubrics are used in Waldorf charter schools across the country and our rubrics will be developed in consultation with schools that have already developed their own assessments. City of Trees PCS is also considering the use of the Parent/Guardian Questionnaire available through the Gesell Institute in order to more deeply involve families in the assessment of first-grade readiness.⁸⁰

⁸⁰ www.gesellinstitute.org

Elementary Grades to Middle School Gateway: The transition between elementary and middle school is another important gateway for students. To be successful in middle school, students must be proficient readers, able to read and comprehend grade-level informational and narrative text fluently and independently. They must have mastered the foundational skills in each of the strands of mathematical understanding so that gaps in number sense, computation, or problem-solving strategies do not challenge and deter them from engaging in algebra and higher-order math. They must demonstrate the academic habits and study skills that are essential in navigating the increased and more complex demands of the middle school curriculum.

Elementary students will be promoted to the next grade on the recommendation of the students' teacher and approval by the principal—based on a comprehensive review of the students' portfolio of work and multiple assessments. As described above, over the course of a year every student will have multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery of grade level standards through various forms of assessment. The benefits of this comprehensive approach to assessment are magnified by the multi-year relationship teachers build with students through the grades 1-5 loop. Since teachers will know most of their students' academic backgrounds, they will be able to effectively assess students' grade-level proficiency. An additional benefit of the multi-year loop is that teachers can confidently assess whether they will be able to support students in subsequent years in deepening their understanding of a particular skill or knowledge where they may not yet have demonstrated proficiency.

We recognize that a large number of our students may arrive at our school significantly below grade level. For these students, promotion to the next grade will be determined by a combination of demonstrating progress and grade-level proficiency. Students who demonstrate significant growth but still do not meet grade level standards may be eligible for promotion to the next grade. Teachers, administrators, and families will consider the child's individual social and academic needs to determine whether promotion or retention is most appropriate. In such cases, a written action plan for intensive support and academic acceleration will be developed to support the student in the coming school year.

Teachers will assess student progress throughout the year and will report to families both in written form (two times per year) and in more informal conversations about student performance. Part of each weekly faculty meeting includes student studies when teachers can discuss concerns about students with the full faculty. This meeting is in addition to a weekly grade level meeting when the classroom teacher and specialty teachers meet together to discuss any concerns or issues with students in their grade level. As soon as a concern arises, teachers will communicate with families and include them in the discussion of how to best support children. This communication is critical in both supporting students at school and home and ensuring that parents are fully informed about student progress and struggles.

City of Trees PCS is confident that the Waldorf-inspired approach will ensure student success. Research has shown that the time savings afforded by an estimated extra month of instructional time each year due to the existing teacher-student relationship beginning in Year Two of a loop leads to increased mastery of basic skills and a decrease in student retention.⁸¹ Yet, there may be instances, when in the best interests of

⁸¹ Cistone, P. J., & Shneyderman, A. 2004. Looping: An empirical evaluation. *International Journal of Educational Policy, Research and Practice*, 5(1), 47-61.

a child, a student is retained in the current grade. The decision to retain a student will be carefully considered based on student demonstration of grade level skills and knowledge, progress achieved over the course of the year, and the likelihood of best meeting a student's needs by promotion or retention. This careful balance, particularly important at City of Trees PCS, is needed because we expect many students, based on district-wide data, will come to our school performing below grade level. There is a significant benefit for students to be promoted to the next grade level with a teacher who deeply knows their abilities and a classroom of peers within a positive classroom community through its years together. For this reason, only in situations where it is clear that a teacher cannot adequately meet the needs of a student who is performing below grade level, will a retention decision be rendered.

c. Leading Indicators

Promoting high levels of attendance is important at City of Trees PCS because we believe the amount of classroom time that our target population will have will positively impact them with access to learning, healthy food, exercise, and supportive teachers and staff. In addition to the positive effects that school has, the negative consequences of not attending can be severe. Poor attendance is an indicator that either children or the parents are giving up on schools, which is a risk factor for children's achievement in school, and if it continues, can be indicators of disengagement, poor behavior, and other risks (e.g., dropping out, juvenile delinquency).

City of Trees PCS will comply with compulsory attendance laws by maintaining attendance records to address chronic absence or tardiness. All attendance data shall be collected, recorded and reported using a Student Information System (SIS). City of Trees PCS will encourage high rates of attendance with two research-based strategies customized with approaches particular to our school. They are family engagement and a supportive context.

Family Engagement: Students with involved parents and families attend school more frequently and perform better in school. We will encourage family involvement by:

- Seeking advice, experience, and expertise of parents/guardians as experts in the lives of our students and interacting with them throughout our school year, not just when there are issues to address;
- Encouraging family attendance at school social events, seasonal festivals, and study groups complete with healthy meals and childcare;
- Providing a school-based parent resource center;
- Facilitating parent representation and involvement by using the extensive tool set made available by members in the National Network of Partnership Schools at Johns Hopkins University;
- Using parent/family technology-based networking with online social networking and website or blog as a forum for parents to discuss school matters and share information. We will look for an SIS system that includes this feature. This could include networking opportunities with parents and families in other Waldorf and Waldorf-inspired schools; and
- Offering Early Parent Child Education Workshops: Possible topics include: (a) strategies that parents/families can use to support children's attendance and academic achievement at home; (b) effective behavioral management strategies with children; (c) healthy eating and physical activities to support children's development; and (d) protecting children from unhealthy commercial messages on the screen (TV, Internet, cell phones).

Supportive Context: A supportive network is crucial to developing a good attendance record. The multi-

year loop and single class model at City of Trees PCS will create a strong supportive network for parents. Families will come to know their child's teacher well, and of equal importance to a strong network, they will come to know each other well. Students will build strong connections with their classmates as they progress together through the grades. School festivals, parent information nights and student exhibitions will all provide an opportunity for families to get to know one another.

Re-Enrollment of Students: A consistent student population allows for a strong, identifiable school culture to emerge and evolve; conversely, high rates of student transience can create challenges to maintaining a positive school climate. Therefore, we will make every effort to retain students from one year to the next. Like attendance, re-enrollment and retention of students will reflect on the success of our efforts to build a strong learning community that meets the needs of our students and families. In addition to ongoing efforts to create a supportive, nurturing school environment, we will take the following steps to pro-actively encourage student re-enrollment and retention.

Personal Relationships: The multi-year loop fosters meaningful, authentic relationships between families and teachers. In addition, City of Trees PCS will be a relatively small school, which means the teachers are able to watch for signs of family disengagement. They will notice more quickly with small classes and will be able to act faster. Our mission to individually know each child and their families also positions us well to have high rates of student and parent/family satisfaction. There is increased individualized attention, made possible by small class sizes, school schedule, teacher development, and looping.

Family-Friendly Enrollment Policies: In order to make our school an attractive option for families with more than one school-age child, the enrollment process will include a preference for siblings of currently enrolled students or siblings of applicants selected during the lottery process. Also, currently enrolled families will be offered an Early Registration deadline - prior to the Application Deadline for new students. Current families will be asked to complete a Notification of Intent to let us know their plans for the next school year.

Exit Interviews: Any family that indicates they will not be returning will have a conference with the principal to discuss their planned withdrawal. If possible, the principal will work to determine if modifications are possible to keep the student at our school. If the family decides to change schools, City of Trees PCS will conduct exit interviews with parents/guardians of withdrawing students. Information gathered will serve as a learning tool for faculty and staff, and inform future improvements to our school.

4. Support for Learning

a. Parent Involvement

Parental involvement is critical to the success of students at City of Trees PCS. The value we place in truly knowing our students extends to students' families. We believe that an effective community is based on relationships; so in order to engage families, we must make them feel welcomed and important in our school. Teacher looping facilitates this relationship and increases the ability of parents and teachers to develop a meaningful working relationship. The mission specific goal below (also outlined in section A.I.d.) highlights the quality of engagement our school will strive to achieve:

- **Meaningful and Effective Family Engagement:** Our school will structure parent education, outreach and communication in such a way that fosters and encourages meaningful family involvement.

Building Family-School Partnerships: The beginning of the family-school partnership will begin even before the first day that a student attends City of Trees PCS. Teachers will conduct home visits with all incoming students to deepen the relationship and strengthen the communication between the teacher and parents. The majority of home visits will occur before pre-Kindergarten (with the early childhood teacher), before first grade (with the early elementary school teacher), and before sixth grade (with the middle school teacher). Home visits will provide teachers with a fuller picture of each student and will also facilitate communication in the home environment where some families may feel more comfortable than in our school building. Families will be encouraged to take part in the seasonal celebrations, festivals and student performances that will be so important to our school culture.

Parent Training: City of Trees PCS strives to build a community of learners at the student level, faculty/staff level and parent level of our school. In the same way that we will depend on a strong partnership with the Nova Institute for teacher education in our school, in some cases we will turn to outside organizations to support our parent education as well. Parent education that deepens parent understanding about our academic program will allow the methods practiced in our school to extend into the home when appropriate and will equip parents to better support their child’s learning. To this end, our school will offer parent education workshops and opportunities throughout the year, both for individual classes and for the entire school. Teachers will offer a classroom parent education night twice per year to share grade-level goals and class plans with parents. Speakers will be invited to our school to discuss such topics as Waldorf teaching methods, arts integration, play-based learning, and other topics that are identified by both parents and faculty/administration as being of interest to the parent-body. Research indicates that when schools guide their families on how to understand and get the most from the educational system, students are more successful.⁸² When appropriate, these school-wide education events will be advertised in the surrounding community and citywide to provide parent education to interested parents outside of City of Trees PCS.

Families and community members will be invited to engage in informal arts-based gatherings where participants will be guided through craft activities. We believe that in informal gatherings when parents are themselves engaged in an artistic endeavor, they will come to greater understanding about the City of Trees PCS program and engage in conversations and create meaningful relationships that further strengthens our school community.

A Family Resource Center will provide families with a physical space in the building where they can access parenting and educational resources to further their understanding of the educational program at our school. Computers will be available for family use, both to give personal access for families that may not have computer access at home and to provide a workspace for volunteers who are working in our school.

City of Trees PCS plans to offer parent-toddler and parent-child classes to families who do not yet attend our school to give families first-hand experience with our educational philosophy and curriculum—allowing the classroom to extend into the home. These classes have already started and it is our goal to offer them on a sliding-fee scale when our school opens. While families who attend the parent-toddler and

⁸² Sanders, Mavis, *Collaborating for Change: How an Urban School District and a Community-Based Organization Support and Sustain School, Family and Community Partnerships*, 2009.

parent-child classes do not receive any admissions preference, we believe that it is a valuable educational opportunity we can provide to families in the city in addition to increasing understanding of the City of Trees PCS program.

Family Involvement: City of Trees PCS will encourage and invite parents to take part in substantive discussions and decisions at our school. It is not enough for parents to be invited into their children’s classrooms, they must also be invited to participate in the growing and learning that our school as an organization experiences each year. In addition to a number of specific roles that parent representatives will have at our school such as membership on the Board of Trustees and faculty hiring committees, all parents will be encouraged to participate in the Parents’ Guild. Similar to a PTA, the Parents’ Guild is a structured meeting to facilitate discussion about important issues at our school amongst parents and between parents and faculty/administrators.

Families will always be welcomed to volunteer in our school and in their child’s classroom. Teachers will work with families to create opportunities for meaningful participation in the classroom community. There will also be evening and weekend volunteer opportunities for families who would like to be involved but whose schedules make classroom visits a challenge.

Family Communication: Our teachers will come to know their students’ parents, much as they are able to come to know their students from year to year. Families in looping classes are more willing to communicate with their child’s teacher and that parent involvement increases. In addition to the informal communication that is highly valued at our school, several structures are in place for more formal communication with families. Twice per year, teachers will hold parent education evenings in their classrooms to communicate the curriculum and plans for our school year. This will be a time for teachers to discuss the qualities of the class and for families to ask questions about our school program.

Families will be made aware of all aspects of our school’s adequate yearly progress and teacher qualifications as required by No Child Left Behind.

b. Community Participation

Community Relationships: City of Trees PCS is committed to becoming a vital and active member of the community where we will be located. We have begun to develop partnerships with a number of organizations, as well as started conversations with those organizations that will provide important services to the families and students in our school community. To date, we have focused on developing those partnerships that will most directly strengthen the teaching and learning in our school. The organizations listed in the chart below are those that will offer significant support beginning in the planning year in the areas of teacher training (Nova Institute), special education (The Lab School of Washington and The DC Special Education Cooperative), the development of school wide indicators to measure programmatic effectiveness in ways that standardized testing cannot (Center for Urban Progress, Howard University), and systems for parent/community involvement (National Network of Partnership Schools, Johns Hopkins University). Each of these organizations has each submitted a letter of support that acknowledges these budding partnerships (see Section K).

Community Partner	Activity	How It Builds Capacity
Nova Institute Jack Petrash, Director	Professional development for faculty and staff in	Nova Institute will provide the summer and on-going professional development for City of Trees

3106 Edgewood Road Kensington, MD 20895 (301) 946 2099 novainstitute@verizon.net	developing a public Waldorf educational program	PCS' teachers and staff in Waldorf education best practices in areas of philosophy, curriculum, and instruction.
The Lab School of Washington Noel Bicknell 4759 Reservoir Road NW Washington, DC 20007 (202) 965-6600 noel.bicknell@labschool.org	Professional development for faculty and staff in working with children in need of special education	The Lab School will provide technical support to staff in working with students in need of special education. It has a worldwide reputation for transforming lives and guiding students on the path toward success.
Center for Urban Progress Howard University Dr. Rodney Green HU Research Building 1 1840 Seventh Street, NW 3rd Floor Washington, DC 20001 (202) 865-8572 hucup@howard.edu	Evaluations of student academic achievement and programmatic success at our school level	The Center for Urban Progress provides evaluation services in education using standardized and authentic assessments of student academic achievement and competence. It also provides training and service programs for parents and family members via various grant programs.
National Network of Partnership Schools Dr. Joyce Epstein, Director Johns Hopkins University 2701 N. Charles Street, #300 Baltimore, MD 21218 (410) 516-8800 nnps@csos.jhu.edu	Training parents, families, and community members	The NNPS will provide technical assistance for training parents, family members, and community members in effective strategies to support children's education.
Center for Inspired Teaching Aleta Margolis, Executive Director 1436 U St NW, Suite 400 Washington, DC 20009 (2020) 462-1956 www.inspiredteaching.org	Teacher quality supports	Center for Inspired Teaching will support the development of a pipeline of highly-qualified teachers with strong philosophical alignment – by referring Inspired Teaching Fellows directly, and by supporting City of Trees PCS in teacher quality initiatives such as teacher recruitment and selection.

As a small and new school with the need to fully focus on our central academic mission, we recognize the critical importance of partnerships in broadening our students' access to resources and experiences. We believe that working with those organizations that are already successfully operating within our community will strengthen our school. There are numerous organizations in the surrounding neighborhood that are aligned with City of Trees PCS' educational philosophy and focus on the arts, storytelling and educating children to be physically, socially and emotionally healthy. Programs such as City Blossoms, Meridian Hill Pictures, the US Botanic Gardens education department, Young

Playwrights' Theater, Dance Place, Healthy Living, Washington Parks and People, and the numerous programs in our local museums and theaters will enrich our students' lives. We have contacted these organizations and discussed future partnerships. During the planning year, we will continue to develop these and other partnerships to identify ways in which we can bring programs to our school community.

c. School Organization and Culture

Collaborative Leadership: City of Trees PCS will be a model of collaborative leadership. The Executive Director and the Principal will work as a team to protect and promote the educational and financial/legal health of our school. The Executive Director will turn her attention to the business side of our school, assuring that our school complies with all regulations and legal responsibilities. The Executive Director will work closely with the Board of Trustees, the staff, the parents, and the faculty.

The Principal's responsibility will be to organize the pedagogical work of our school and support that work through the shaping of our school schedule, course offerings, teacher assignments, teacher evaluation, mentoring, teacher development, and the chairing of the weekly faculty meetings.

The Principal will set the agenda for the weekly faculty meeting and work closely with the mentors, visiting teacher training instructors, and with the teachers themselves to develop the pedagogical study that the teachers will do on a weekly basis, as well as the teacher development and teacher training work that will occur during the summer.

Involving the Teachers: In addition, teachers will have input in the running of the school. Full faculty discussions and committee meetings will help to determine what modifications are made to school programs, both curricular and extracurricular. In addition, there will be times for breakout meetings with just the early childhood teachers, or the grade school teachers, and administrators and staff to discuss matters that pertain primarily to their specific group.

Each class teacher will use her professional expertise, her creative ability, and her knowledge of child development to design artistic, stimulating, and comprehensive lessons that will deliver our school's curriculum. Each teacher will have autonomy in shaping those lessons and yet will do so in a manner that is consistent with our school's overall philosophy of education, its theory of child development, and its understanding of how children learn.

The class teacher will be supported in these educational efforts by the Assistant Teacher and by the specialty teachers. Those teachers will have important perspectives about students, students' needs, and the progress that they are making.

Supporting Families: Family participation will also be a key piece of the City of Trees PCS community. Our school recognizes that effective work with the students happens more effectively when families and teachers work together for the good of the children. This sense of community will be cultivated by regular whole school gatherings where the children perform plays and present musical offerings, where their work is displayed, and where all members of our school community can meet together over a meal. These festivals will occur regularly in our school year to deepen this sense of family/teacher collaboration.

This culture of family participation will be cultivated early on through the parent education work that City of Trees PCS will offer to its parents through programs like *Parent/Infant*, *Parent/Toddler*, and

Parent/Child which help support parents in the important work of raising their children. These very early childhood programs will help to create a culture of trust, where parents feel supported and cared for, and that trust will be nurtured and maintained through the child’s time at our school.

Supporting Students: In order to create a culture of engagement and enjoyment, children must experience success at City of Trees PCS. This success will be dependent on the teachers understanding strengths and weaknesses of each individual student and helping them overcome challenges and lead with their strengths. To do this, many students will need individual tutoring and mentoring. With this in mind our school will seek to train and engage a team of volunteer adult/parent tutors who will work with the students to help them overcome their challenges. We are exploring partnerships and not relying exclusively on volunteer tutors. Creating a stable, dependable team of tutors is essential to the success of our school. Teachers must also find the time to speak with students after school and to support and encourage the students to make the effort to do their best.

But above all, children at City of Trees PCS must come to feel that their school is a place where learning and respect are valued, a place where students arrive at school each morning and are met with warmth and respect. And each day will begin with active movement, singing, and recitation as the class comes together to create a cohesive and socially sensitive, learning community.

Our school day will have a routine and predictability that will enable students to know what is expected of them. The City of Trees PCS will be a school where children will be encouraged and expected to participate whole-heartedly in activities like singing, recorder playing, movement, poetry recitation, and above all with their class work. In class the students will sit up tall, speak clearly, and listen earnestly to their teachers and classmates, establishing early on the habits and behaviors that successful students exhibit.

Along with establishing a culture of excellence there will be an awareness among the teachers that children also need a wide variety of experiences in their school day to meet their diverse needs. Times of quiet listening and concentration should be followed by movement, singing, and games. Times of concentrated skills practice in math or English Language Arts, should be balanced with hands-on activities like handwork, woodwork, painting, or drawing.

d. Extracurricular Activities

Our goal of supporting students intellectually, emotionally, and physically will extend beyond school hours. There will be a Before Care and After Care program that supports our school’s vision of providing a stable, relationship rich and healthy environment for all children. At its most basic level, students’ health starts with nutritious and appetizing meals in a setting conducive to eating. Breakfast will be available to all students in their classrooms during Before Care (provided at cost or reimbursed through the School Breakfast Program) and teachers’ relationships with their students will allow them to be aware of particular nutritional needs of the children in the room.

A part-time After Care Director will run the program and will base its on standards from the National After School Association/Council on After School. Developed from extensive research on after school programs, the guidelines emphasize that the single most important factor in successful programs is the quality of the relationships between the staff and children. This belief is inherent in our school program and will continue to be of importance in the wrap around services offered in our school building.

A consistent team of adults who will strive to know and support each child will staff the After Care program. For the most part, and particularly for the beginning years at City of Trees PCS, the After Care program will be a time for free, imaginative play. Cognizant of our school day that students have just finished, the After Care program will create a restful environment that is developmentally appropriate for the age of the children. As our school grows to include upper elementary grades, the After Care program will provide an environment where students can continue school work or get extra help where needed.

It will be of particular importance when we grow to include a middle school to provide additional extracurricular opportunities. For example, based on the interest of students in the middle school, our school will form sports teams to compete in local athletic leagues. We are currently developing relationships with partners (see section b. above) to provide extracurricular programs at our school.

e. Safety, Order, and Student Discipline

Although City of Trees PCS’ approach to education seeks to educate creative and imaginative students, it will also provides a structured, well-ordered environment. A great deal of attention is placed on the development of sound routines and cooperative behavior through the continuous repetition of school experiences that students need and on which they depend. This repetition provides a comforting framework and expectation of what is done at school, and it reduces disruptive behaviors that result from uncertainty and unpredictability in one’s environment. The routine will begin with a morning hand-shake and will continue with activities like the whole class playing recorder and reciting poetry. The repetition is supported by an approach to teaching that recognizes that students need frequent movement and creative expression each day in school. By actively engaging students in styles that most appeal to their head, hearts, and hands in the Waldorf tradition, our teachers will be working to prevent classroom disruptions before they start.

City of Trees PCS will offer a program based on this understanding that takes place in a quiet homelike environment. The children will eat lunch in small groups in their classrooms, not in a large cafeteria. Poor behavior can be influenced by poor diet. City of Trees PCS will attempt to remedy this by contracting with a company that provides healthy school breakfasts and lunches as part of the National School Lunch Program, and will fully comply with the DC Healthy Schools Act of 2010, which aims to bring more healthy foods into DC schools. Teachers will be conscious of the small details of how students form lines for movement in our school, how they sit in class, how the children listen and speak to each other and to their teachers. All of this will be established in the early grades when children are most easily influenced and then reinforced and furthered in the older grades. By setting a norm of positive engagement at an early age, the students will come to feel with pride, “This is how we work at our school.”

When discipline matters arise, which they invariably will, students will be treated with firmness, but also with warmth. Our model is to meet our students out of the ongoing, positive relationship that we have established with them. We want to give them clear guidelines, expectations, and consequences, but without distancing them or diminishing them through these interactions. It is also important to note that for all teachers at City of Trees PCS discipline begins with our own self-discipline. We cannot ask students to do what we, as adults, are not willing to do ourselves. The root of the word discipline in Latin is to teach, and City of Trees PCS will treat all disciplinary actions as teaching opportunities for the students, and for the support system of parents and teachers and staff around them.

Safety Procedures: Students learn best in an environment they feel safe in, surrounded by those they trust. We will take steps to provide a secure place for all of our school community. City of Trees PCS will contact the Inspector of the School Safety Division from Metropolitan Police Department to obtain School Resource Officer coverage for our school. If coverage is not possible, we will request visits from patrol officers and security assessments of the environmental design of the perimeter and exterior of our facility to ensure that it is not vulnerable to vandalism or theft.

Because public safety and mental health are so closely linked, City of Trees PCS will also investigate obtaining clinician services from the DC Department of Mental Health for prevention, early intervention, and clinical services to youth and their families.

Our school will follow a comprehensive safety plan that outlines procedures for emergencies, including complying with all health and safety codes and regulations, such as fire safety, to keep students safe and able to fully focus on learning. In Sections 3a and 3b in the Plan of Operation we discuss our compliance with the applicable regulations.

Behavior and Discipline Philosophy: City of Trees PCS will have clear policies and guidelines regarding student behavior so that families will know ahead of time what is expected of their children. There will be zero tolerance for violence, bullying, or drugs. In addition, our school will use a number of practices put in place at other successful schools such as: a set of non-negotiable rules that creates a consistent culture with a focus on hard work and academics; faculty and staff that know every student; and families that are an integral part of our school's work.

In addition, City of Trees PCS' teachers will explore the work of successful classroom management approaches to create a culture of respect and cooperation in our school. These approaches include:

- Kim Payne's Social Inclusion Approach which focuses on accountability without blame in guiding conflict resolution among students.
- Ronald Morrish's work with Building Effective School Discipline focuses on the effectiveness of building a school and a classroom learning community in which there is a common effort to accomplish a common goal.

Because City of Trees PCS will be a small school, one in which it is possible for all students to be known by all teachers, it will be easier for changes in student behavior to be observed and acted upon. Teachers will also be able to better diagnose potential causes for unusual behavior through their longstanding relationships with the children. This is particularly important during adolescence. Each week when the teachers meet, there will be a time during that meeting to discuss children of concern. This will allow any teacher who has a concern about a particular student to mention that student in the presence of all the teachers. Other teachers will add their thoughts, heightening everyone's awareness and sharpening everyone's attention regarding children of concern. This heightened awareness will allow teachers to address these difficult issues early to the benefit of the individual student and of the class.

Role of Teachers, Administrators, and School Staff in Monitoring Student Behavior: It will be important that staff of City of Trees PCS be available to help with the discipline situations that arise regularly. It is common in all schools that there are students who, from time to time, are unable to take part in a lesson. Working with those students outside of the classroom in a positive manner will help both

the individual student to improve and the class as a whole to continue to learn. The Principal, Curriculum Director, Literacy Specialist, and other teachers will be assigned to intervention to work with students who cannot remain in class.

f. Professional Development for Teachers, Administrators and Other School Staff

Creating a culture of continuous learning is one of our school's organizational goals that is intimately linked to our mission.

- **Professional Learning Community:** Our school is a vibrant and active learning community where all adults in our school are given the necessary support to continuously improve and invigorate their work.

The teacher-training program at City of Trees PCS will play an integral role in our school's success. This undertaking will be multi-dimensional and will run throughout the course of the year. Relationships are at the heart of our school culture and we recognize that every interaction with an adult that our students have contributes to their educational experience. It is important that all adults in our school develop a similar language and strategies for supporting and interacting with students. To this end, professional development opportunities will often extend beyond the faculty to include all employees in the building.

A three-week summer institute and professional development days during the year will provide time intensive opportunities for faculty and staff to focus on strategies to improve student learning. Of equal importance are the many on-going professional development opportunities that teachers will have on a weekly and even daily basis. These more regular opportunities will ensure that our teachers are fully supported and energized to teach their students each day.

Anticipated Professional Development Needs: A key strength of our faculty and staff will be the diversity of their teaching experiences. We plan to hire teachers experienced in Waldorf education as well as teachers who are highly skilled in teaching students with varied academic needs in an urban public school setting. We also expect to hire a combination of relatively new and experienced teachers. Our teachers will serve as a resource to each other and professional development at our school will be designed to support teachers in the ways that they need it most. The work that is done in the faculty meetings, those at the outset of each school year as well as those that occur on a weekly basis, will create a culture of collaborative working where teachers are able to share insights, observations of children, lessons, and concerns in an atmosphere of professional collegiality and continual learning. The Principal and Curriculum Director will guide these discussions and will use them to tailor the professional development support at our school. With respect for the power of self-designed professional development, teachers will be asked to set their own personal goals at the beginning of each school year and outline strategies for achieving their goals. The Curriculum Director (described below) will support teachers in setting individualized professional development goals.

Summer Professional Development: The following description of the three-week summer program at City of Trees PCS outlines our thorough approach to professional development. The three-week program will be divided between a two-week professional development training facilitated by the Nova Institute and a one-week school facilitated training program.

The Nova Institute will organize and facilitate the public Waldorf teacher training component of the summer program. This important school partnership will ensure that a comprehensive and school specific

training is offered to our teachers. Every teacher at City of Trees PCS will take part in a three-week summer teacher-training program, as well as ongoing teacher development sessions. Each August, prior to the beginning of our school year, there will be a two-week teacher and staff training session focused on the supporting teachers to acquire the skills necessary to teach effectively in a public Waldorf school. This will be part of an on-going three-year teacher-training program required of all teachers. These sessions will have two key components – early childhood and elementary school curricular studies. Each year these ten full-day sessions will enable the teachers to study and work with the practical details concerning the set up of their classrooms, lesson design, and the implementation of an arts-infused curriculum. All of the teachers, administrators, and staff will participate in the study of the philosophy of education, working with the essential ideas in child development as well as an understanding of how children learn. Because art is an integral part of students’ school experience, the summer training will also include artistic experiences to support teachers’ artistic instruction with singing, painting, movement, speech, and storytelling work.

The Curriculum Director and the Principal will facilitate the third week of the summer professional development program. During this week, faculty and staff will: work together to address school specific goals; develop lesson plans (at times collaboratively) that strengthen the connection between City of Trees PCS’ teaching methods, teaching resources, and assessments; set up classrooms; conduct home visits for new students; and receive training in curricular resources and assessments.

Curriculum Director: The rich curriculum and highly skilled teaching at City of Trees PCS will be supported and strengthened on a daily basis by the Curriculum Director who will be hired with the express purpose of supporting teachers in developing their curriculum and teaching skills. The Curriculum Director will be a teacher with a depth of knowledge and experience in Waldorf Education, will spend mornings observing teachers in their lessons, and will be a frequent presence in the classrooms rather than a sporadic evaluator. The Curriculum Director will support teachers by:

- Completing classroom observations and providing appropriate feedback as needed;
- Helping to facilitate weekly collaboration meetings (including faculty study) which contribute to deepening teachers’ understanding of Waldorf pedagogy;
- Assisting teachers in developing classroom management skills as needed;
- Assisting teachers in developing the skills needed to meet the needs of struggling students;
- Developing curriculum materials and manuals for grades teachers;
- Ensuring that each teacher develops a yearly individual professional development plan;
- Completing yearly or twice yearly class teacher evaluations; and
- Ordering and supplying teachers with appropriate resources.

Weekly Faculty Meeting: The two-hour long weekly faculty meetings will offer an opportunity for continued professional development. These sessions will be led by the Principal and will be designed in conjunction with the Curriculum Director and with classroom visits. These topics will be more practical in nature, dealing with issues like classroom management, the teaching of reading, the teaching of mathematics, the special needs child, assessment, etc. This time will allow the teachers to speak together about their classroom experiences. The needs of the teachers will help determine the topics that will be covered in the teacher development sessions.

In-Service Teacher Development Sessions: During our school year, there will be four In-Service Teacher Development Sessions. These sessions will begin with the weekly afternoon meeting time and then continue the next day when school is not in session. These In-Service Meetings will take place four times a year and will be led by visiting experts in the field of Waldorf and mainstream education. These intensive workshops will deal with timely educational topics such as project based learning, mindfulness teaching, creative writing, literacy and assessment. These intensive workshops will also be held on a regular basis during the professional development time created each week when students are released two hours early.

In partnership with the Chesapeake Coalition of Essential Schools (CCES), and in support of our dedication to evaluation, we will work to develop programmatic assessments that evaluate how closely our educational program is aligned with our mission and values. The CCES will work with our faculty to develop assessment measures and will then evaluate our program based on these measures. The focus of the evaluation will be mission specific but will adjust year-by-year depending on need. We continue to work with CCES to determine which professional development needs they can meet for our school.

The Courage to Teach: The Courage to Teach Program will be an essential piece for teacher reflection. This program:

- Renews heart and mind through the exploration of the inner landscape of a teacher’s life;
- Reconnects to one’s identity and integrity—identifying strengths, and acknowledging limits;
- Creates a context for careful listening and deep connection that honors diversity;
- Helps educators create safe spaces and trusting relationships in their schools, with their students and colleagues, and within their communities; and
- Explores the connection between attending to the inner life of educators and the renewal of public education.

The Courage to Teach Program allows teachers to meet together as colleagues and speak about the challenges that they commonly face in the classroom in meaningful, heartfelt ways. This will be part of the Nova Institute’s offering to teachers at City of Trees PCS in their ongoing teacher training work.

g. Structure of the School Day and Year

City of Trees PCS will primarily follow the same school calendar as traditional DC Public Schools. We will begin the school year and end the school year on the same calendar, and observe the same holiday schedule; students will be in school for 182 days per year. We will not follow DCPS professional development days, but will schedule our own day-long trainings four times during the year (likely November, February, April, May). Teachers will participate in on-going professional development day on the early-release day on Wednesdays. Parent-Teacher conferences will be scheduled twice per year and on those days students will have a half-day schedule.

We recognize that many families will have children in more than one school and a closely aligned school calendar will ease the ensuing logistical difficulties these families face. City of Trees PCS recognizes the importance of providing high quality experiences for students during the summer vacation and a voluntary summer program will be offered to all students with a sliding payment scale to ensure accessibility.

Date	Activity
------	----------

August 6-24, 2012	Faculty professional development program
Monday, August 27	First day of school
Monday, September 3	Labor Day, no school
Friday, September 14	Teacher training day, no school for students
Monday, October 8	Columbus Day, no school
Monday, November 5	Teacher training day, no school for students
Friday, November 16	Half day, Parent-Teacher conferences
November 22-23	Thanksgiving Holiday, no school
Dec. 19-January 2, 2013	Winter Break
Monday, January 21	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, no school
Monday, January 28	Teacher training day, no school for students
Friday, February 15	Presidents' Day, no school
Monday, March 18	Teacher training day, no school for students
Friday, March 29	Half day, Parent-Teacher conferences
April 12-April 22	Spring Break
Monday, May 27	Memorial Day, no school
Friday, June 14	Last day of school
Monday, June 24	Summer Program begins

Organization of School Day: Our school day will begin at 8:45 and end at 3:15. A Before Care program (7:30-8:45) and After Care program (3:15-6:00) will provide an extended day option that is consistent with the values of the traditional school day. Students will have access to academic support, arts infused activities and outdoor play during the extended school day. All students will have access to a healthy breakfast and afternoon snack in the extended day programs. There will be an early dismissal every Wednesday at 1:15 to allow teachers to participate in extended and ongoing professional development and faculty meetings. The After Care program will start at 1:15 on Wednesdays.

The Early Childhood Schedule: City of Trees PCS will offer a healthy learning environment for young children in pre-Kindergarten and kindergarten where teachers provide children with ample time for both structured and unstructured physical activity. The schedule reflects both the values of creative free play and continuity and rhythm in our school day. The emphasis on creative play is one of the unique features in the Waldorf approach to education. This approach to our school day recognizes that the child's nature is essentially active and that children learn many important lessons through freely-chosen, self-directed play. Another important component of the early childhood classes is time outdoors. While more and more schools are decreasing recess time, we find that current research indicates the critical importance of outdoor, physical play for young children.

The Grades Schedule: Our school day in 1st to 8th grade at City of Trees PCS is intentionally designed to best support student learning and is based on Waldorf education's theory of knowledge. This theory states that meaningful learning requires that children be engaged in the learning process in three distinct ways:

actively, emotionally, and thoughtfully. The schedule respects the ebb and flow of students' attention and energy during the day by alternating between active, high-energy segments of the day and more quietly focused portions of the day. The length of the main lesson offers teachers ample time for creative multi-disciplinary endeavors, which make learning meaningful, and enables teachers to provide multiple access points and methods of instruction within each main lesson.

After the two hour main lesson, there is time for out-door play and snack. The alternating between focused academic instruction and more active play is reflective of the overall school day. Children's natural rhythms are reflected in this schedule that helps avoid fatigue and promotes balanced learning. Two shorter periods take place before lunch and two periods take place after lunch. In the period directly after recess, students will have a focused math or English Language Arts class depending on whether the main lesson unit is more math or literacy focused.

A significant lunch and second recess time are an integral part of our schedule and recognize that children are inherently active and need time during the day to be engaged physically and energetically. Engaged physical activity is the focus of the afternoon at City of Trees PCS. Students will have their physical education or games class, gardening, handwork, crafts, and in the later years (fourth and up) woodworking. The afternoon classes are ones in which the whole child is active.

An example of an Early Childhood (pre-K and K) daily schedule:

Time	Description
7:30-8:30	Before Care
8:30 – 10:15	Morning Session
10:15– 11:45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Snack Time (children help in preparing, setting up, serving, cleaning up) Outdoor Play
11:45– 12:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Story Time Puppet Plays
12:30 – 1:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lunch Outdoor Play
1:30 – 3:15	Afternoon Session
3:15	Dismissal
3:15 – 6:00	After Care

An example of the elementary grade school daily schedule:

	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI
7:30-8:45	Before Care and Breakfast				
8:45 - 10:45 MAIN LESSON	Main Lesson				

10:45 – 11:10 SNACK/RECESS	Snack/Recess				
11:10 – 11:55 PERIOD 1	Literacy	Math	Literacy	Math	Literacy
11:55 – 12:40 PERIOD 2	Specialty Class				
12:40-1:20 LUNCH/RECESS	Lunch/Recess				
1:20-2:20 PERIOD 3	Practice Period				

Although this schedule could vary from day to day and from year to year, the essential theme would remain the same. Subjects requiring more thoughtfulness and attentiveness will take place during the main lesson time. Classes requiring more social and emotional understandings would take place after main lesson and before lunch. Classes that engage the students physically and actively would take place after lunch in the afternoon when children are less attentive. As shown in the above schedule, one period each day is slightly longer, allowing classroom teachers and specialty teachers to coordinate more extended activities during the day. While not shown in the schedule above, yet an important aspect of the schedule, is the great flexibility teachers will have to respond to their individual class needs, and thusly may choose to lengthen or shorten periods in the day to create a more effective class rhythm. Teachers will work closely with the specialty subject teachers in fine-tuning their weekly and daily class schedule.

Time Outdoors: Essential to our instructional philosophy is time outdoors for all children. Healthy physical development and a close connection with the natural world are viewed as essential. City of Trees PCS' pre-K and kindergarten schedule allows for ample time outdoors daily. Even in our urban context and in spite of rainy weather, we will strive to offer children regular opportunities to connect with and learn about nature, engaging in robust physical activities, and experiencing the joys and wonders of the changing seasons with diverse sights, colors, sounds, and smells. School and classroom curricula with outdoor programs and lessons have become an even more essential part of our school day as reflected in the many recent academic articles and books that focus on "nature deficit disorder."⁸³

Not yet knowing where our facility will be, we can assume that we will make use of the neighborhood's larger parks with recreational centers, ball fields, and playgrounds, as well as several pocket parks that are scattered around. In addition to these, there is a nearby urban farm that we are pursuing a partnership with, and are also pursuing partnership with the National Park Service. Destinations beyond our neighborhood include Rock Creek Park, The Arboretum, The National Zoo, and the Botanic Gardens.

⁸³ Richard Louv. 2005. *Last child in the woods: Saving our children from nature deficit disorder*. Chapel Hill, NC: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill; Kahn, Peter H. and Stephen R. Kellert. 2002. *Children and Nature*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press; Moore, Robin C. 1997. The Need for Nature: A Childhood Right. *Social Justice* 24 (3): 203-220.

B. Business Plan

1. Planning and Establishment

a. Profile of Founding Group

The Founding Group of City of Trees PCS is made up of parents, teachers, and community members whose combined skill sets, personal, and professional experiences have shaped the mission and vision for our school. Expertise in the group includes Waldorf and public school education, finance, work with at-risk populations, organizational development, non-profit management, grant writing, data collection, data analysis, and community activism.

Founding Group Members

Jack Petrash has been a Waldorf teacher for thirty years, during which time he has taken three cohorts of students from grade one to grade eight. He has written extensively on Waldorf Education and is the author of *Understanding Waldorf Education: Teaching from the Inside Out*. Jack has co-authored *The Enlivened Literacy Project* in Baltimore, an arts and drama based literacy program that was designed to promote writing fluency, reading comprehension, and vocabulary development. Jack is also the founder and director of the Nova Institute, a non-profit organization that is using the Waldorf approach to education to enliven teaching in public schools. The Nova Institute's Waldorf Teacher Training Program, which Jack co-directs, has trained teachers at the Waldorf Schools in Baltimore, Richmond, Bethesda, and Alexandria. Part of the mission of the Nova Institute is to involve parents in the important work of educating healthy children. In that effort Jack has worked with mothers and fathers throughout the United States and Canada to help them understand the key elements to successful parenting. Jack has written two parenting books, one of which received the National Parenting Publication's gold award.

George Hoffecker has been an educator for 40 years. He was a class teacher at Live Oak Waldorf School in Applegate, California for 12 years. George was the Principal of the first Waldorf methods charter school in the United States as well as a Principal of a charter high school. While Assistant Superintendent for Twin Ridges Elementary School District, he was Director of Charter Services and helped to create and implement a nationally recognized innovation in the way charter schools and their authorizers collaborate. He is a visiting faculty member of Rudolf Steiner College and lectures widely on child development, positive discipline, Waldorf Education methods in public schools, collaborative leadership, and designs for organizational renewal and reframing, including strategies for conflict resolution. George has served on the Education Commission of the States, the U.S. Department of Education's task force designed to study charter schools' impact on national educational reform. George has his B.A. in education and is a certified Waldorf educator and currently operates his own educational and organizational consulting firm.

Laura Birdsall has been a teacher for 32 years. Her background in teaching spans grades one through eight, and she has worked with students from diverse backgrounds. As a class teacher in Milwaukee's inner-city Urban Waldorf School (1993-2001), the first public Waldorf school in the United States, she played an integral role in developing and adapting curriculum and assessment to meet the unique needs of under-served urban children. She was named in 2000 as one of Wisconsin's Exemplary Educators. In 2001 she coauthored the curriculum and developed teacher training for the Enlivened Literacy Project, an after-school program in Baltimore, which serves children, grades K-3. In 2004 she launched a new initiative in Phoenixville, PA for underserved children and youth mentors, beginning with weekend

workshops emphasizing literacy and seasonal enrichment activities. Since 2006 she has collaborated with the Phoenixville district in establishing a summer literacy camp, Camp Jump Start, for entering first graders, along with teenaged youth mentors. Laura developed the curriculum and has been the director of Camp Jump Start for the last five summers. Laura taught middle school language arts and math at Kimberton Waldorf School between 2001 and 2008 and has taught curriculum and assessment courses and workshops to classroom teachers, grades 1-8. She is currently Middle School Coordinator, teacher mentor and subject teacher at River Valley Waldorf School.

Velma LaPoint, Ph.D. is a professor of child development and education in the Department of Human Development and Psychoeducational Studies, School of Education (and the Graduate School) at Howard University. She has over 20 years of experience in educational research and development, teaching, and service in urban education and community settings. At Howard's Center for Urban Progress, Velma evaluates home-based, school, and community-based DC preschool programs for the D.C. Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) using standardized observation methods to improve preschool education practices and policies. At Howard's Center for the Education of Children Placed at Risk (CRESPAR)/Capstone Institute, Velma designed, directed, and implemented federally funded school reform on best practices with District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) and charter schools at the middle and high school levels where she worked with culturally diverse students, their families, and educators to promote academic achievement and social competence in various areas. Velma teaches students who seek to become P-12 classroom teachers and education and human service specialists who work with youth, parents, and families. She develops, teaches, and evaluates courses, degree programs, and thesis/dissertations for a diverse undergraduate/graduate student body from 102 countries and all income groups, in courses and topics focusing on youth placed at risk and their resiliency and diverse youth and families of color. Velma has served for several years as a member of several local and national Boards: Trustee Council of the Washington Waldorf School, the former DC Public Charter School Resource Center, Campaign for Commercial Free Childhood, and, recently, the DC Mayor's Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education. Velma earned a BA in elementary education/sociology from the University of Hartford (teaching 3-5 year and 9-11 year old children), graduate degrees in counseling from Michigan State University, and post-doctoral fellowships at the National Institute of Mental Health, Cornell University (children and social policies), and Emory University (social/emotional development of Black children). Selma is a DC resident.

Noel Bicknell has worked as a special education teacher and training coordinator at the Lab School of Washington (LSW) since 1999. He holds a Masters of Arts, Special Education: Learning Disabilities degree from American University and is currently certified K-12 in the District of Columbia. He coordinates a team of five educators at LSW providing content instruction to children with moderate to severe learning disabilities, language disorders and ADHD. In his role as chairperson of the LSW Social Studies/Humanities program recertification committee, he forged new educational standards that aligned the school's unique arts based Social Studies/Humanities curriculum with jurisdictional leaning standards. His role as a staff development trainer includes coordinating the Academic Club Teaching Service, a professional development program designed to educate teachers in the use of LSW methods.

Selma White is a seasoned urban educator with 20 years of experience as a Lead Teacher in a District of Columbia public elementary school. She has divided her time between early childhood classrooms and lower elementary grades, teaching every level between Pre-K and 3rd grade and serving as a mentor to other teachers at her school. Selma's elementary teaching experience has led her to become a teacher of

teachers where she has served an adjunct professor at University of the District of Columbia. Selma has also used her teaching expertise to work with the Early Childhood Leadership Institute to assess early childhood centers for literacy preparedness and to provide professional development to for staff in integrating standard based content in conjunction with rigorous ongoing assessment. Selma earned her MA in early childhood education/administration from the University of the District of Columbia and a BS in human development from Howard University. Continuing her own professional development, Selma has taken courses at Trinity University, Catholic University, and elsewhere in content areas of mathematics, science, language arts, social studies, and the arts. Selma received the Highly Effective Teaching Rating from DCPS in 2010 and has received the Outstanding Ratings for Teaching throughout her teaching career in DCPS. Selma is a DC resident.

Brett Macleod, a DC resident, is a Vice President in Citigroup's Citi Community Capital division in Washington, DC, where he finances affordable housing and urban revitalization projects in underserved communities. In this role, Brett is responsible for projecting and managing multi-million dollar budgets that require him to model and analyze cash flow projections. Primarily responsible for originating new business, Brett has strong marketing and outreach skills and has helped grow Citigroup's presence in the Mid-Atlantic. In addition, he is experienced in analyzing financial statements and assessing credit worthiness for both for- and non-profit organizations. Brett's early career included teaching 7th and 8th graders at the Willauer School, one of the nation's first Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound schools, where he was responsible for designing and implementing learning expeditions for his students. He has taught in a variety of schools, including the Grover Cleveland Middle School, a seriously underperforming Boston school to help inspire and engage underserved students in after-school activities. Brett holds a BA from Williams College and an MBA, *magna cum laude*, from Babson College.

Valerie Graff, who lives in DC, brings nearly 30 years of experience in nonprofit governance and management. Valerie has consulted to the nonprofit community since 1989, full-time since 1994. She has extensively consulted to Boards in the areas of governance, including Board development, Board-executive director relations, managing staff leadership transitions, succession planning and strategic and Board planning. Additionally, Valerie has extensively consulted in the areas leadership development, communications, team development, and change management. Her clients have included education and children and youth organizations and agencies. Prior to starting Valerie Graff Associates in 1994, she was Executive Director of the Society of Professionals in Dispute Resolution, then the leading international professional association of 3,000+ mediators, arbitrators and other conflict resolution professionals. During her 3-year tenure, SPIDR' membership grew 25% she increased the budget 30% and expanded programming to include more member benefits. She managed the development of guidelines for credentialing mediators that influenced practices in that area across the nation. Valerie also conducted trainings for the former Public Charter School Resource Center, has consulted on public charter school management issues and has served as a volunteer facilitator for about 20 public participation sessions sponsored by DCPS in addition to Mayor Williams' Summits.

Adrienne Gallo is the Chair of the Board of Trustees of City of Trees PCS. She founded and ran her own independent architecture company for 6 years, before becoming a mother and spearheading the conceptualization and development of City of Trees PCS full-time. She has been the strategic force behind the extensive preparations our school has made to create City of Trees PCS. With a strong understanding of Waldorf education, a dedication to adapting it to the public context and making it available to children of all backgrounds, Adrienne has been a key contributor to, and driver of, every

aspect of this initiative. She has organized outreach events and spoken publically about City of Trees PCS; personally partnered with and recruited nearly all of the experts associated with this effort; visited and built relationships at charter schools locally and Waldorf charter schools in California; developed a bank of interested teachers; and grown a listserv of close to 250 supporters. Adrienne plans and leads the Founding Group meetings and managed the group in the writing of its successful Walton Family Foundation grant application. Adrienne also conceived of and implemented City of Trees PCS' successful early childhood pilot classes: Saplings Garden/Seedlings Garden, which have helped contribute to the long list of supporters for City of Trees PCS has already developed. Adrienne, a licensed architect, has over 13 years of experience in designing buildings, developing real estate, project management, leading collaborative processes, and budget administration. Her areas of expertise include environmentally sound building practices and contextual, client-centered design solutions. Adrienne is a committed community member of the Shaw-Logan Circle neighborhood in DC and has a daughter who could join the first pre-Kindergarten class.

Joseph Ciani-Dausch is an antitrust attorney in the Washington, DC office of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP, a leading international law firm. Joseph has represented clients in antitrust litigation, as well as mergers and acquisitions under review by the United States Department of Justice (Antitrust Division) and the Federal Trade Commission. He has a strong interest in and commitment to educational issues, having completed several Master's-level courses in Education at Marymount University and advised students participating in a moot court exercise at McKinley Technology High School in Northeast Washington, DC. Joseph has also taught Professional Responsibility as an Adjunct Professor at Cornell University Law School. Joseph lives in Washington, DC.

Helen Cymrot, a resident of DC, has been involved in urban education and educational policy work in a variety of venues. Helen worked as a teacher at two innovative schools serving significant populations of low income and minority students: The Girls Middle School in California and the Cesar Chavez Public Charter School for Public Policy in Washington, DC. Both schools were in their infancy during Helen's tenure, and as a 7th and 9th grade teacher, Helen designed new curriculum in language arts, history and math. Helen also worked on education policy, first on the staff of a US Senator and later during her graduate studies at Georgetown University. While pursuing a Master's Degree in Public Policy with a focus on non-profit leadership and management, Helen researched early education policies for CROCUS (the Center for Research on Children in the US). More recently, Helen has continued to be involved in DC Public Schools on the grassroots level, working as the chair of the Local School Restructuring Team for Brent Elementary and co-founder of a parent organization at Peabody Elementary.

Lisa Ruthel, a resident of DC, is a certified Speech Language Pathologist who has provided special education services to linguistically, culturally, and economically diverse populations with a wide range of special needs. Her experience includes assessment and intervention in preschool, early elementary school and early intervention. As a Fairfax County Public Schools clinician, she served at-risk, economically disadvantaged students in schools with Title I funding and Head Start preschool programs. Lisa has chaired and served on special education eligibility committees throughout the entire process of referral, assessment, eligibility determination, and IEP development. At Children's National Medical Center outpatient center in Adams Morgan, Lisa served students in DCPS and also provided services in Spanish to families with very young children. Through her clinical experience and ongoing professional education, Lisa has developed her expertise in autism spectrum disorders, literacy, language-based learning disabilities, and sensory processing disorders. At the Washington Waldorf School, Lisa serves on the

Parent Organization Steering Committee.

Roza Oblak currently serves as the program coordinator for the Josephine Butler Park Center (located in the most dense and culturally diverse community of Washington, DC), where she led arts, music, dance, youth, health, and wellness programming for five years and established a low-cost healing arts clinic offering wellness services to local residents. Roza created the event management system for the Center, assisting hundreds of non-profit organizations in using this "greenhouse" for rebuilding inner city Washington. Her community connections help to establish many evolving relationships and partnerships for our school within our community including potential incubator space for City of Trees PCS.

Lindsay Gonzales lives in the District and is a professional fundraiser with significant experience designing, implementing and evaluating fundraising strategies, from direct mail campaigns to special events to procuring major gifts. As the former Director of both the Annual Giving and Major Gifts departments at a national social justice lobby, Lindsay understands how to build and implement a fundraising plan that can recruit, sustain and increase the investments of a group's smallest and largest donors. She is well versed in the latest fundraising strategies and technology; including the importance of an integrated communication plan, online giving and utilizing social networks. Most recently she has worked as a writer for a well-respected leader in the fundraising community crafting appeals, newsletters and proposals for local and national nonprofits.

Elizabeth Zwicker is a DC resident who brings data analysis and grant expertise to the Founding Group. She currently works as a Performance Officer for the Department of Justice to continually improve criminal justice programming through the use of grantee reporting. She manages the collection, analysis, and publication of performance measure data for thousands of grantees, over thirty grant programs, and is responsible for the day-to-day operations of a \$4.9 million dollar contract to support this effort through an online grantee database and analysis support services. She has managed online software design and implementation. She's both worked and volunteered in preschools for four years, deepening her interest in children's education.

Founding Contributors

Ida Oberman, Ph.D. is founding President of the Community School for Creative Education, an Oakland-based multi-lingual, multi-cultural Waldorf-inspired charter school opening August 2011 with grades K - 3 to grow to pre-K - 8. A schoolteacher with over a decade classroom experience, she has also served as director of Pivot Learning's (previously Springboard Schools) California Best Practice Study and as education program officer at the Hewlett Foundation. Dutch born and German educated, she graduated high school from the Tuebingen Waldorf School in Germany, received her PhD in Education from Stanford and her BA from Swarthmore. Publications include *The Waldorf Movement in Education* from European Cradle to American Crucible, 1919-2008 (Mellen Press, 2008).

Julie Sweetland, Ph.D. has been actively involved in improving teaching and learning for urban students for over a decade, first as a classroom teacher, and more recently as an educational researcher, teacher educator, and local activist. She is a graduate of Georgetown University and now holds an adjunct faculty position at her alma mater. Julie completed her MA and PhD at Stanford University, with her dissertation research funded by the National Science Foundation. Julie spent several years at Center for Inspired Teaching, serving first as a researcher and then as the organization's Director of Teaching and Learning. In that role, she was the key designer of the Inspired Teaching Fellows teacher preparation program and

was centrally involved in the development of the Inspired Teaching Demonstration School. Julie now serves as the Founding Director of the Urban Teacher Academy at the National Center for Urban Education at the University of the District of Columbia. Her work has appeared in publications such as Journal of Sociolinguistics, Journal of English Linguistics, and Educational Researcher.

Tom Kamm has over 25 years of experience in architecture and related fields and will evaluate potential facilities and help our school hire and manage the teams conducting any facility renovations. He has designed architecture and interiors in all regions of the United States, including projects in the Washington D.C. metro area. Tom is the founding Principal of Tom Kamm Architects, P.C. and his work has been exhibited at Chicago's I-Space Gallery, The Boston Museum of Art, the Paula Cooper Gallery in New York, and at the Prague Quadrennial international design exhibition. Tom holds a Master of Architecture degree from Yale School of Architecture where he was awarded the prestigious Robert A. Ward honor. He received his Bachelor of Arts from University of California, San Diego. Tom is a former member of the faculty at the School of Architecture, University of Illinois, Urbana/ Champaign, where he also served on the Chancellor's Design Advisory Board, reviewing designs for all campus projects.

Joan Almon is the Executive Director of the Alliance for Childhood, a partnership of educators, physicians, parents, and others advocating for social change to improve children's overall health and well-being. In this capacity, Joan promotes the policies and practices that support children's healthy development, love of learning, joy in living, and especially the restoration of play to childhood. She is a former co-chair of the Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America, author, and is an international consultant on early childhood education.

Anne Wotring did her doctoral dissertation in human and organizational studies involved a 5-year cultural change intervention with a Waldorf school's governance and leadership, using best practices of Learning Organization theory (Senge 1990) and congruent best practices of Rudolf Steiner's Threefold organization and education theory and structure. She consults with schools and other institutions on best practices, facilitates change processes as a mentor and coach with individuals and groups in a variety of fields, makes presentations, and writes journal articles in an effort to foster new leadership and organizational models based on collaboration and consensus. A former public school and college teacher and Waldorf administrator, Anne has a Master's degree in English Education with an emphasis on interdisciplinary learning and writing. She teaches professional and organizational development in the Nova Institute Teacher Training Program. Anne is a member of the International Coaching Federation and serves as Board president for the Nova Institute.

Christine Szathmary is President of the U Street Neighborhood Association. She was elected in 2009, having previously served the association as Business Development Committee Chairperson (2007) and Vice President (2008-2009). She played a lead role in the city-funded 9th and U Hospitality Resource Partnership, which worked to bring neighborhood stakeholders together to identify and address problems within the community and to open the lines of communication between stakeholder groups.

Jeanne Feeney received her early (birth to three) Waldorf teacher diploma in 2006. She is also certified in Body-Mind Centering TM since 1989, giving her movement expertise to support families during pregnancy, infancy and early childhood. Since 2005, she has initiated programs and taught at the Washington Waldorf School in Bethesda, MD. Jeanne helped start the first classes for infants, toddlers and their parents at City of Trees PCS outreach classes, the Saplings Garden, in 2010.

Mechelle Horning is the Principal at Alice Birney Waldorf-Inspired K-8 School in the Sacramento City Unified School District. Mechelle started over 20 years ago as an early childhood educator in private school, became a credentialed teacher in public elementary and middle schools, served as a curriculum and instructional coach, and worked as a private consultant, instructor and author of training materials certified by the California Department of Education. Mechelle was introduced to Waldorf methods while obtaining her Master's Degree from CSU, Sacramento and attending elective classes at Rudolf Steiner College in Fair Oaks, California. In her current position, she is able to support teachers and serve students in the country's only non-charter, public Waldorf-Inspired school.

Carol Cole has 25 years of teaching experience with traumatized children. She has received certificates in graduate New York State teaching, Montessori, Waldorf for early childhood and grades, and has a site director certification for California State. Carol helped to establish schools for girls in Saudi Arabia, co-founded Sparrow Creek School (a nursery school for very low income children in California), founded a multiracial kindergarten in South Africa, served as director of Children's Services at Raphael House family shelter, and is founder and director of Sophia Project. She has served on the advisory Board for the Homeless Education Project in San Francisco and the Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America (WECAN) in New York. She is a Board member of the Academy for the Love of Learning in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Founding Partner Organizations

Golden Valley Charter School: Golden Valley is a public charter school inspired by Waldorf education in Orangevale, California that serves grades kindergarten through eighth grade with over 45% of students qualifying for free or reduced price lunch. Founding Group members visited Golden Valley and have developed an ongoing partnership with staff in leadership positions including the Curriculum Director, Special Education Coordinator, Business Manager, Human Resources Specialist, Admissions Director and Principal. Principal Deborah Lenny and her staff have committed to continue to provide advice and guidance and to share the expertise they have gained over the past decade as an established public Waldorf school.

Alice Birney Waldorf-Inspired K-8 School: Alice Birney is located in Sacramento, California and is the largest public Waldorf school in the nation, serving grades kindergarten through eighth grade. Over 40% of the student body qualifies for free and reduced price lunch. Founding Group members have worked closely with Principal Mechelle Horning over the past three months, discussing assessments, curriculum, standardized tests, special education and parent involvement at our school. During a visit to the school, Founders met with teachers and parents to discuss the educational program and to visit all grade levels. Principal Mechelle Horning has expressed her commitment to a partnership with City of Trees PCS in its planning year and beyond, including sharing curriculum materials, rubrics, handbooks and other pertinent documents and has provided a letter of support.

Alliance for Public Waldorf Education: The Alliance is a membership and professional organization serving the 46 public charter schools in the country grounding their practices in Waldorf education. Members of the Founding Group consulted with Deborah Lambrecht, the Executive Director of the Alliance for Public Waldorf. The Alliance has provided a letter of support.

Building Hope: Founded in 2003, Building Hope is a private foundation based in Washington, D.C. that

works to close the educational achievement gap by giving students access to high quality public charter schools. Building Hope supports the expansion of successful charter school organizations with the capacity to grow their enrollments in order to catalyze change across the public education system. Adrienne Gallo, Brett Macleod, and Tom Kamm met with Tom Porter of Building Hope to discuss interim and permanent space options for City of Trees PCS. Once our school has received a charter, Building Hope will assist it in locating interim space. Building Hope provided a letter of support.

The Nova Institute is a non-profit organization that seeks to bring fresh insights into parent and teacher education through a deeper understanding of children. Their mission is to share best practices and create a bridge between public education and the Waldorf philosophy. The Nova Institute believes that when parents and teachers help children to develop good habits of hand, heart, and mind, young people become well-rounded individuals who can embrace life, love to learn, and have an abiding concern for their fellow human beings and for the Earth. Founding Group member Jack Petrash along with the Nova Institute worked to develop the teacher training program for City of Trees PCS. Nova Institute has provided a letter of support.

Washington Parks & People began 20 years ago with Meridian Hill/Malcolm X Park, receiving the National Park Service's highest organizational award for leading the transformation of the single most violent park in the capital region into one of its safest. WPP connects DC citizens to the outdoors with nature-based learning, working in DC's green spaces with hundreds of classes and thousands of volunteers from schools across the city, creating new green spaces and gardens and presenting in-school education lectures. WPP leads greening initiatives across the city—massive land reclamation, native reforestation, watershed restoration, public health and fitness programming, urban agriculture, and green job training—to help revitalize once forgotten communities. WPP has provided incubator space for two other charter schools and is currently in talks with City of Trees PCS to do the same and they have provided a letter of support.

The Lab School provides an exceptional academic experience for motivated students (grades 1-12) with specific learning disabilities. The first school of its type in the nation, The Lab School enjoys a worldwide reputation for transforming lives and guiding students on the path toward success. For students with ADHD, dyslexia, and other learning differences, art can be the gateway to learning. The Lab School's innovative arts-based curriculum is experiential and multi-sensory, helping young people overcome difficulties with reading, spelling, writing and math, while preparing them for a rewarding range of college and career choices. The Lab School has provided a letter of support.

Community School for Creative Education: The Community School for Creative Education has just received their charter in Oakland California and will open in the fall of 2011 serving grades Kindergarten through third, and ultimately growing to eighth grade. Similar to City of Trees PCS, Community School for Creative Education will serve a socio-economic and racially diverse population in the urban public Waldorf context. Community School will continue to collaborate with City of Trees PCS in identifying the strategies, curricular resources and support systems that will best support our student populations. Ida Oberman, the lead founder and Principal of Community School, is serving as a contributing founder to City of Trees PCS and has consulted on the education plan.

Sophia Project serves children and families who are at risk of recurring homelessness. Their core work is to ensure that children are nurtured and that their physical, developmental and educational needs are met

while providing their mothers with time, guidance and support to acquire new abilities to meet their children's needs and stabilize their families. Primarily with the help of the Waldorf understanding of the child and the human being Sophia Project has developed an approach to education especially suited to these populations. The programs provided include early childhood education, extended hours of childcare, a before and after school program with both tutoring and care, artistic activities, an infant toddler program, a weekend respite program and family support services. The Sophia Project will assist teachers and staff to better understand the needs of this population, and the organization has provided a letter of support.

Howard University's Center for Urban Progress offers expertise in diverse youth and families; youth and families placed at risk; youth and consumer culture; expressive therapies promoting wellness, and social policies influencing youth and family development; evaluations of school and community-based early childhood education programs.

The following Founding Group members serve as directors or officers in the following organizations.

Name	Name of Organization	Position	Annual Report
Velma LaPoint	Campaign for Commercial Free Childhood	Board Member	Not applicable.
	Kids Can Make a Difference	Board Member	Annual report available at www.kidscanmakeadifference.org/
	Washington Waldorf School	Board Member	Annual report available at www.washingtonwaldorf.org
Brett Macleod	National Housing Trust Community Development Fund	Board Member	Annual report available at www.nhtinc.org
Jack Petrash	Nova Institute	Board Member	Not applicable.
Adrienne Gallo	City of Trees Enrichment, LLC*	Board Member	Not applicable.

*Founding Group members created City of Trees Enrichment, LLC to offer Waldorf-Inspired infant and toddler classes to the community as a means of building support and potential enrollment for a Waldorf charter school in D.C. The LLC will be dissolved when City of Trees PCS has been awarded its charter.

Community, Parent, and Teacher Interest and Involvement: As demonstrated in the biographies, our Founding Group members include educational experts, business and management professionals, community members, and parents. A group of dedicated parents decided that bringing the compelling benefits of Waldorf education to the Shaw-Logan Circle area would fill an educational void not met anywhere else in the city. These parents, wanting a safe school where students could thrive, immediately began spreading the word about their efforts, and they were met with immediate enthusiasm by community members and teachers. We have already received enough resumes from potential teachers to fill all of our teacher slots during the first year of operations. We quickly began recruiting experts in translating Waldorf to urban contexts and have partnered with some of the preeminent leaders in this field. Our initial Founders also engaged with community organizations, such as Washington Parks & People and Howard University's Center for Urban Progress, among others, in the creation of City of Trees PCS' mission and vision so they could be true partners from the onset of our school.

The Founding Group has collaborated together on a regular basis to build the vision for our school and all

of its component parts. Applying for the Walton Family Foundation grant was a valuable exercise for all members of the group to solidify plans very early in the chartering process, and the partnerships and resources brought forth for that effort have remained strong. This early practice with the grant writing meant that there were opportunities for community, parent, and teacher perspectives to contribute to the building of our school. The activities and processes necessary for building our school to a point of maturity to write the PCSB petition has made these partnerships concrete.

A key tenet in the operation of a Waldorf school is an on-going dialogue among teachers, parents, and the community. The Founding Group has relied on this dynamic in creating our school plan, ensuring each group of stakeholders was represented in our committees and decision-making processes. This has been especially important in adapting the collaborative values of Waldorf philosophy to a public setting and specifically to the needs of DC students. All of the partnerships with the community are expected to be long-term, which will enhance our school experience for every child and family who is a part of our school.

We expect that many of the Founding Group members will either join the Board of Trustees or serve on a committee of the Board. Several Founders are parents of potential students, who will continue to be stakeholders in the success of our school for years to come. Involvement of Founding Group members, contributors and partners and those identified in the key leadership roles has been confirmed. Please see the letters of support in section K. This is the core group that will guide and directly contribute to the success of City of Trees PCS for the long term—their proven experience, ability and passion for and commitment to bringing a Waldorf-based public charter school to the District of Columbia will be essential to our school's success.

The recruitment of additional Founders or organizers will be ongoing until all critical skill sets are met, or until all of the expertise can be filled with school hires. We will continue to grow the ranks of our Founding Group, knowing that recruiting teachers with recent experience in diverse urban settings is of primary importance. We will focus our recruitment efforts on teachers with early childhood, elementary, and special education in those grades. It is also our hope to find additional support in the areas of business and/or finance. In the past Founders and supporters have been found by word of mouth; conditional approval from the PCSB will be a valuable asset to us in recruiting additional partners. We anticipate finding people with those skill sets met by May 2011.

b. Planning Process

The Decision to Open a Charter School: City of Trees PCS grew out of a series of meetings initiated and attended by parents in the Shaw-Logan Circle neighborhood concerned about the educational choices available in the District of Columbia. The group identified academic achievement, a pedagogy driven by the knowledge of child development, an inclusive and collaborative learning environment, and parental/community involvement as important school qualities. With these in mind, the group researched several educational philosophies and determined that the Waldorf philosophy inherently incorporates all of the qualities in its educational philosophy and instructional methods. The Waldorf approach offers multiple pathways to success within a school built on long lasting relationships with teachers, a trustworthy school environment and cultural relevance in the curriculum and school culture to diverse children across boundaries of SES, race, ethnicity, language, and abilities and needs. Although there are dozens of proven public charter Waldorf-inspired schools in the country, there are none in the Mid-Atlantic region, and our Founders decided to apply for a charter to bring a Waldorf education option to all

students in the District of Columbia.

Recruiting Committed People with the Right Skills: Once the initial Founding Group decided to bring the Waldorf educational philosophy to District of Columbia students, we immediately began to spread the word, to identify and communicate needed skill sets and ultimately, to bring a committed Founding Group together. We began by reaching out to the wider DC area Waldorf community and Waldorf public charter schools across the country, making connections with parents and Waldorf educators who are now serving as founding members and contributors. The leading experts in the Waldorf movement are now part of our team. We also reached out to local charter schools and to FOCUS to learn more about what skill sets were needed most. We began offering Waldorf-inspired parent-toddler classes called Saplings/Seedlings Garden as a way to introduce the Waldorf approach to our neighbors in DC, hosted five information sessions and reached out to the group's contact lists. We began publishing a monthly e-newsletter, and soon our list of recipients grew to almost 250 interested people who greatly expand our reach into the greater DC community. As word spread regarding our efforts, supporters and volunteers also began reaching out to us. Once we identified the expertise we desired, we were able to begin targeted recruitment with our established networks. In many cases we followed up on referrals from trusted sources and in others, the people with the right skill sets came to us. Each prospective Founding Group member was assessed in terms of his or her relevant professional expertise, commitment to our school's mission, and collaborative spirit. To ensure a realistic and cohesive understanding of the commitment involved as a founding member, the expectations for joining the group were outlined and have been agreed to by each new member.

Involvement of Parents, Teachers, and Community Members: Parents, teachers and community members have directly influenced the design of all aspects of City of Trees PCS. Currently, the Founding Group and its contributors include parents and Shaw-Logan Circle community members, financiers, organizational development experts, data analysts, lawyers, architects, and educators with several decades of classroom experience combined.

Our initial focus was on mission development and research into the use of the Waldorf methodology in the public context. We launched a listening campaign, setting up meetings with parents, teachers, and researchers tied to Waldorf education and fellow DC charter school initiators. A majority of these meetings were with local community representatives; what we learned, in addition to what we already intimately knew about our community, greatly informed our philosophy and program.

Since this phase, we have done extensive outreach to educate the community about Waldorf education. This methodology of listening and offering learning opportunities and engaging in our own study as a Founding Group has set the foundation for a dynamic learning environment; it is one that we will carry into the operational years of our school. We also reached out to every ANC commissioner in Shaw-Logan Circle by inviting them to our community meetings and have received letters of support from Council members Graham and Evans. In addition to the involvement of our immediate neighbors in Shaw-Logan Circle, we have received much support and guidance from the local Waldorf community, which has supported three independent Waldorf schools over the past 40 years. In addition, the Founding Group has collaborated with several partners that have brought depth and new perspective to our efforts, including Howard University, and the Nova Institute, whose mission is to provide a connection between Waldorf and traditional public education. The Founding Group has also relied on the experience of several DC charter schools and Waldorf-inspired public charter schools in other states.

As detailed in the educational plan, parents, teachers, and community members in our school will play an ongoing role in the accomplishment of our school's mission, philosophy and program. City of Trees PCS will emulate the strength of teacher involvement in traditional Waldorf schools by steeping our school culture in the values of open dialogue, continual improvement, and a collaborative leadership style that ensures teachers are heard. Parent involvement in our school is formalized in the structure of the Parent's Guild and parent/teacher conferences, but it will also occur organically during the home visits from teachers, volunteer opportunities, and through the use of the Parent Resource Center (described in Section 5.a.). The committed members of the Founding Group represent all three constituency groups and will continue to strengthen the learning community that has been established during this start-up phase.

In addition to cultivating relationships with local organizations, our school will maintain membership in the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education, a forum for Waldorf-inspired school to share best practices and learn from each other's experiences. We will also continue to build upon our partnerships with charter schools and DCPS in Washington DC to learn from the application of best practices schools across the city. Our school will continue to work with ANC and Council members to ensure we make a positive impact in the Shaw-Logan Circle community. Community members will also be invited to attend school events such as celebrations and festivals, and they will be welcomed on the Board and in other volunteer capacities to make lasting impact on the direction of our school. Finally, we are members of the National Network of Partnership Schools, who will provide technical assistance in developing the Parents Guild and strategies that parents can use support their children's education and achievement as well as ways to become integrally engaged in City of Trees PCS.

c. Corporate Structure and Nonprofit Status of the School

City of Trees Public Charter School (EIN# 27-3146808) was recognized by the District of Columbia as a nonprofit corporation on July 28, 2010. A copy of the approved Articles of Incorporation is provided with this application in Section J of this document. The Articles of Incorporation were reviewed by Douglas B. Weinfeld, a lawyer with experience in incorporating nonprofit organizations. The Board of Trustees approved the Bylaws on August 12, 2010. City of Trees PCS has applied to the IRS for tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, and has received a letter from the IRS stating that the application is being reviewed.

2. Governance and Management

a. Board of Trustees

Composition of the Board: City of Trees PCS recognizes that an effective Board must have a diverse group of people who together provide an experience base and skill set that will directly contribute to the Board successfully fulfilling its role in governing our school. The Board will be led by these officers: Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary/Treasurer and will always have an odd number of trustees and officers, not to exceed 15 Trustees. City of Trees PCS is committed to Board diversity with respect to gender, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, disabilities and representation of the community population. The Board represents a diverse skill set of financial and budgetary expertise, project management, evaluation, preschool start up know-how and experience, community engagement in urban settings, school reform, education, and a growing number of constituencies such as parents and neighborhood community members and leaders. The roles currently are as follows:

The Chairperson will convene regularly scheduled Board meetings, and will preside or arrange for other members of the Board to preside at each meeting. Except as otherwise expressly provided by law, by the Articles of Incorporation, by these bylaws or by the Corporation's policies and procedures, he or she or his or her designee approved by the Board of Trustees will, in the name of the Corporation, execute such deeds, mortgages, bonds, contracts, checks or other instruments which may from time to time be authorized by the Board of Trustees.

The Vice-Chair will support the activities of the Chair including sharing responsibilities as appropriate. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair will perform duties and exercise powers of the Chair. The Vice-Chair will work with the Chair in developing the agendas for Board of Trustees meetings and will take on responsibility as necessary for communication with Committee Chairs.

The Secretary/Treasurer will be responsible for ensuring all Board and corporate documents and records are kept securely and are current by performing several functional duties (e.g., taking of minutes at all Board meeting, sending out meeting announcements; distributing copies of minutes and agendas). He/she will make a financial report to the Board at each Board meeting; will chair the finance committee, and ensure that all proposed budgets, fundraising plans and handling of monies reflect integrity and are in keeping with City of Trees PCS' strategies, goals and priorities.

The Executive Director will be an ex-officio member of the Board and all committees (except the Personnel committee), having the ability to contribute to discussions, ensure information flows between the Board and committees and back again and to be an influential member, albeit one that does not have authority to vote on Board matters.

The Trustees will have the following responsibilities:

- Hiring and evaluating the Executive Director and holding the Executive Director accountable for our school mission and goals;
- Overseeing strategic planning to ensure that City of Trees PCS's mission is being adhered to and carried out with the highest quality education possible;
- Connecting with our school and surrounding community to bring in needed information and resources, including demand for enrollment;
- Ensuring appropriate Trustees and officers are elected who will bring the needed experience and skill set to the governance function of the Board; with attention paid to succession planning for the Board and other school leadership;
- Conducting an annual Board assessment and follow through to continually improve the Board, which is particularly important as our school grows and develops;
- Ensuring that resources needed by our school are provided; and
- Approving all operational policies and overseeing the finances and financial growth and stability of our school.

The following chart summarizes both Board and Executive Director roles and responsibilities:

Board of Trustee Responsibilities	Executive Director Responsibilities
Determine mission.	Carry out the mission.
Hire, evaluate and if necessary, terminate the Executive Director.	Hire, evaluate and terminate staff.
Lead development of the strategic plan for our school.	Assist Board with development of strategic plan and implement the plan for our school.
Review, evaluate and approve annual business plan and budget and provide ongoing financial oversight.	Ensure that business plan, budgets and financial information are completed for Board review and approval.
Monitor progress of programs in terms of meeting our school's goals and mission.	Direct programs, staff, services and community relations.
The Nominating Committee oversees the Board's annual performance evaluation.	Work with the Board to facilitate decision-making, fundraising and oversight roles.
Approve all policies, including and not limited to academic, financial, personnel and governance.	Implement all policies.

The three current Trustees are residents of the District of Columbia and two are parents of students eligible for enrollment at City of Trees PCS. We are confident in the commitment to vision and expertise that is embodied by this Board and recognize that recruiting more Board members to fulfill the required skill sets is essential.

Board Selection Process and the Terms of Office: The Bylaws provide for the selection of future Trustees via a Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee is responsible for developing a matrix of the skills, experience and knowledge that the Board requires to effectively govern. It will then evaluate which skills, knowledge and experience are needed in light of pending vacancies and recruit prospective Board members to provide those that are needed. Finally, the Nominating Committee will present a slate of prospective Board members for the Board's consideration and vote.

The Board's Nominating Committee will ensure that all candidates:

- Are committed to City of Trees PCS mission, philosophy and values;
- Provide skills or expertise in areas needed by the Board and school;
- Reflect the community that City of Trees PCS serves; and,
- Have the required time to commit to be an engaged Trustee.

All Trustees will serve three-year terms and will be allowed to serve two consecutive three-year terms. Trustees may serve additional non-consecutive terms. These same limits apply to all officer positions. The initial Board members have staggered terms.

Accountability: The Board will hold school leadership accountable in the following ways:

- Building on our school mission accomplishment plan and with input from the Executive Director, the Board will identify organizational goals in academic and operational performance that fulfill the City

of Trees PCS mission accomplishment plan and school's mission. The Board will monitor progress towards these goals and if necessary, direct the staff leadership to make adjustments so that goals are met.

- In order to hold our school leadership accountable, the Board must first hold itself accountable. The Board has specific responsibilities for the success of school, such as evaluating the Executive Director. To manage these tasks, the Board will create an annual strategic plan for itself which will set broad school goals with objectives, timelines, and an action plan. Included in the plan will be Board duties with strategies for budget formulation, outreach, and fundraising, for example. The Board will identify actions that meet or exceed the goals it sets and will take immediate action if goal attainment seems problematic through redirecting resources, staff leadership or its own activities so that problems are addressed and not allowed to become more significant.
- The Board will set annual performance goals for the Executive Director and ensure that quarterly performance monitoring takes place. The Personnel Committee and Executive Director will discuss progress towards those goals and adjust plans if needed. The Board Chair, as necessary, will serve as a point of contact between the Personnel Committee and Executive Director.
- The Executive Director is responsible for ensuring other staff leaders perform and will be evaluated, in part, on staff performance. One performance measure will be a staff level operations plan designed to ensure that the annual school goals are met; another is setting and meeting staff leadership goals and objectives.
- The Board will hold itself accountable through intensive and unwavering focus on school goal attainment and its own contributions to reaching those goals. Meetings will always include an agenda topic to talk about goal achievement. The Board will create a Board culture of trust and open discussion to address potentially difficult conversations about Board and staff leadership performance. Holding itself accountable will help to create and maintain a culture of accountability throughout our school.

Parent Input for Selection of Parent Trustees: City of Trees PCS will have a Parents Guild of which all parents are encouraged to become active members. The Parents Guild will represent a forum for communication and participation in the life of our school, including working with the Nominating Committee to proposed skilled and experienced prospective parent Trustees. Board members who are parents will serve as liaisons between the Board and the Parents Guild and will embody the mission and vision in all aspects of their service. At least two parents/guardians of currently enrolled students will serve on the Board. Interim parent members will come from our Founding Group, and the first official parent members will be selected within the first six months of our school's operation.

Ensuring Demand for the Proposed School: The Board will set recruitment goals, monitor goal progress, work to resolve any problems and participate as individuals to recruit families. When the Executive Director is hired, the Board will work with him or her to set aggressive recruitment goals and provide appropriate resources to meet those goals. The Board recognizes ongoing recruitment as a top priority, and has already undertaken a number of efforts to ensure demand for our school, including:

- Attending and providing information at community events throughout the city;
- Networking to identify events and opportunities to reach into the community and market our school;
- Continuing to hold introductory classes and events about the Waldorf philosophy and methods during

which a short presentation is made about our school;

- Using the website as a repository of information about current activities and background information about Waldorf philosophy and methods as well as ways to be involved with developing our school;
- Asking for specific commitments from Founding Group members around recruitment during the planning year and continuing to fill recruitment goals with commitments from Board Trustees and staff after our school has opened.

The Saplings (parent/toddler) classes held to date have been full with waiting lists. These classes are potential sources of students to City of Trees PCS along with educating families about the Waldorf approach and our school. Classes will continue to be offered for these purposes. City of Trees PCS outreach effort has resulted in 250 people who requested to be placed on our listserv with whom we are in regular contact via our newsletter and updates. See Section 5b in the Business Plan for further details about student recruitment.

Board Decisions about School Operations: The Trustees will discuss and, where appropriate, make decisions regarding organizational cultural, external relations, fundraising and its own process matters. It will keep track of important trends related to the Mission Accomplishment Plan and take action as necessary.

The Board will work towards consensus on decisions, and when it cannot, decisions will be taken by majority vote. Decision-making will occur in a timely manner, with appropriate data provided to and by the Board to support their decision-making. Trustees will be asked to bring in their own expertise in making decisions.

The Board will strive to be appropriately inclusive of our school administrators in decision-making, yet will come to its own conclusions and decisions in the Board's areas of responsibilities.

The Board will charter committees to support its role in oversight, policy development, planning, implementation and decision-making. The committees will be:

- **Nominating**, which includes Board and non-Board members, as outlined in the bylaws. It will ensure that elections of highly qualified trustees and officers are proposed and the Board conducts annual evaluations of it and addresses deficiencies.
- **Academic Rigor**, which includes Board and non-Board members to ensure academic excellence through monitoring and recommending strategies to Board and staff;
- **Finance and Audit**, which includes Board and non-Board members, will be chaired by the Treasurer and will oversee and make recommendations about our school's finances and ensure the audit is completed;
- **Facilities**, which includes Board and non-Board members, will initially oversee the selection of the temporary facility and the development of our school's permanent home.
- **Outreach**, which includes Board and non-Board members, will ensure continual effective intra school communications and with the community, coordinate fundraising to meet school goals.
- **Personnel**, composed exclusively of Board members, will establish the Executive Director evaluation process, ensure the evaluation takes place and handles any personnel matter referred to in the employee policies and procedures.

Advisory Board: Advisory Board members provide additional expertise and guidance to the Board of Trustees, Executive Director and staff on an as needed basis. This body has no legal or governance

responsibilities. The Advisory Board will meet at least once annually.

In addition, the Board will appoint ad hoc committees as needed in response to short term needs.

Board Relationship with School Administrators, Staff, Parents and Students: The Board of Trustees will work with the Executive Director to develop appropriate relationships that are supportive and functional for both the roles of the Board and our school administrators, being neither unnecessarily distant in a way that would inhibit the effectiveness of the relationship or roles, nor one in which individual Trustees give direction to staff members, which would undermine the authority of both the Board and Executive Director. The Board will work with school administrators so they understand those decisions in order that implementation is in keeping with the Board's decisions. Further the Board will plan for turning over its initial management responsibilities to our school administrators through a process that will begin when the first Executive Director is hired.

One aspect of appropriate relationships that the Board will take responsibility for is ensuring that Trustees understand and act as a Board and do not take individual actions as a Trustee unless specifically authorized to do so by the Board. Individual Trustees who perform volunteer activities beyond their roles as Trustees will keep their volunteer activities and Trustee roles separate and make that clear to parents, staff and others.

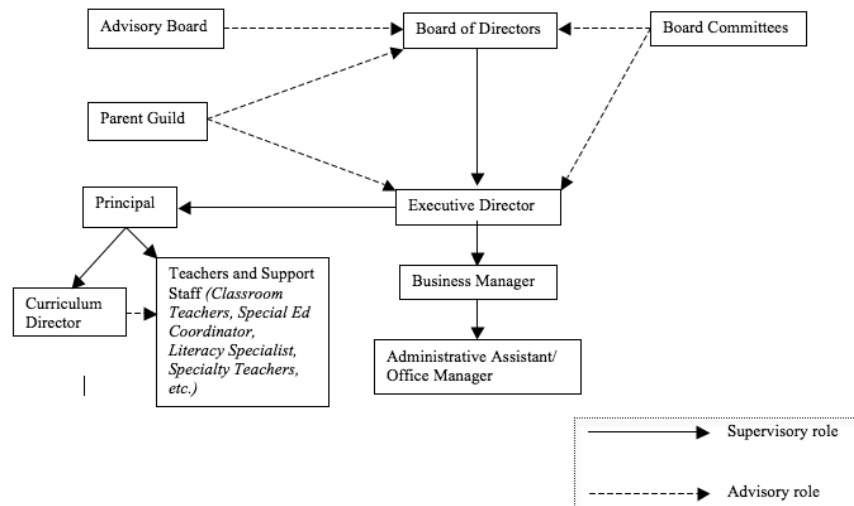
Also important is the relationship between the Board and the parents and students. At all times, there will be at least two parent Trustees, as per the School Reform Act and our bylaws. Parents and students will be strongly encouraged to provide their views on important school matters through meetings, focus groups and surveys and via individual conversations with Trustees and administrators. Trustee elections will be widely advertised and the Nominating Committee will work closely with our school community to identify and cultivate outstanding Trustee nominees.

b. Rules and Policies

The City of Trees PCS' Trustees will ensure the development and implementation of policies in the following areas: academics, operations, personnel, financial management, student discipline, governance, communications, organizational performance, drug-free workplace, non-discrimination, compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and areas mandated by District or Federal laws and regulations.

To complete the policies, the Trustees will charge appropriate committees of the Board to develop policies based on the information from experts, best practices, other charter schools and related credible sources that are consistent with the City of Trees PCS' mission, philosophy and values. The Board will approve personnel and financial policies by the time the first hire is made. The rest of the policies will be completed by June 2012. Staff will have input into the personnel policies at the beginning of our school year, with the final policies to be determined by the Board. These policies and procedures will be summarized into handbooks, one for students and their families, one for staff, and another for volunteers, detailing information appropriate to each group. These will be available to all staff, parents or caregivers and volunteers annually at the beginning of our school year. If important changes are made to any of the policies during our school year, our school will communicate those changes to our school community.

c. Administrative Structure



Teacher, Parent, and Student Input into Decision-Making: In addition to the Board using committees to carry out its executive functions, committees are a strategy to broaden the input and generate as many avenues for parents, teachers and community members to invest in the development, activities and governance of City of Trees PCS. Committees will be convened to advise and make recommendations to the Board pertaining to school policies and activities. Committees will also carry out tasks in their respective areas as approved by the Board.

With the exception of Personnel, most committees will include a minimum of one parent of an enrolled student and a Trustee. This is one way to ensure parent involvement as well as build leadership skills for all who are interested and serve as a possible path towards becoming a Trustee. Additionally, the Executive Director may participate on any committee except the Personnel as a non-voting member. The Principal may participate on the Academic Rigor, Facilities and Outreach committees as a non-voting member. Membership on a Committee will be at the discretion of the Chair of that committee. Each committee will develop a charter outlining the scope, role, and its responsibilities and once approved by the Board, will begin work. The Board has decision-making authority with committees providing advice and recommendations to the Board. Due to the unique role that Committees will have in serving as advisors to the Board, members will go through an orientation to ensure that each member has a clear understanding of the committee’s charter, committee policies and the goals and projects of the committee.

Board meetings will be held regularly with the agenda for each meeting posted in advance so that members of our school community can provide input into decisions and discussions. The Trustees will ensure that annual climate surveys of parents and teachers occur and integrate the results into their work. The Trustees may hold special open community sessions to generate discussions and seek

recommendations, and on issues of particular interest the Trustees may go even further to solicit input by holding focus groups or sponsoring surveys.

d. School Management Contracts

Our school does not plan to hire a management company.

3. Finance

a. Anticipated Sources of Funds

Anticipated Per Pupil Allocation: City of Trees PCS’ primary financial objective is to fund its core operations entirely from District of Columbia public funds and federal entitlements. We understand that a school’s financial feasibility is largely determined by achieving the projected student enrollment. Based on a strong demand for Waldorf-inspired teaching methods in the DC market as well as City of Trees PCS’ multi-faceted outreach efforts, we are confident that we will achieve the student enrollment reflected in the budget.

As the budget illustrates, City of Trees PCS’ projects DC per pupil public revenues of \$1,912,438, or 79.5% of total Year One revenues. The per pupil revenue funding is based on Pre-K to second grade revenues of \$1,379,810; Special Education, Limited English Proficient (LEP)/Non-English Proficient of \$144,339; and facilities revenues of \$388,289.

First year revenue projections also include \$337,659 of federal entitlements and federal funding, which represents 14.0% of total revenues. Federal entitlements in Year One are comprised of \$46,114 of No Child Left Behind funds and \$31,545 of Federal Lunch Reimbursement funds; and federal funding includes \$260,000 of Title V b funds. During the first year of operations, City of Trees PCS’ projects receiving \$155,226 of private funds, or 6.5% of total revenues, which represents school lunch sales.

For the sake of conservatism, we have not included any public or private grant funds, nor have we included any fundraising money in our budget. It is important to note, however, that the Board of Trustees and school staff will be committed to help raise additional school funds by pursuing public and private grant opportunities as well as holding fundraising events. While our core operations do not rely on these funds, the money that we receive from these sources will strengthen the school’s financial position and improve our credit worthiness with financial institutions.

City of Trees PCS worked with GoldStar Group, Inc. to develop our budget. The table below outlines our anticipated sources of funds during the Planning Year and the first two years of operations. Additional budget details can be found in Section F.

	Planning Year	Year 1	Year 2
Student Enrollment			
Pre-Kindergarten		52	26
Kindergarten		26	52
Grade 1		22	26
Grade 2		22	22
Grade 3		-	22
Total Students		122	148
Percentage Special Education		11%	11%
Percentage LEP		8%	8%
Per Pupil Allocation			
Pre-Kindergarten		\$12,337	\$12,707
Kindergarten		\$12,337	\$12,707
Grade 1-3		\$9,490	\$9,774
Per Pupil Facilities Allowance		\$3,183	\$3,278
Per Pupil Revenue			
Total Per Pupil Allocation		\$1,379,810	\$1,675,340
Total Facilities Allowance		\$388,289	\$485,171
Total Special Education Funding		\$101,635	\$122,572
Total LEP/NEP Funding		\$42,704	\$52,782
Total Per Pupil Summer Allocation		\$0	\$101,361
Total Per Pupil		\$1,912,438	\$2,437,225
Other Public Revenue			
Federal Entitlements	\$180,000	\$306,114	\$342,781
National Food Program	\$0	\$31,545	\$39,416
Total Other Public	\$180,000	\$337,659	\$382,197
Private Revenue			
Supplemental Program Fees*	\$0	\$88,561	\$104,621
Paid Meals	\$0	\$66,665	\$83,298
Total Private Revenue	\$0	\$155,226	\$187,919
Total Revenue	\$180,000	\$2,405,323	\$3,007,341

* Before-Care/After-Care and Summer Program

The assumptions used for the numbers of Special Education and LEP students in this chart are intentionally slightly lower than those in the enrollment chart in Section 5.c of the Business Plan because we have more conservatively estimated the numbers for the budget in an effort to not be too reliant on those funds.

Additional Resources: We will apply for \$220,000 from the Walton Family Foundation to pay for expenses related to the Planning Year and Year One of operations. Again, in the interest of creating a conservative budget, we have not included this money in our projections. Once chartered, we will apply for this funding, which would be available during the Planning Year and Year One of operations. It is worth noting that City of Trees PCS has a strong relationship with Walton Family Foundation, which awarded our school a pre-authorization grant of \$30,000 in November 2010. City of Trees PCS was the only applicant school in DC to be awarded Walton Family Foundation pre-authorization funds this year.

Contingency Planning: In the event that per pupil allocation funds are not available as early as expected or are lower than expected, City of Trees PCS will employ the following cost-control measures:

- **Increase Enrollment:** In order to keep the early childhood education class sizes small and to increase the teacher-to-student ratio, we currently have 3 Lead Teachers and 3 Assistant Teachers for approximately 50 students. If we experienced budget shortfalls, we would consider increasing the pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten class sizes to increase revenues while keeping the teacher-to-student ratio at a manageable level. In addition, our current enrollment plan includes only one grade per year (with the exception of two pre-Kindergarten classes in Year One). If necessary, we would consider increasing our school size to include two classes per grade, which would increase revenues by approximately \$1.1 million per year.
- **Reduce Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment (FF&E):** Our first place to look for cost savings would be in our school's FF&E line item. If necessary, we would purchase fewer computers (potential cost savings of \$8,400) and/or reduce classroom furniture expenditures by \$3,000 (potential cost savings of \$18,000).
- **Reduce Number of Assistant Teachers:** If enrollment numbers are lower than anticipated, we would consider reducing the number of Assistant Teachers. The potential cost savings is approximately \$35,000 per Assistant Teacher.
- **Curriculum Director:** The Curriculum Director position could be reduced to a part-time position. This would save our school up to \$30,000 in Year One.

Five-Year Financial Goals and Objectives: City of Trees PCS' primary five-year budget goal is to generate excess revenue on a yearly basis. To that end, our projections show that we will accumulate approximately \$1 million in the first five years of operations. We intend to use this excess revenue to build a cash reserve for unexpected expenses and to develop strong credit worthiness, which will be crucial in financing a long-term, permanent facility for our school. We understand that we will need a strong balance sheet and a successful operating history to secure a revolving line of credit of at least \$100,000, which is helpful in managing a growing charter school's cash needs with seasonal federal and District cash infusions. Another five-year budget goal is to develop a successful and sustainable fundraising strategy to augment the anticipated revenues in the budget. These funds will help strengthen our school's financial position and will allow us to provide better learning environment for our students.

b. Planned Fundraising Efforts

Pre-Opening Period: To be financially conservative, our budget does not rely on fundraising dollars outside of Title V-B during the pre-opening period, so whatever funds we do raise from our planned efforts in the community will only strengthen our budget. In addition, if we should receive both Walton Family Foundation and Title V-B funding as anticipated, we will far exceed our budgeted revenue. The fundraising plans for the pre-opening phase through grant applications and individual giving are outlined below.

Foundation and Government Grants

- Apply to the Walton Family Foundation for the additional \$220,000 of start-up grant funds to build on our initial WFF grant of \$30,000.
- Apply to the DC Office of the State Superintendent for Education for Title V-B and other funding.
- Build relationships in the local funding community to maximize our prospects of receiving relevant private grants.

- Research www.grants.gov for federal funding opportunities and state and local government agencies for their grant solicitations.
- Build relationships with federal, state, and local government agencies to maximize prospects for being awarded grant funds.
- Research vehicles such as the Foundation Center and notices from membership organizations will be routinely culled for possibilities.

Individual Giving

- Continue to grow and call upon our base of support in the community through events, list building, word of mouth, social networking sites and neighborhood list serves.
- Enhance our current online giving capacity by utilizing the most user friendly technology and popular sources, such as greatergood.org
- Commend the Founding Group's current 100% participation in giving, provide opportunities to strengthen their financial investment and develop opportunities for each member to include their networks and contacts in fundraising efforts.

Planned Fundraising Activities: City of Trees PCS will build on its significant foundation of grants and individual giving during the pre-opening period to secure our long term donation goals in addition per pupil funding and will budget accordingly as additional funds are secured. We will commit to conservatively budget for fundraising. In addition to continuing to build on the plans outlined in the previous section, the following plans will be implemented once our school is open:

- Establish an annual giving campaign incorporating the families of current students, teachers and staff into the broader list of community supporters to cultivate and solicit.
- Identify and cultivate supporters of greater means into a major donor program with the goal of becoming independent from grant funding (other than per-pupil funding) after the first several years.
- Integrate giving opportunities into all events and festivals each year that target both the families of students as well as the larger community.
- Explore feasibility of hiring professional fundraising staff.
- Explore feasibility of a Capital Campaign.

c. Financial Management and Accounting

Financial Management and Internal Accounting Procedures: City of Trees PCS will use the accrual basis in accounting for all monies and follow the Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) outlined by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. The fiscal year will begin July 1 and end June 30. City of Trees PCS has been working with GoldStar Group, Inc. to develop these initial procedures and will contract for audit services from the list of DCPCSB's approved auditors list. City of Trees PCS will complete its financial policies and procedures by the first hire, December 2011.

The Finance and Audit Committee of the Board will work closely with the Executive Director and Business Manager to ensure the audit is completed in a timely fashion. Staff audit preparation will begin on June 1, a month in advance of the end of the Fiscal year.

An important Board responsibility is to ensure the proper handling of monies. The Financial Policies and Procedures Manual will clearly outline strong and well defined financial controls, provide for all reporting

required by DCPCSB, OSSE, the IRS and its financial contributors along with an audit. Some of the areas to be outlined in the financial policies and procedures include the following broad areas:

- Investment of assets of the organization will be crafted to avoid conflicts of interests and being careful stewards of all monies. An example of this policy is to document the classes of assets in which the reserves of our school might be invested; this activity will be overseen by the Finance Committee.
- Internal control procedures to identify and address inevitable human error and as importantly, fraud and theft. Procedures will include a system of checks and balances. For example, disbursing monies; a staff member requests monies for an item/activity in written form, the request is approved by the Business Manager, the check is produced by the off-site accountant and signed by the Executive Director.
- Purchasing practices to ensure City of Trees PCS is getting the best prices for its plethora of purchases and to avoid fraud and theft. An example of this policy is to develop 3 bids for all purchases and contracts over \$5,000 and follow the public bid procedures mandated by the Public Charter School Board for bids over \$25,000.
- Unrestricted current net assets that City of Trees PCS intends to accumulate to manage its financial risks and provide for financial and cash flow stability. This policy will include for the establishment of and budgeted annual contributions to a reserve. The reserve goal will grow as our school grows.

Each area contains substantial policies and procedures that the Board will carefully construct and review before approval.

The Business Manager will oversee the daily financial operations under the guidance of the Executive Director with the Board retaining financial oversight and responsibility. Additionally, City of Trees PCS is considering contracting with a firm that specializes in financial and compliance management for DC charter schools. This firm would assist with the annual budgeting process, monthly bank reconciliations, BVA and Cash Flow Analysis, preparation of Board presentations, and grant and financial compliance management.

Cash Flow Management Plan: Managing cash flow is likely to be a challenge, particularly in the early days of our school, given the schedule of the per pupil disbursement. The Board will ensure that monthly cash flow planning is done and evaluated, carefully plan for a cash flow interruption by setting up a line of credit and building cash reserves. If cash flow becomes a problem the Board will decide on whether to use the line of credit or draw down the cash reserves.

Based on current projections, City of Trees PCS will have positive cash flow despite the seasonality of per pupil funding. In the unlikely event that we need to access cash from outside sources, we will have a working capital line of credit with a financial institution.

d. Civil Liability and Insurance

We are working with Early, Cassidy & Shilling, Inc., which is among the leaders supporting the insurance needs of charter schools in DC. We will meet or exceed coverage limits detailed in the DCPCSB guidelines for 2011 as shown in the table below.

Coverage Type	Estimated Limits
General Liability	\$1 million per occurrence; \$2 million aggregate
Trustees and Officers Liability	\$1 million
Educators Legal Liability	\$1 million
Student Accident	Per student basis
Umbrella Coverage	\$3 million; \$5 million if providing transportation
Property/Lease Insurance	100 percent of replacement cost
Boiler and Machinery Insurance	\$1 million
Auto Liability Insurance	\$1 million
Workers Compensation	As required by law

e. Provision for Audit

The Board Finance and Audit Committee will oversee the annual audit. The Committee will choose an independent certified public accountant that will conduct the audit in accordance with government auditing standards and with Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards and DCPCSB’s audit policies; the firm will be chosen from the Charter School Board’s list of approved auditors. The School will provide all financial information and data to the auditor in order to complete the audit in a timely fashion. Upon the completion of the audit, a copy will be submitted to the DCPCSB in accordance with published deadlines - currently November 1.

4. Facilities

a. Identification of a Site

City of Trees PCS plans to locate in the greater Shaw-Logan Circle neighborhood of Washington, DC. The Shaw-Logan Circle neighborhood is roughly bounded by 16th Street NW to the west, North Capital Street to the east, L Street NW to the south, and Euclid Street NW to the north. Wards one, two, five and six are within these boundaries. We are focused on identifying facilities that appropriately reflect the principles of Waldorf education. For example, to the extent possible, we will attempt to locate our school in close proximity to outdoor space. In addition, we will put an emphasis on providing ample space for creative expression and free play in the early education classrooms. City of Trees PCS intends to locate near public transportation to best serve its target population.

We recognize that identifying and securing a suitable facility is one of the most critical tasks involved with successfully launching a charter school. To that end, the Board of Trustees has created a Facilities Committee that is focused on developing the facilities plan and exploring facility options in the Shaw-Logan Circle neighborhood. The Facilities Committee includes or will include individuals who have extensive knowledge of Waldorf education, real estate finance, brokerage, city planning and architecture.

Members of the Facilities Committee have made significant progress towards identifying a facility. The facilities search was launched in November by bringing together a wide array of experts with real estate, charter school and design experience, including representatives from Howard University’s real

estate department, Jair Lynch Development Partners, DC’s Office of Planning, real estate finance professionals, architects, city planners and Waldorf education experts for a planning session.

We anticipate locating in an interim space for the first two years of operations and then moving to a permanent facility in Year Three (school year 2014-15). With respect to a temporary location, we are pursuing several avenues. First, we are working with Tom Porter at Building Hope (who has provided a letter of support) about the availability of incubator space, and we will continue this over the coming months. The following spaces may serve our needs and are in locations near public transportation:

- **2437 15th Street, NW** (square footage to be determined)
The Josephine Butler Parks Center is a multi-purpose former embassy on a half-acre lot with a multi-media lab, teaching kitchen, and incubator loft. It is located adjacent to Meridian Hill Park.
- **3029 14th Street, NW** (approximately 12,500 square feet)
The facility includes six classrooms, multi-purpose space, office space, nurse’s office, teachers’ room and a warming kitchen. It is ADA compliant. Building Hope leases this space to charter schools.
- **2001 S Street, NW** (approximately 8,000 square feet)
This facility also includes six classrooms, multi-purpose space, office space, nurse’s office, teachers’ room and a warming kitchen. It is ADA compliant. Building Hope leases this space to start-up charter schools.
- **915 Rhode Island Avenue, NW** (approximately 11,500 square feet)
Founding members visited this facility on January 10, 2011. This three-story building with an elevator and onsite parking has been gutted for immediate design and build out.

City of Trees PCS has begun to discuss an option of permanent location alongside our partner organization, Washington Parks & People (WPP) and owner of the Josephine Butler Parks Center at 2437 15th Street Northwest Washington D.C., DC 20009, a suitable permanent location for our school. The goals of both organizations have an overlap regarding using parks and green space throughout the city and the possibility of co-residing with WPP on this site on a temporary or permanent basis will provide more facilities options for City of Trees PCS.

The Facilities Committee will also research commercial space. We recognize that the Shaw-Logan Circle neighborhood has low vacancy and relatively high rents; as a result, it may be difficult for us to find a space in the target neighborhood that is financially feasible. We will work with commercial real estate brokers that specialize in charter school facilities, including Dennis Perkins at CB Richard Ellis.

Lastly, the Facilities Committee will research vacant DCPS sites that are available for sole tenancy or co-location with another school.

Timetable to Identify School Location: The Facilities Committee will continue to research potential facilities during the application review period. Upon approval of its charter, City of Trees PCS anticipates the following timeline to secure a site:

Activity	Timeframe
Site Search	Ongoing
Site Selection	August 2011
Negotiate Lease	November 2011
Execute Lease	December 2011
Architectural design, if applicable	January 2012
Renovation out to bid, if applicable	January 2012
Selection of contractor, if applicable	February 2012
Renovation, if applicable	February to April 2012
Completion of renovation	April 2012
Occupancy	May 2012

b. Site Renovation

Not applicable.

c. Financing Plans for Facilities

We recognize that a school must have a strong credit history to receive facility financing. City of Trees PCS currently has a banking relationship with Wachovia. Once chartered, we will open a line of credit with Wachovia to establish a track record of strong credit.

We anticipate financing our interim facility in Years One to Three solely using the per pupil facility allocation. In the first three years of operations we will create a cash reserve that will be used to help finance a permanent space. As mentioned above, we will focus on creating a history of strong credit during our planning year and initial operational years so that City of Trees PCS will be a credit worthy borrower when we need to seek facility financing from banking institutions. We will also continue our conversations with Building Hope to explore the different financing services that they provide. In addition, we will meet with individuals at City First Bank and Eagle Bank to better understand the facility financing programs they offer.

d. Building Maintenance

City of Trees PCS is dedicated to providing students a clean, safe and inspiring learning environment. We understand that our facility must comply with all applicable building codes and requirements for occupancy permits for a public charter school. We are considering the use of Building Hope incubator space, in which case facilities maintenance would be provided by a reputable firm with significant charter experience. To the extent that we do not use such incubator space, we will hire a professional firm that specializes in charter schools to maintain the building and ensure that our facility complies with all applicable codes and standards. The Facilities Committee will develop a monthly inspection checklist to ensure that we exceed all applicable building code requirements on an ongoing basis. Monthly maintenance checklists will be reviewed by the Board of Trustees at least quarterly.

5. Recruiting and Marketing

a. Outreach to the Community

City of Trees PCS will publicize our school and its program by continuing to build relationships with

parents, children, businesses, community leaders and groups, educators, and the Waldorf community. In the past year, our school has held public information sessions widely attended by potential parents, educators, and others interested in public Waldorf education. We have reached out to every ANC Commissioner in our school’s target neighborhood, secured letters of support from the two Shaw-Logan Circle Council members and made contact with several houses of worship in our neighborhood. In addition to burgeoning online interest and support, City of Trees PCS has also had an in-person presence at DC Greenfest and Capitol Hill School Information night. For a full listing of our Founding Partners who will be integral to community outreach (see Section B1a).

Outreach Effort	Details
School Sponsored Events	In Summer 2010, we began offering the parent/child classes called Saplings/Seedlings Garden providing Waldorf-inspired instruction for young children. We will continue to develop and publicize enrichment programming.
Elected Officials	We have reached out to the five Advisory Neighborhood Commissioners in the Shaw-Logan Circle area, and have received letters of support from Council members Graham and Evans.
Community Groups and Churches	We are seeking support of community and civic associations and continue to develop relationships with local church, temple, and mosque leaders.
DC Charter Schools	We have conducted informational meetings with the following DC Charter Schools: E.L. Haynes, Elsie Whitlow Stokes, Capital City, Washington Yu Ying, Septima Clark, Two Rivers, and will be partnering with Center for Inspired Teaching to recruit teachers. A letter of support is attached.
Electronic Marketing	Websites: The City of Trees PCS website and Facebook fan page detail our mission and efforts to become chartered. Listserv: We have used local parenting groups to publicize our efforts and classes. We will continue to communicate our activities to these focused groups and will identify additional opportunities to expand our online reach.
Print Marketing	We will place fliers publicizing our school in neighborhood locations, including community event boards at parks, pools, recreation centers, boys’ and girls’ clubs, community health centers and pediatricians’ offices, pre-schools, and day care facilities throughout the city. We will place one-time advertisements in papers such as the Washington Post, The City Paper, The Dupont Current, the In-Towner, and Metro Weekly. We will reach out actively to publications such as the Washingtonian, Washington Parent, and Washington Life for news coverage about our school.
Strategic Partnerships	We are a member of the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education which shares information and best practices among Waldorf-inspired public charter schools. Washington Parks & People unites DC citizens with the outdoors and provides community space for many children’s’ classes and events. We will distribute information to community members there.

	Howard University School of Education and Center for Urban Progress offers expertise in diverse youth and families; youth and families placed at risk; youth and consumer culture; expressive therapies promoting wellness, and social policies influencing youth and family development; evaluations of school and community-based early childhood education programs
	National Network of Partnership Schools at Johns Hopkins University facilitates schools, districts, states, and organizations to join together and use research-based approaches to organize and sustain excellent programs of family and community involvement that will increase student success in school.
Community Events	We will continue to hold regular community meetings in a wide range of locations and venues in order to attract the broadest possible audience, including sites known for their centrality and accessibility to hard-to-reach families. When possible, food and childcare will be provided.
	We will distribute literature at local farmers' markets and other key neighborhood festivals and fairs such as U Street Dog Days, the U Street Movie Series, NBC4 Health and Fitness Expo, events at the Lincoln Center, and Adams Morgan Day.
	We will present at school fairs including DC PCSB's yearly charter school exposition.
Founding Families Campaign	We will create a Founding Families Campaign in the summer of 2011 to actively seek out parents and community members willing to help with tasks including recruitment, administrative assistance, and fundraising

School as Resource to the Community: We have identified several programs that can be institutionalized as examples of our community inclusive efforts:

- **Early Parent Child Education Workshops:** Our school will sponsor ongoing early childhood education workshops for the community that will be held at our school where facilitators will share best practices for families to use in supporting their children's education. Possible topics include: (a) strategies that parents/families can use to augment children's academic achievement at home; (b) effective behavioral management strategies with children; (c) healthy eating and physical activities to support children's development; and (d) protecting children from unhealthy commercial messages on the screen (TV, Internet, cell phones).
- **Family Resource Center:** A Family Resource Center (FRC), located in our school building, will be created and outfitted to institutionalize our school-family-community partnership programs and will be a work space for parents to locate educational materials and work on school projects.
- **Community Cultural Connections:** The DC area is rich in cultural diversity with its many people, places, and events that promote and celebrate diversity such as its international embassies, museums focusing on various cultural groups, and cultural events highlighting the contributions of diverse cultures to the nation and world. Our school will systematically capitalize on and connect with these community institutions and events that can be infused into the City of Trees PCS parent/family/community programs and other academic support programs.

Our school also intends to provide meeting space for community and non-profit groups in the FRC and in other rooms in our school, as appropriate. In addition, we will work with the community to identify and participate in volunteer opportunities, including membership on our Board of Trustees.

The Nominating Committee of the Board of Trustees has as one of its tenets that the Board reflects the community that City of Trees PCS serves, and we will strive to ensure appropriate community representation on the Board and its committees.

b. Recruitment of Students

City of Trees PCS recognizes that student recruitment in an economically and racially mixed neighborhood in Washington, DC such as Shaw-Logan Circle requires special consideration and strategies. Our school will diligently try to seek those children in the community who would benefit the most from a local, Waldorf-inspired school experience. In order to fulfill this expectation, we must also recognize the limitations that families in the neighborhood are faced with such as minimal computer or internet access at home or cell phones. While we have included online outreach techniques to address the portion of the community with whom that will be effective, we recognize that online outreach at homes is not an effective way to reach the entire community and so have developed multiple alternative approaches. City of Trees PCS proposes to seek students for its 2012 school year with several methods, some of which are detailed below:

- Meetings with leaders of charter school organizations (e.g., Public Charter School Association, Friends of Choice of Urban Schools) to provide information and literature that can be introduced and distributed to their memberships.
- Community meetings held in a wide range of locations and venues in order to attract the broadest possible audience including sites known for their centrality and accessibility to families. When possible, childcare and refreshments will be provided.
- Meetings with leaders of social justice and civil rights organizations (e.g., Washington Urban League, National Council of La Raza, National Black Child Development Institute), to provide literature and information that can be introduced and distributed to their memberships.
- Meetings with leaders of faith institutions (e.g., churches, temples, and mosques) to provide information and literature that can be introduced and distributed to their memberships.
- Booths and literature at neighborhood farmers' markets, festivals, and fairs (e.g., U Street Dog Days, U Street Movie Series, Lincoln Center events, Adams Morgan Day).
- Charter school recruitment fairs at the Washington Convention Center
- Convention Center events (e.g., Green Festival, NBC4 Health and Fitness Expo, job fairs).
- Chain and local grocery and home stores (e.g., Giant, Whole Foods, Target, Home Depot).
- Waldorf-inspired Saplings Garden and Seedlings Garden parent-toddler and parent-infant programs with successes (e.g., participant numbers and reviews).
- Flyers marketing City of Trees PCS in relevant locations in Shaw-Logan Circle and the broader metropolitan areas (e.g., colleges and universities, community boards, recreation centers, health centers, child care centers, pre-schools).
- Public service and paid advertisements in city newspapers and public radio stations (e.g., Washington Post, City Paper, Northwest Current, Dupont Current, In-Towner, Metro Weekly, Washington Afro American, El Tiempo Latino, WPFW Pacifica Radio's community programs for Black, Latino, and

Native American programs, WAMU)

- Articles published in magazines (e.g., Washingtonian, Washington Parent, and Washington Life).
- Websites, blogs, and listservs (e.g., Greater Washington, The Prince of Petworth, A Parent in Silver Spring, DC Urban Moms, DC Metro Moms, U Street Tots, Dupont Circle Parent, Kalorama Playgroup).
- City of Trees PCS Facebook Page and forthcoming Twitter account.
- Neighbor-to-Neighbor software with proven success in the last presidential election where a decentralized web of supporters manages growing layers of outreach.
- Founding Families Campaign (forthcoming) to actively seek parents and community members willing to help with tasks (e.g., administrative, fundraising, and community outreach).

After City of Trees PCS opens, our recruitment efforts will employ some of the same strategies, but will be expanded to include our school functions and fundraisers as marketing tools.

Founding Group members and contributors believe fully in the recruitment of students from across DC. Many of our Founders are parents and through their involvement with City of Trees PCS, they have actively engaged other parents and community members. Their enthusiasm for City of Trees PCS, passion for the mission, and belief that our school is the best choice for their children is compelling to other parents. Founders' connections with other parents have given us a networking base in the hundreds that mirrors the diversity of our community.

City of Trees PCS will use community organizing and outreach to ensure that families of *all* students are aware of CTPSC opportunities and have equal opportunities to enroll and participate in our school's activities. To recruit students whose parents do not initiate contact with us, we have reached out to civic groups, met with church and community leaders, and will continue to employ strategies detailed above.

With respect to the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 1987, we will seek to recruit students from families who are designated as homeless through seeking meetings with leaders of community-based organizations (e.g., Columbia Heights/Shaw Family Collaborative, North Capitol Collaborative, Latin American Youth Center, and Community Partnership for the Prevention of Homelessness), social service agencies, and the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE). City of Trees PCS will work with DC's Child and Family Services Agency to reach out and recruit students who are designated as wards of the state, and we will follow OSSE guidelines with respect to collecting enrollment paperwork from students who are homeless.

Lottery, Recruitment, and Enrollment: In compliance with the DC School Reform Act, if the number of applications received for enrollment exceeds the capacity for pupils per grade, a public lottery will be conducted for that grade level(s). Parents or guardians of all applicants will be notified via U.S. mail of the lottery location and time. We have targeted late March for our lottery; for more information on our school enrollment timeline, please see Section 1a in the Plan of Operations. After the lottery is held, the families of all students selected for admission will be contacted regarding their intent to enroll. The class roster for the affected grade will include the students whose names were drawn in lottery order totaling the number of enrollment openings for that grade.

The remaining names will compose the wait list for that grade in order by lottery number, and to ensure

that students can migrate from wait list to the enrolled list quickly when they are eligible, City of Trees PCS will require that all applicants who are offered admission after our March lottery submit their enrollment forms by May 1. If space becomes available, admission will be offered to the next student on the waiting list. Applicants who are placed on the waiting list and are subsequently offered enrollment will be required to respond within one week after our school sends an enrollment form. Applicants not responding in the allotted time will be removed from consideration. For more on our timeline, please see Section 1.a in the Operations Plan.

Enrollment preference categories to be identified prior to lottery include: (a) siblings of a student selected during the lottery; (b) sibling of a student already enrolled; and (c) children of Founding Group members (up to 10% of enrollment or 20 students, whichever is less).

Sibling Enrollment: To ensure the academic and financial success of City of Trees PCS, student recruitment will be year-round. Siblings of already enrolled students will be given priority status and will be exempt from lotteries, assuming there is adequate space in the grade for all siblings. If there is not adequate space, then a separate sibling lottery will be held. Siblings must complete applications concurrent with general enrollment, and indicate where appropriate that a sibling is already attending our school.

Ensuring Sufficient Enrollment: City of Trees PCS believes that an effective recruitment strategy combined with the Waldorf-inspired approach of our school will ensure we meet our enrollment goals. Based on initial interest in our school, including close to 250 names on a City of Trees PCS community list serve and wait lists for the Saplings and Seedlings garden classes, there is a clear demand for this type of education. Given the uniqueness of the educational model, we expect that students will come from across the city. Waldorf is a proven educational philosophy that is internationally known and highly sought after. The arts-infused, developmentally staged, and differentiated model will make it an attractive option to DC families.

It is apparent from wait lists of other schools in the area that there is demand for quality education in Shaw-Logan Circle. Enrollment at City of Trees PCS will impact other competitive schools by shortening their wait lists. Our school will ensure that more students will get the quality, individualized education they desire and make progress towards providing DC students with a wider range of educational options and open seats. Another facet of our school that we feel will enhance successful recruitment of students is its emphasis on creating a positive, healthy impact on the surrounding community and its families. For a discussion on these themes, please reference the Demographic Analysis (Section I).

To ensure optimal enrollment, ongoing recruitment and outreach is a priority for all City of Trees PCS stakeholders. If under-enrollment occurs, we will adjust the number of faculty, staff, equipment, and other materials to allow for an operable budget. Please reference the budget in Appendix F for more budget details.

c. Future Expansion and Improvements

Grade	Year 1			Year 2			Year 3			Year 4			Year 5		
	Total	SpEd (13%)	LEP/NEP (8%)	Total	SpEd (13%)	LEP/NEP (8%)	Total	SpEd (13%)	LEP/NEP (8%)	Total	SpEd (13%)	LEP/NEP (8%)	Total	SpEd (13%)	LEP/NEP (8%)
Pre-K	52	4	5	26	4	1	26	3	2	26	4	3	26	4	3
K	26	4	5	52	4	1	26	4	2	26	4	3	26	4	3
1	22	4		26	4	1	52	4	2	26	4	2	26	4	2
2	22	4		22	4	1	26	4	2	52	4	2	26	4	2
3				22	3		22	4	3	26	4	2	52	4	2
4							22	4	3	22	3	2	24	3	2
5										22	3	2	22	3	2
6													20	3	2
Total	122	16	10	148	19	12	174	23	14	200	26	16	222	29	18

Our school will open in 2012 with 52 students in pre-Kindergarten, 26 students in kindergarten, and 22 students in first and second grades, adding a grade each subsequent year. The percentages of students with Special Education and LEP needs are based on citywide averages, and our school wants to be programmatically prepared for high percentages of those students. The smaller class size in the 1st and 2nd grades in our school's first year will allow for greater class development and individualized attention to ensure the successes of the lead classes which did not experience the early childhood classes at our school. The pre-Kindergarten and kindergarten program will include mixed-age classrooms (4, 5, and 6 years old) with 19-20 students in each of four early childhood classrooms. The kindergarten students in the four classrooms will combine to form one 1st grade class in 2013-2014 with 26 students. Given the unstable home lives of many students in our target population and the experiences of other elementary charter schools with similar student demographics, we expect to experience close to 10% attrition each year.

New students will be welcomed to our school to fill empty spaces at every grade level, however, in an effort to maintain established classroom dynamics, the baseline class size is allowed to drop slightly between first and eighth grade to minimize the number of new students added to a class each year. Class sizes will be allowed to drop from 26 to 24 students in the 4th grade and 22 students in the 6th grade. The target enrollment numbers for each grade are a baseline. Teachers and administrators will decide on a class by class basis whether a particular class would benefit from adding students beyond the baseline or whether the educational needs of the current students would be better served by a smaller class size in the upper elementary grades. Unlike a language immersion school, where introducing a new student without prior language knowledge would be an unachievable goal, adding a few new students to a classroom at City of Trees PCS each year can invigorate the class, while the individualized and differentiated teaching inherent in the Waldorf approach facilitates a smooth transition for new students.

Although our intention is to grow our school slowly with only one class per grade, in order to open with only four grades in 2012-2013, but with enough students to afford a high quality facility and robust staff, we will start with two pre-Kindergarten classes. This two class cohort will work its way up to the 8th grade, preceded and followed by grades with only one class. We chose to double the size of the pre-Kindergarten rather than one of the other grade levels, both for programmatic reasons (the benefit of beginning with students when they are young), and because we believe recruitment of 52 new students will be most feasible at this level. The staffing issue due to a one-time increase to two sections is mitigated by the multi-loop model in which one individual teacher follows the same cohort of students for

multiple grades.

Yearly expansion will be supported by the kind of work currently being done to grow City of Trees PCS from an idea into a school supporting 122 students its first year. We predict that our academic record and school culture will speak highly of our successes, which will, in turn, attract top teaching candidates. We anticipate using the same methodologies to attract and retain additional staff as we would to fill vacancies. Our plans for community engagement will reap a positive reputation as a good neighbor.

C. Plan of Operation

1. Student Policies and Procedures

a. Timetable for Registering and Enrolling

Date	Activity
July – September, 2011	Development of student application in English and Spanish
Upon conditional approval – March, 2012	Active recruitment begins; open houses held
November 1, 2011	Publicly announce application period dates and enrollment lottery date and location
November 15 th , 2011	Admissions application available; beginning of application period
March 26 th , 2012	Admissions application deadline
March 29 th , 2012	Public lottery held (if demand is greater than capacity)
April 5 th , 2012	Notification by mail to accepted and wait list students
May 1 st , 2012	Intent to enroll forms due
May-July, 2012	Verification of DC residency
May 15 th , 2012	Fill any remaining open slots with wait listed students
May – June 2012	Registration information completed; orientation dates scheduled; collect information on special needs students
July 2012	Orientation and open houses held for enrolled families
August 27, 2012	School year begins

b. Policies and Procedures for Enrollment, Withdrawal, Suspension, and Expulsion of Students

Enrollment Eligibility: Admissions to our school will be open to any student of appropriate grade level who resides in the District of Columbia. Students will be considered without regard to ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, language proficiency, disability, or achievement level or any other basis prohibited by law. If the number of students who apply for enrollment exceeds the available capacity, a public lottery will be held and a waiting list will be implemented. On the other hand, if space remains after all District residents are enrolled, non-residents may enroll and pay tuition as established by the District.

Upon acceptance and prior to admission, parents/guardians and students will be invited to attend an orientation meeting and sign a letter indicating they understand and are committed to the outcomes, philosophy and program of our school.

City of Trees PCS will conduct an entirely open enrollment process where no information gathered will be used to differentiate among prospective students. As required by the District, our school will request proof of residency and student immunization records. If an Individual Education Plan (IEP) exists, the family will be asked to provide a copy for the student's records and also authorization for the transfer of

those records from the student's previous school(s).

Withdrawal: Students may seek to withdraw at any time during our school year. City of Trees PCS will conduct an exit interview with parents/guardians of the withdrawing student. Information gathered will serve as a learning tool for faculty and staff, and inform future improvements to our school.

Suspension and Expulsion of Students: Part of the City of Trees PCS school culture is the setting of high expectations for academic achievement and interpersonal conduct. Our school expects students to practice good citizenship by conducting themselves in a courteous, compassionate, and respectful manner. Students must display positive language and behavior when dealing with themselves, other students, staff, and teachers. Our school believes self-discipline to be foundational to education and respect for humanity is part of the fabric of our school. As such, students have a responsibility to know and observe school policies, rules, and regulations. Violations will result in disciplinary action. The Board will direct our school administration to establish rules and regulations necessary to create and preserve conditions essential to orderly operation of our school.

In order to promote learning and protect the safety and well-being of all students, City of Trees PCS will develop a code of conduct and discipline policy. This policy will be distributed as part of the student and parent handbooks, and will be discussed with parents/guardians and students at orientation. Keeping the parents informed about the expectations of conduct at our school and how students are living up to those expectations is key to a collaborative approach to student behavior.

Staff shall enforce disciplinary rules and procedures including suspension and expulsion fairly and consistently. Corporal punishment shall never be used. City of Trees PCS will always provide notice and a hearing before suspending or expelling a student, as required by the U.S. Supreme Court to protect students' due process rights. Suspended or expelled students shall be excluded from all school and school-related activities unless otherwise agreed during the period of suspension or expulsion.

Actions involving students with disabilities will be addressed in accordance with state and federal law. City of Trees PCS' policy on suspension and expulsion of students with disabilities will adhere to the specific procedures for disciplinary actions that involve students with disabilities as outlined in the 1997 amendments to IDEA.

Redress: Decisions regarding expulsion may be challenged by parents/guardians. The parent/guardian must file an appeal in writing to our school's Board of Trustees. The Board will consider the appeal, making a decision that will be final.

2. Human Resource Information

a. Key Leadership Roles

Chief Administrative Officer (100%): This position will be the first our school intends to fill. The duties of the Chief Administrative Officer will be carried out by Adrienne Gallo until we hire a full-time Executive Director. Adrienne, whose resume can be found in Section G, has been the visionary lead Founder of City of Trees PCS since its inception in January 2010. Deeply dedicated to the vision and mission, Adrienne possesses a thorough knowledge of City of Trees PCS' philosophy, educational design, curriculum and operations. She brings over 13 years of professional experience as a licensed architect,

including project management, leading collaborative processes, administering budgets of over one million dollars, and developing real estate. Through her work over the past year establishing City of Trees PCS, Adrienne has gathered experience in community outreach by organizing events, speaking publically on behalf of City of Trees PCS and growing a listserv including nearly 250 supporters. Additionally, in that time, Adrienne conceived of and successfully implemented an ongoing parent/toddler class – Saplings Garden - which sought to introduce interested community members to the Waldorf methodology and gauge support for a charter school following the same methods. Adrienne is adept in a collaborative leading style that will be essential to the process of hiring leaders with the qualities identified as necessary to the success of City of Trees PCS. She will be supported in this role by Founding Group members Valerie Graff, with her non-profit governance, management and organization development expertise, and Elizabeth Zwicker with her data and grant expertise. Also, Adrienne will call on Anne Wotring as necessary for her deep understanding of school administration best practices and Waldorf philosophy.

Curriculum Leader (100%): Until we hire a Principal, Jack Petrash, whose resume can be found in Section G, will fill this leadership position. As a master Waldorf teacher and national expert on the Waldorf philosophy and practice, Jack will manage the implementation of all aspects of the academics, including leading curriculum design, coaching teachers, leading the literacy programs, and ensuring training for teachers and staff. His twenty-five plus years of classroom experience and his time spent translating Waldorf best practices to urban public approaches qualify him for this position. Jack's leadership in the Founding Group includes conducting study groups in Waldorf tenets and discussions about their implementation in a DC public charter school. Jack will be supported in this role by George Hoffecker, Laura Birdsall, Selma White, Helen Cymrot, and Velma LaPoint.

Business Officer (100%): Until a full-time Business Manager is hired, Brett Macleod will fulfill this role. Brett's strong business qualifications include financing projects of millions of dollars in value combined with his deep experience in financial management, budgeting, cash flow and planning. He has considerable management experience from his past employment and his current Vice President position, including planning, executing, overseeing loan processes, and working closely with a large number of internal and external stakeholders. These are complemented by his background in teaching and designing courses, making for a well-rounded Business Officer for City of Trees PCS.

Legal Counsel (100%): Joseph Ciani-Dausch, an antitrust attorney in Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP's Washington, DC office, has provided *pro bono* legal counsel to City of Trees PCS in connection with the preparation of this petition. He has agreed to continue providing legal counsel on an interim basis if a charter is granted to City of Trees PCS. He will be assisted by his colleagues Pankaj Sinha and Christopher Ulery, partners in Skadden's Corporate practice group. Messrs. Sinha and Ulery have previously provided *pro bono* legal representation to Bridges Public Charter School, both prior and subsequent to its opening.

b. Qualifications of School Staff

As core requirements, all staff and faculty will:

- Consider it an honor to be in the presence of children.
- Fully support the mission, vision and values of our school and actively and enthusiastically participate in our professional learning community.
- Demonstrate a strong desire to teach a highly differentiated academic curriculum and have an unwavering belief that all students can achieve at high levels.

Specific qualifications and standards for key positions are outlined below.

Executive Director:

- Minimum of Master's degree (MBA preferred)
- Deep commitment to Waldorf pedagogy (experience preferred)
- Demonstrated relevant experience in organizational leadership, school management, finance, communications and working with a Board.
- Successful track record of building donor relationships and securing donations
- Understanding of the need and benefit of reporting on our school's performance and operations
- Passion for working in an urban environment with diverse students and staff (experience preferred)
- Commitment to high levels of academic achievement for all students
- Excellent communication, interpersonal skills and demonstrated ability to work with a wide range of stakeholders

Business Manager:

- Business educational training (MBA preferred)
- Experience in managing school operations and finances including reporting as needed and required

Principal:

- Minimum of Bachelor's degree
- Experience in school administration, preferably as a Principal
- Profound understanding of and deep commitment to Waldorf pedagogy
- Extensive classroom teaching experience in a Waldorf or Waldorf-inspired school.
- Passion for working in an urban environment with diverse students and their families
- Commitment to high levels of academic achievement for all students
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills

Curriculum Director:

- Minimum of a Bachelor's degree.
- Extensive classroom teaching experience in a urban environment and preferably in a Waldorf or Waldorf-inspired school.
- Experience as a teaching mentor or trainer of teachers
- Experience in developing and adapting curriculum
- Profound understanding of and deep commitment to Waldorf pedagogy
- Passion for working in an urban environment with diverse students
- Commitment to high levels of academic achievement for all students
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills

Special Education Coordinator:

- Experience in and commitment to inclusion model of special education.
- Significant experience monitoring and supporting special needs students in general education classes,

designing services, developing IEPs and administering annual testing (for IEPs).

- Willingness to commit to ongoing training and professional development in Waldorf pedagogy and Waldorf remedial methodologies
- Experience with ELL students
- Experience as a program coordinator and in supervising staff

Teachers:

- Highly qualified, as defined by the No Child Left Behind Act.
- Minimum of a Bachelor's degree and have passed the appropriate Praxis, if applicable.
- Portfolio of work that demonstrates excellent teaching, preferably in an urban environment
- Willingness to commit to ongoing training and professional development in Waldorf pedagogy, standards based instruction and student assessment
- Passion for working in an urban environment with diverse students
- Commitment to high levels of academic achievement for all students
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills

Assistant Teachers:

- Minimum of a Bachelor's degree.
- Highly qualified, as defined by the No Child Left Behind Act.
- Highly motivated to support teachers and students in classroom
- Willingness to commit to ongoing training and professional development in Waldorf pedagogy, standards based instruction and student assessment
- Interest in becoming lead teacher
- Passion for working in an urban environment with diverse students
- Commitment to high levels of academic achievement for all students
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills

Administrative Assistant:

- Bachelor's degree (or equivalent in experience)
- Excellent communication and strong interpersonal skills
- Ability to multi-task and prioritize

Other faculty, including Special Education Teachers, ELL Coordinator, Literacy Specialist, and Specialty Teachers will have appropriate qualifications for their roles in our school and be able to demonstrate proficiency in their specific area. All faculty and staff will be committed to the Waldorf pedagogy and ongoing training and professional development.

Standards for other school staff will depend on the specific position. For example, the office support staff will serve a variety of roles in our school and therefore their skills should include the ability to multi-task, manage databases, and interact effectively with the parent and student community at the front desk. We will seek to employ people with a passion for working in an urban environment with diverse students, a

basic understanding of a whole-child approach to education and strong interpersonal skills, regardless of their role in our school.

These standards and qualifications are on par with or exceed NCLB requirements.

Staff Qualities: We will hire teachers who understand the demands of our school's teaching rigor and embrace them. We will look for teachers who demonstrate flexibility, a joy for learning themselves, team-work and an openness of mind to improving their teaching skills. Some of our teachers will have an extensive Waldorf background. Others will be effective public school educators whose teaching methods are in line with Waldorf methods of instruction. Because the Waldorf instructional model shares research-based best practices found in other educational models such as interdisciplinary block scheduling, arts infused curriculum, the use of multiple modalities and multiple intelligences in core academic instruction, a broad range of experiences and enthusiasm will be sought. Our school will be strengthened by hiring a spectrum of teachers such that we will have on staff teachers with familiarity and depth of understanding of Waldorf alongside teachers who have extensive experience working with students with a diversity of academic needs.

A particular emphasis will be placed on recruiting teachers with experience in urban schools, with an interest in Waldorf education, and with a desire to use new approaches to teaching. Recruitment of teachers who reflect the racial, ethnic and cultural diversity of the communities of the students we serve will also be strongly emphasized. Finally, we will seek teachers who are able to communicate effectively with and earn the trust of their individual students. It is important that all teachers understand and are ready to take on the challenges inherent in the first year of a new school.

Teacher Recruitment: City of Trees PCS will hire faculty and staff that can demonstrate the high level of commitment critical to carrying out the mission and goals of our school and to meet the demands of a new public charter school. We understand the challenge of recruiting qualified teachers and the importance of hiring teachers who are committed to our school's mission and will reach widely to find highly qualified faculty. We have already received numerous unsolicited resumes and job inquiries and have begun to build a bank of interested teachers that have reached out to us over the past year. In addition, we will take a grow-your-own approach to building our faculty through providing our teachers, with demonstrated excellence in teaching and an interest in Waldorf methodologies, with an on-site, ongoing teacher training program provided by our partner the Nova Institute. The Nova Institute is designing a program tailored to City of Trees PCS to train our faculty and staff in the methods of Waldorf education in the public context.

We believe being the only Waldorf-inspired public charter school on the east coast will be attractive to those Waldorf teachers who are interested in teaching in a public setting. We will recruit public and private school teachers alike, through a nationwide search as well as inside Washington, DC and the surrounding area. Our competitive salaries compare extremely favorably to salaries in Waldorf schools across the country.

Eight teacher-training institutes exist in the Washington DC Metro area, along with Teach for America, as potential sources for teacher recruits. City of Trees PCS and Center for Inspired Teaching have agreed to partner in placing appropriate teachers-in-training in our school as Assistant Teachers. Another strategy is to hire Assistant Teachers who are on a teaching career track. The salaries for Assistant Teachers are higher than other schools in the area, we have Assistant Teachers in all early childhood and elementary

grades classrooms and our professional development emphasis will attract candidates.

City of Trees PCS will recruit through directly identifying and pursuing exceptional candidates, as well as advertising in Waldorf Training Centers, Waldorf World website, www.waldorfteachers.com, National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, local universities, and other websites/media to be identified. We will continue to develop and expand our recruitment strategy as we move closer to our expected opening date in August 2012.

We will advertise nationally and locally, post our positions at local colleges and universities, and submit announcements to Waldorf Teachers Training Centers including Antioch College, the Rudolf Steiner College and Bank Street College, all of which educate teachers with Waldorf-inspired or similar methods. We will make a particular effort to recruit a diverse teacher population, in particular African American and Latino teachers, to ensure that staff represent the diversity of the District and of our student population.

Recruitment of teachers will be initiated by the Principal. For all applicants, we will require a letter of interest, a resume, and a minimum of three references. Our school may also request a biographical sketch, copies of professional/educational credentials and certificates, verification of previous employment, health examination, driving record, and interview as part of the application process. Resumes will be screened by the Principal or assigned personnel to ensure minimum qualifications are met. Resumes of qualified candidates will be forwarded to an assigned Interview Committee or individual for review and interviews.

The interview process will require prospective candidates to teach a demonstration lesson so the interview committee members can ascertain each candidate's experience, skills and knowledge of teaching, Waldorf-inspired methods, teaching in an urban setting and to students with widely diverse needs. City of Trees PCS will have a non-discrimination policy applied to the recruitment and hiring processes.

Background Checks: City of Trees PCS will conduct background checks on all employees prior to their hiring using an independent private firm with international search capabilities. Our school will require a criminal history records check for all people, whether adult or juvenile, who either work with students or have access to students. The process requires fingerprinting, and each employee or volunteer is responsible for scheduling and completing the fingerprinting process promptly upon hire or at our school's request, whichever comes first. Our school will reimburse the fingerprinting costs. Employees and others who work at our school and who do not complete this process will be subject to remedial measures, which may include termination of employment.

c. Staffing Plan

	Pre-Opening	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Administrative Staff						
Executive Director	December, 2011	1	1	1	1	1
Principal	December, 2011	1	1	1	1	1
Business Manager	June, 2012	1	1	1	1	1
Administrative Assistant			1	1	1	1
Data Analyst		0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Academic Staff						
Classroom Teacher		6	7	8	9	10
Assistant Teacher		6	7	8	9	10
Curriculum Director		1	1	1	1	1
ELL Specialist		0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Special Education Coordinator		1	1	1	1	1
Special Education Teachers		1	1	2	2	2
Literacy Specialist		0.5	1	1	1.5	2
Specialty Teachers		0.375	1	1	2	2
After Care Director		0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
School-wide Average Student Teacher Ratio		10 to 1	11 to 1	11 to 1	11 to 1	11 to 1
Total Staff		20.375	24.5	27.5	31	33.5
Beginning in year one, City of Trees PCS will hire the following contracted employees: a part-time data analyst, a part-time Spanish teacher, a part-time handwork teacher, and a part-time music teacher. When the school is large enough, these will become part-time and then full-time positions. Special education and ELL specialist services will be contracted on an as needed basis.						

Description of Chart

Pre-Opening Administrative Staff: Immediately after we receive our charter, the Founding Group will begin the search for a full-time Principal and full-time Executive Director. These two leaders will work together to support the vision of our school. The Executive Director will primarily handle issues related to business aspects of our school, and the Principal will primarily focus on the teaching and learning in our school. Both positions will be hired to begin work in December of 2011 and will work for seven months before the next fiscal year begins the following July. The full-time Business Manager will be hired in June to support the efforts of the Executive Director and Principal.

Administrative Staff for Years 1-5: A part time Data Analyst will be brought on in Year One, and a full-time Administrative Assistant will be added in Year Two.

Classroom and Assistant Teachers for Years 1-5: Each class will have a full-time Classroom Teacher and a full-time Assistant Teacher. In Year One, there will be six classrooms with a Classroom and Assistant Teacher in each. As a new class is added to our school each year, a new Classroom and Assistant teacher will be hired.

Curriculum Director for Years 1-5: There will be a full-time Curriculum Director beginning in Year One and continuing in a full-time capacity each year thereafter. The Curriculum Director will provide the foundational underpinning for the ongoing professional development and teacher support in our school. They will serve as a mentor to teachers and will act as a bridge to connect Waldorf curriculum and pedagogy to proven best practices in education. The Curriculum Director will enable teachers with or without Waldorf teaching experience to be successful by giving ongoing support of Waldorf-inspired lesson planning and delivery.

Literacy Specialist for Years 1-5: There will be a half-time Literacy Specialist for the first year. As our school grows, we will have a full-time literacy specialist in Years Two and Three then add another literacy specialist beginning in Year Four. The Literacy Specialist will support the teaching staff in improving literacy instruction in our school as well as mentoring teachers and supporting curriculum design.

ELL Specialist for Years 1-5: There will be a half-time ELL Specialist starting in Year One. The Coordinator will provide direct services to students, support teachers, coordinate any contracted services and manage student IEPs.

Special Education Coordinator and Special Education Teachers: The Special Education Coordinator will oversee the administration and integration of special education services as well as provide assessment and intervention for students with special needs. S/he will coordinate and collaborate with contracted personnel to provide integrated services. In Years One and Three, Special Education Teachers will be hired. The Special Education Teachers will provide assessment and intervention for students with a variety of special needs. Based on an assessment of the characteristics of our student population, we will select incoming staff with the appropriate special education backgrounds to address the full spectrum of needs of our students.

Specialty Teachers for Years 1-5: In Year One, part-time Specialty Teachers will be contracted to teach Spanish, handwork and music to the first and second grade students (specialty classes are held within the early childhood classrooms). In Year Two, a full-time Specialty Teacher will be hired and in Year Four a second Specialty Teacher will be hired.

After Care Director for Years 1-5: A part time After Care Director will begin in Year One. S/he will coordinate the hiring and supervision of After Care staff and will ensure that the program is consistent with City of Trees PCS' mission and philosophy.

The school wide average student teacher ratio is listed in the chart, but it is worth noting that the early childhood student teacher ratio is 10 to 1, and the elementary school ratio is 13 to 1.

Teachers Working Together

Our school's mission to foster children's love of learning and nurture their physical, emotional,

intellectual and social capacities by applying the Waldorf principles of education depends on a gathering of a highly qualified team of administrators and educators who will work effectively together to ensure that all aspects of our school are driven by this mission. All adults in the building will be viewed as educators in as much as they are interacting with students and modeling behavior in the building. As a community of professionals and lifelong learners, we consider all adult interactions in the building to be an important model to our students for how to work collaboratively and with respect for each other. As much as possible, all adults will be included in training during the year to ensure that the mission and goals of our school are understood and actively supported by everyone in the building.

Every student in pre-K through 5th grade will be in a classroom with two teachers, a classroom teacher and an assistant teacher. These educators will work together to ensure that both the group and individual needs in the classroom are met. Assistant teachers will be viewed as teachers in training and they will participate in all aspects of faculty professional development.

The Curriculum Director will play a critical role in our school of assisting highly skilled teachers without a Waldorf background in developing and implementing a Waldorf-inspired curriculum. This staff member will also serve as a teacher mentor and as a facilitator during the weekly professional development and team meetings during the early release day.

The ELL Coordinator and Special Education Teachers will be used for both in-classroom and pull-out services and support for students. These faculty members will be critical in determining the best support plan for students in need, and coordinating with the classroom teachers to provide those services directly, or to support the teachers in methods best suited for the student.

The Special Education Coordinator and Special Education Teachers will collaborate with contracted personnel to provide educational support based on best practices. They will ensure that every student is able to participate fully in the City of Trees PCS curriculum and achieve academic success. Any teacher can refer a student who is struggling academically or behaviorally to the Educational Support Team. The Educational Support Team will be a resource to all staff about the broad range of special education issues.

Specialty teachers will also play an important role in coordinating their specialty subjects with the other academic curricular work of the students. These teachers will work as partners with the classroom teachers and will offer an important perspective during grade level meetings and discussions about students.

As described in Professional Development (section A4.a) staff will have a half-day each week to meet together to continue professional development training and to work together as a staff to make decisions on school matters. The active engagement of teachers in running our school ensures that our school's program will be acutely responsive to the needs of the student body. This ongoing evaluation of school services, as well as adjustments and improvements to school routines, is necessary to ensure that the mission and goals remain vibrant and alive, rather than becoming stagnant and unresponsive.

d. Employment Policies

City of Trees PCS will look for a diverse group of educators who have strong preparation and experience teaching in their respective grades or content areas, experience or familiarity with urban education, multicultural educational issues and the needs of students with disabilities. We intend to hire a staff that is

committed to Waldorf principles as a basis of student learning, even if not initially experienced as a Waldorf educator.

City of Trees PCS intends to hire faculty and staff that are experienced, highly motivated and culturally diverse. Our school will be an equal opportunity employer and drug-free workplace (see below), and will comply with all applicable laws and regulations. Our school will reserve the right to terminate employees without cause. Employees will be terminated for cause in case of problems such as consistent neglect of duties, poor performance, failure to act in the best interests of the students, families, faculty, staff and school as a whole; or criminal acts.

Because the Waldorf approach to education is highly collaborative, we anticipate that dismissals will occur rarely. Teacher's contracts are planned to come up for renewal in February, allowing time to bring on new staff. In the rare event, following efforts to address the issue(s), that a person's employment must be terminated, our school will work with the employee as much as possible to make it an amicable separation. Depending upon the circumstances of the termination, the employee may be eligible for unemployment compensation.

Salaries, Benefits, and Hiring: Salaries and benefits will be based on a number of factors on which the Trustees, Executive Director and Principal will continually seek input from staff and monitor. The most important factors are performance, the salaries and benefits set forth by DCPS, benchmarking with other DC public charter schools and the resources of City of Trees PCS. Attracting and retaining highly qualified teachers is a primary goal for our school so salaries and benefits are a major factor in achieving this important goal. Thus, City of Trees PCS' compensation packages for teachers will reflect the high level of accomplishment and experience expected of its teachers.

All eligible employees will have paid vacations and holidays.

City of Trees PCS will benchmark the selection and hiring processes comparable to that used by other public charter schools and Waldorf schools. These processes will include a background check and verification of permission to work in the United States.

Our school will be an equal employment opportunity workplace and will proactively work to hire a diverse faculty and staff. Our school will be a drug-free workplace. More specifically, City of Trees PCS will bring together an experienced, highly motivated and culturally diverse faculty and staff. Employees will be selected on the basis of skill, training ability, attitude, and character without discrimination with regard to race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, genetic information, disability, source of income, or veteran status. In short, our school will be an equal opportunity employer and drug-free workplace, and will comply with all applicable laws and regulations in that regard. We will enforce zero tolerance policies regarding drugs.

Future Policies and Procedures: By December 2011, the Board will create comprehensive personnel policies and procedures drawing on research into best practices, advice from experienced DC public charter and traditional public schools and education experts.

City of Trees PCS' Board of Trustees will develop comprehensive personnel policies and procedures that

promote understanding and engagement with Waldorf principles and practices, professionalism, collaborative and inclusive leadership practices, ongoing learning, and trust within the staff. The personnel policies and procedures will include staff job descriptions, outline the evaluation process, salary and benefit plan and other policies designed to attract and retain a committed and highly qualified faculty.

Some parts of the personnel policies and procedures—primarily, performance appraisals – will necessarily be revised with staff input. The Trustees will also ensure that the needs of our school are balanced with the needs of the staff and are consistent with the Waldorf approach of continual learning, creating an environment which supports open feedback.

An official Personnel Manual will be created in partnership with legal counsel and approved by our school's Board.

Evaluations and Compensation: City of Trees PCS intends to provide for continual development for all staff through the evaluation, supervision, professional development, mentoring and related processes and supports.

In addition to routine, ongoing feedback on performance and professional issues, all staff will be evaluated annually by the process set forth in the employment policies and based on their own job descriptions, goals, objectives and related performance indicators.

Teachers and Staff may be asked to complete self-evaluation forms. These forms are used to assist with setting goals for future years and/or to establish whether or not the employee's self-reflections are consistent with those of the organization. The self-evaluations are filed in personnel folders in the office of the Executive Director. They will be destroyed between three and six years after separation from employment with our school.

The Executive Director and Principal will receive specific evaluations based on gaining input on their performance by the Board, staff, parents and others they work with. Given the visibility and impact on our school, both positions require evaluations that take those factors into account. Broader input into the evaluation of the Executive Director and Principal provides information about their performance including perceptions of key stakeholders to whom they also have responsibility. The feedback will be integrated into their evaluation so each can see their strengths and areas of potential development. The Trustees are responsible for evaluating the Executive Director.

The Executive Director will evaluate the Principal and Business Manager. The Principal will evaluate the teaching staff. The Business Manager will evaluate her/his direct reports. Evaluations will be based on clearly established performance expectations and goals set at the beginning of the staff person's employment and annually thereafter. All dimensions of the job will be evaluated.

The evaluator will appropriately seek input into each staff person's evaluation but make all final evaluation decisions. This is in keeping with the Waldorf philosophy of having an active learning environment based partly on open feedback. All staff will emerge from their evaluations with a professional development plan agreed to by both the employee and supervisor. Our school will support the development plan by providing both time and resources to the employee.

Increases in salary and benefits will be dependent on a number of factors including individual performance in achieving expectations and goals, school resources and the priorities set forth by the Trustees. The Trustees and Executive Director will include salary and benefit increases and professional development resources in each annual budget. All staff will understand resources available for compensation increases and professional development.

Wages and benefits will be regularly reviewed to provide optimum total compensation, consistent with good management practices and competitiveness with schools with which City of Trees PCS competes. Fringe benefits, available to all staff, may include: participation in a retirement plan; access to medical, dental, and vision insurance; participation in a flexible spending account; parking; and access to Metro SmartBenefits, a pre-tax transportation expense plan.

Provision for Current DCPS Employees: Our school's employment policy will include provisions for hiring current DCPS employees. Should a current DCPS employee come to work at our school, he/she may request a two-year leave of absence from DCPS, renewable for an unlimited number of two-year terms. During their time at our school, the employee can choose either: City of Trees PCS paying into the employee's DCPS retirement plan at the specified rate of 7 or 8 percent dependent on the original DCPS hire date; or the employee may participate in the City of Trees PCS retirement plan.

e. Use of Volunteers

City of Trees PCS will recruit, train and retain individuals who will commit to serving our school as volunteers on the Outreach Committee. This committee will be the responsibility of the Executive Director.

The Outreach Committee will be composed of staff, Board members and volunteers who will assist in the ongoing volunteer program. They will pinpoint volunteer opportunities, advertise those to the City of Trees PCS community and recruit volunteers. They will train, support and monitor volunteers to be successful. Given that City of Trees PCS is a parent-initiated school and that parents, families and community members are seen as essential to strengthen the quality of our school and help achieve our school's academic and organizational goals.

Parents will be asked to volunteer at least 30 hours a year, similar to the Latin American Montessori Bilingual PCS, Capital City PCS and Washington Yu Ying PCS models. Upon admission, parents will submit their requested volunteer activities. The Outreach Committee will coordinate this process.

At a minimum, City of Trees PCS will recruit volunteers to:

- Serve on the Board of Trustees;
- Participate in the Parents Guild;
- Share leadership for and staff fundraising projects with staff;
- Support classroom activities, serve as tutors and/or content experts;
- Support field trips and community service activities; and
- Lend a hand in creating and maintaining the garden.

City of Trees PCS will encourage parents and community members to contribute their experience and expertise through regularly and widely posting volunteer opportunities and active recruitment by individual Trustees, volunteers and staff.

3. Arrangements for Meeting District and Federal Requirements

City of Trees PCS will act in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations set out by federal and local authorities.

a. Health and Safety

City of Trees PCS will comply with all health and safety laws and regulations specified in §38-1802.02 (11) and §38-1802.04 of the DC School Reform Act, including the recently passed DC Healthy Schools Act and the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. Our school will pursue having a part time school nurse funded by the Department of Health, and as such will try to find a facility that complies with the requirements for a health suite set out by the National Association of School Nurses (NASN). City of Trees PCS will submit to periodic requested inspections by government officials to ensure compliance with health and safety laws and regulations, including that all students have up-to-date immunizations.

b. Safety (e.g., ADA and Fire Codes for Buildings)

City of Trees PCS will meet the requirements of applicable safety laws and codes, for example, the Americans with Disabilities Act and the DC Code § 5-501 *et seq.* We will provide safety training to students and staff, develop fire evacuation and safety plans, and execute and keep logs for the Public Charter School Board's review of monthly fire drills in accordance with statutory requirements as laid out by the DC Fire Marshal's Office and the International Fire Code Council.

c. Transportation

We will comply with §38-1802.08 of the School Reform Act as it relates to student transportation. City of Trees PCS will ensure that every student who is eligible for reduced fares on Metrobus and Metrorail is aware of their eligibility. To stay consistent with the benefits afforded to students at DCPS, we will participate in the DC student bus token system from Metro, providing tokens available to all students requiring them. We will work with parents and Metro's Office of Mass Transit's School Transit Subsidy Program to ensure that the program is carried out in an efficient manner. We will make arrangements for transportation of students with disabilities through DCPS. If our school is located near streets or intersections with a high volume of traffic, we will ask Metropolitan Police Department to assign a crossing guard or solicit volunteers.

d. Enrollment Data

City of Trees PCS will comply with all requirements of §38-1802.04(c)(12) of the DC School Reform Act and use its Student Information System to track student enrollment data and fully meet the DC Public Charter School Board's and the Office of the State Superintendent of Education's reporting requirements. Our school will perform residency verification for all students and will report data using DCPS student ID numbers to comply with enrollment reporting requirements.

e. Maintenance and Dissemination of Student Records

The Student Information System (SIS) that City of Trees PCS selects will be the primary means to track student contact data, health records, and assessments. The SIS will include basic student information necessary for reporting and school administration purposes and will be compatible with DC Public Charter School Board's management systems. City of Trees PCS will comply with the DC School Reform Act, Parts B and D, and all other applicable laws, such as D.C. Code § 31-401 *et seq.* (Compulsory School Attendance); D.C. Code § 31-501 *et seq.* (Immunization of School Students); D.C. Code § 31-601 *et seq.* (Tuition of Nonresidents); D.C. Code § 29-501 *et seq.* (Nonprofit Corporations).

City of Trees PCS will attempt to obtain student records from previous schools, with knowledge that parental approval for release of those records is necessary. Student records will only be released with appropriate consent from a parent or guardian. Original copies of enrollment and registration forms will be kept in locked file cabinets. We will use student records only for internal school purposes and to disseminate information required for regulatory purposes.

f. Compulsory Attendance Laws

City of Trees PCS will ensure that we comply with the DC Compulsory Attendance Act and that we communicate our deadline for age requirements to the DC Public Charter School Board. School staff will call parents or guardians when students have unexcused absences and will proactively pursue solutions to excessive absenteeism. We will use OLAMS to record attendance data as requested.

g. Subchapter B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 1411, et seq.) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. § 794)

City of Trees PCS will adhere to the details of the Acts specified regarding special education and students with disabilities. Special education services will be developed by professionals who are thoroughly knowledgeable of the requirements of the Act.

h. Title I of the Improving America’s Schools Act

City of Trees PCS anticipates that it will qualify for Title I funding given the demographics of the population we will serve and the neighborhood we intend to locate in. We will apply for Title I funds and meet all their local and federal requirements by using the funds in a manner consistent with their purpose and by meeting the No Child Left Behind requirements of parental involvement and notification, highly qualified teachers, and making Adequate Yearly Progress.

i. Compliance with Civil Rights Statutes and Regulations of the Federal Government and the District of Columbia

City of Trees PCS will comply with all federal and local civil rights statutes and regulations specified by the Department of Justice, Department of Education, and the District of Columbia in SRA §§ 38-1802.02(11) and 38-1802.04(c)(5). Compliance with these ensures that students, staff, and volunteers of our school are not unlawfully discriminated against in any way.

j. Other

City of Trees PCS’ goal is to eventually occupy a facility that meets LEED standards.

4. Implementation of the Charter

a. Timetable and Tasks for Implementation of Charter

Pre and Post Approval Tasks	Started	6/11 - 8/11	9/11 - 12/11	1/12 - 3/12	04/12 - 08/12
A. Accountability					
Begin work on Mission Accomplishment Plan	x	x	x		

Begin developing 1 and 5 year academic & non-academic goals and outcomes	x	x	x	x	
Determine data collection needs & reporting requirements		x	x	x	
Research and choose software to manage student and personnel records and financial information	x	x	x	x	
Finalize student record templates				x	x
Establish suspension and expulsion policies	x	x	x		
B. Admissions					
Begin designing application & registration forms		x	x		
Define student application period	x				
Develop a fair lottery system for selecting students if applications exceed available seats	x	x	x		
Discuss and develop student/parent handbooks	x	x	x		
Develop confidentiality policy for student records			x	x	x
Initiate admissions process by accepting and acknowledging receipt of student applications				x	x
Enter application information into SIS				x	x
Establish and adhere to application deadline			x	x	x
Conduct impartial lottery and establish wait lists (if applicable)				x	x
Send confirmation of admissions or status of wait list.					x
Notify parents of deadline for completing registration					x
Move applicants of wait lists into accepted status and continue registration until school is fully enrolled					x
Request records from pervious schools as students enroll					x
Establish plan for recording and compiling attendance information				x	x
C. Marketing & Recruitment					
Develop community outreach, marketing and student recruitment strategy	x	x			
Determine materials needed to carry out recruitment strategy; informational brochures and fact sheets on school design and curriculum, and powerpoint presentations.	x	x			
Contact community stakeholders	x	x	x	x	

Develop volunteer base	x	x	x	x	x
Hold community informational meetings	x	x	x	x	
Develop group of interested parents & volunteers	x	x	x	x	x
Host outreach/fundraising events		x	x	x	x
Hold open house			x	x	
Run ads, distribute literature, and staff information tables at community events			x	x	x
Conduct search and hire Executive Director		x	x	x	
Conduct search and hire Principal		x	x	x	
Conduct search and hire teachers and other staff				x	
Conduct search and hire business manager				x	x
D. Board of Trustees					
Establish Board of Trustees and recruit new members	x	x	x		
Finalize by-laws and governance documents	x	x			
Schedule first Board meeting	x				
Establish plan for transition from start-up Board to governing body		x	x	x	
E. Development					
Continue to identify and apply for private, corporate, foundation, and government grants and support.	x	x	x	x	x
Refine long term fundraising strategy and set goals		x	x	x	
F. Educational Program Development					
Continue to develop educational program to assure program aligns with educational goals and accountability	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to develop enrichment, after school and summer programs			x	x	x
Hold summer training program for faculty and staff					x
Encourage and support ongoing professional development among faculty				x	x
G. Facilities					

Identify and select an interim school site/facility	x	x			
Ensure facility meets school's occupancy requirements	x	x	x	x	
Complete lease negotiation and signing			x		
Schedule all relevant facility inspections				x	x
If we decide to renovate or build a site, then:					
(a) Secure and /or grants (if necessary) to finance construction		x	x	x	
(b) Begin construction documents and issue RFP's for bids		x	x	x	
(c) Select contractor(s) and finalize construction documents/architectural plans			x	x	
(d) Obtain building occupancy permits as needed				x	x
(e) Create contingency plans and identify temporary space for short-term use if construction/renovation is not completed by start of our school year				x	x
H. Financial Management					
Establish school bank accounts and banking relationship	x				
Develop financial management systems, policies and establish internal controls	x	x	x		
Secure insurance policies	x	x	x	x	x
Establish a payroll system			x	x	x
Implement internal accounting, expenditures vs. budget monitoring and financial reporting procedures.		x	x	x	x
Purchase software for managing finances and generating all required financial reports		x	x		
Select independent auditor certified as a CPA and on approved auditor list				x	
I. Food Service					
Ensure facility meets food service requirements				x	x
Select food services vendor					x
Ensure multiple staff members acquire food service handler certification					x
J. School Governance (See section D)					

Finalize Board of Trustees		x			
Set up Advisory Board		x	x		
Set up Committees of the Board	x	x			
K. Health & Safety					
Have parents complete medical information forms and check to ensure they are filled out completely				x	x
Ensure all staff receives First Aid and CPR certification				x	x
Establish fire evacuation routes, fire drill procedures and a schedule of fire drills				x	x
Orient families and staff on code of conduct, behavior requirements, suspensions and expulsion policies				x	x
Develop risk management plan for emergencies/disasters			x	x	x
Review risk management plan with staff and families				x	x
L. Legal & Organizational					
File application for IRS 501(c)3 status	x				
File application for IRS 501(c)3 status	x				
Receive approval of charter petition		x			
Negotiate and sign contract with DCPCSB		x	x		
Apply for DC tax exempt status		x			
M. Parental Involvement					
Ensure ongoing and meaningful involvement of parents in school governance, committees, classrooms, fundraising and other activities				x	x
Ensure ongoing and meaningful involvement of parents in school governance, committees, classrooms, fundraising and other activities				x	x
Establish and carry out process for choosing parent trustees					x
N. Procurement					
Order and manage receipt of instructional materials				x	x
Order and manage receipt of instructional materials				x	x

Order and manage receipt of desks, furniture and classroom equipment				x	x
Order and manage receipt of office equipment and supplies				x	x
Order and manage receipt of computers, software, etc.			x	x	x
Order and manage receipt of kitchen, recreational and other necessary equipment and supplies				x	x
O. Special Education					
Identify students entering with a valid or previous IEP, 504 Plan and/or Special Education Eligibility					x
Obtain cumulative files (including IEPs and all reports), and other relevant background information related to special needs, from previous schools and agencies					x
Create record keeping process, records to be held in locked cabinets to ensure confidentiality			x		
Hire special education staff and contract with outside providers for appropriate special education service delivery				x	x
Continue to develop pre-referral and referral procedures for students with potential special needs	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to develop Special Education Services and service delivery approach	x	x	x	x	x
P. Personnel					
Develop personnel policies, procedures, and handbook			x	x	x
Develop employee benefit and retirement packages		x	x		
Determine staffing needs	x	x	x	x	
Design employment applications and contracts		x	x		
Finalize salary scale/compensation plan			x		
Conduct background checks as required			x	x	x
Create personnel files			x	x	
Conduct search for teacher sand staff and interview candidates			x	x	x
Conduct employee orientation and pre-opening professional development activities					x

Research policies and procedures for staff taking leave from DCPS			x		
Establish staff evaluation policies and forms				x	x
Distribute class lists and cumulative records to teachers as appropriate					x
Q. Technology					
Determine computer and other technical procurement					
Purchase computers and other technology				x	x

b. Maintenance and Reporting of Academic and Non-Academic Performance Data

City of Trees PCS knows the importance of sound data management in any discipline, and members of the Founding Group have close to fifteen years of experience with data collection, maintenance, analysis, and usage, and thus know how crucial it is in school settings. City of Trees PCS will implement a technology structure with a high speed internet connection of at least a T-1 and using a Student Information System (SIS), most likely PowerSchool, as early as is feasible in the planning year.

The information gathered in the SIS will inform school leadership and other staff about progress towards and alignment with school goals. Accurate and reliable data will be analyzed to serve as timely feedback on how our school is performing on various indicators: student attendance, health, testing, portfolios, and behavior to name a few. City of Trees PCS will use the SIS to make informed decisions about enrollment projections and school capacity which both affect financial projections for our school. With sound usage of data in the SIS, City of Trees PCS will be in a position to determine whether investments in additional interventions or student supports delivered returns.

City of Trees PCS will also take advantage of technology to store homework assignments, school schedules, and communications between students, parents, and teachers. Since City of Trees PCS will be in close contact with the parent community, storing contact information electronically and periodically updating it will be important. It can also store records of prospective parents and students for recruitment purposes and contacts for fundraising.

The use of a Student Information System (SIS) will be necessary for reporting to the DCPCSB, the State Superintendent of Education, the community, the School Leader, and private grantors by lending efficiency to reporting with fast response times and high overall performance capabilities. The investment of resources into collection of student assessments, attendance, health records, portfolios, and enrollment figures necessitates timely usage of the information to make both sound business and educational decisions that are in the best interests of our students.

City of Trees PCS will attempt to place as many measures and data points in the SIS as possible so as to take advantage of the benefits of having one system store and synthesize much of our school's data. Since it is not possible for any one system to meet all needs, the SIS we select, will be Schools Interoperability Framework (SIF)-compliant; working collaboratively with other disparate reporting systems. This provides for both much needed connectivity between systems, and for software longevity.

City of Trees PCS firmly believes in a continual improvement philosophy for our school such that data drives decisions and communicates progress towards stated goals such as the effectiveness of policies and teaching methodologies. This continuous feedback is necessary to cultivate an environment of quality improvement and will be an integrated part of our school's culture of learning. Teachers will be able to use data to make decisions about lesson plans and student goals. The results of traditional assessments and the non-traditional measures of success that we will use will be stored in our SIS, as will course information. City of Trees PCS will use the data gleaned from the SIS to evaluate the quality of instruction and make adjustments where necessary.

Too many organizations are data rich and knowledge poor. We will not fall into inertia by failing to use the data we collect. Most staff members will be trained on the use of the SIS, because City of Trees PCS will commit to maintaining data quality and data-driven decision-making. The Executive Director will oversee these functions. A Data Analyst and Business Manager as backup will have responsibility for day-to-day reporting, will develop a calendar of reporting due dates, and use customizable reports to quickly answer requests for data from stakeholders. In Year One, we will contract for part time Data Analyst services. This structure of accountability will ensure the vital role of collection and usage of performance data in our school.

c. Major Contracts Planned

We foresee entering into the following major contracts that will be \$25,000 or greater:

- Insurance
- Food service, food service equipment
- Accounting and compliance outsourcing
- Library and media services
- Intensive special education services, including occupational and speech therapy
- Lease for incubator space
- Building architectural services, construction, renovation, financing, and maintenance

City of Trees PCS will thoroughly review all major contract options with the protocol that best meets our financial needs. Before our school enters into a contract at or above \$25,000, it will submit a copy of the contract to PCSB for review. Our school will comply with all requirements pertaining to contracting and procurement established by PCSB.

d. Orientation of Parents, Teachers and Other Community Members

Parent/Family Orientation: It is critically important that parents and families see themselves as partners in their children's education and that they have an understanding of our school's mission, goals and philosophy at the point of deciding to enroll their children at our school. The deepening of this understanding will be important in supporting enrolled families in becoming actively involved in the life of our school in support of their children's academic success. Parent and family orientation will include:

- Information sessions to disseminate information about our school's mission, philosophy, goals and values.
- Parents will be required to attend small group information sessions to help them better understand the

mission of our school

- Pre-opening orientations held in the month prior to opening when parents will again review the mission and goals of our school. Important documents such as a Parent Handbook, school calendar and family contract will be disseminated and parents will learn about policies related to attendance, dress code, school culture and discipline. This will also be a time for parents to meet school faculty and staff and to tour our school site.
- Home visits conducted by children’s classrooms teachers are an important beginning to the ongoing relationship between teachers, students and families. Beginning in the second year of operation, most home visits will occur in pre-K, first grade and sixth grade when children will be beginning a multi-year loop with a new teacher. However, in the first year, all children will have a home visit with their teacher.
- Student exhibitions and school festivals are an important feature of our school and a wonderful opportunity for parents and families to celebrate and engage in their children’s learning.
- On-going parent and family education events will be held during the year, bringing together either outside experts or school staff to continue the conversation about our school’s educational philosophy and strategies for families to support their children’s learning in the home.
- Our school will have a general “Open Door Policy” for parents and families to communicate with faculty and staff.

Teacher and Staff Orientation: The faculty and staff will bring our school’s mission and goals to life. In order to ensure that all staff members are fully committed to our school’s mission, vision and instructional methods, great emphasis is placed on providing adequate and on-going professional development for all staff members. Teachers must not only be supported with training in their curriculum development and teaching methods, but staff must be empowered to actively contribute to the significant decision making of our school. Efforts to build a cohesive, empowered and highly trained staff will be ongoing and will include:

- Teacher recruitment that includes not only careful consideration of applicant qualifications, but also significant communication about our school’s mission and goals to ensure initial commitment of all staff members.
- A two to three week summer training with professional development and preparation time to allow teachers to be ready for the coming school year. The summer training will allow faculty and staff to develop methods of discussing pedagogy and student work as well as to create a culture of active communication and open collaboration. In addition, they will study and work with the practical details concerning the set up of their classrooms, lesson design, and the implementation of an arts-infused curriculum.
- At least four full day professional development workshops during the year to continue the professional development and dialogues begun in the summer.

Student Orientation: Student orientation will serve to engage students in the building of school culture and the expectations for all members of our school community. A significant component of the student orientation is the one-on-one home visit when families will meet with children’s teachers in their homes. This is a special time for teachers to begin to get to know each individual child and his or her family in the context of their home life. This visit is particularly important for our youngest students who may be transitioning to a school environment for their first time.

The orientation will continue during the first weeks of school when students will be introduced to their classmates, students in the other grades and the many faculty and staff in the building who they will see on a daily basis. Students will begin to learn our school norms, will experience for the first time whole school meetings and will begin to identify themselves as part of a larger school community. This student orientation will be a time for students to have their voices heard and valued in the refinement of school rules and to experience that they are respected as important members of our school.

Community Orientation: As soon as we determine the location of our school, we will begin to actively reach out to the community and demonstrate how we can be partners in strengthening the neighborhood. Information sessions will be open to the community and the surrounding community will be invited to take part in school festivals and exhibitions. In the effort to truly be an asset to the community and with recognition that a positive relationship with our community will benefit our students, we will continue to listen for ways that we can further contribute to the neighborhood such as offering school space for community use when possible.

e. Services Sought from the District of Columbia Public Schools

City of Trees PCS does not anticipate seeking services from DCPS. School administrators will work with DCPS to secure student files, identification numbers, and other important student information.

D. Public Charter School Mission Accomplishment Plan

The mission-specific goals of City of Trees PCS stem from our school's programmatic focus on educating the whole child, and reflect the student outcomes and organizational supports necessary to achieve our school's mission in accordance with its philosophy.

Student Goals

Academic goals that City of Trees PCS shares with other schools (such as expectations for high levels of proficiency in literacy, math, science, and social studies) are articulated in the educational plan. The mission-specific goals listed here are drawn from the more comprehensive list of student goals outlined in previous sections of the charter petition, and reflect those aspects of academic achievement unique to our school's philosophy and instructional approach. They represent student outcomes critical for students to have access to and future success in a breadth of academic and artistic endeavors.

Mission-Specific Goal #1: Creativity and Artistic Expression

Arts infusion is a key instructional approach, supporting the development of the whole child. Specifically:

- Students will demonstrate a strong capacity for divergent thinking.

Mission-Specific Goal #2: Habits of Mind and Heart

Students will develop the strong habits of mind necessary for academic achievement. Specifically:

- Students will demonstrate planning, perseverance, clarity, accuracy, and attention to detail in their work.

Organizational Goals

City of Trees PCS is intended to be a vibrant, integrated community in which families and teachers work together in the best interests of the children. The organizational structures of our school will reflect the importance of meaningful and lasting relationships—both between our school and community, school and families, teachers and students, students and students.

Mission-Specific Goal #3: Sustained, Positive Student-Teacher Relationships

Multi-year student-teacher relationships are a hallmark of the Waldorf approach. Accordingly, teacher retention is a key element of the model's success. Our goal is therefore:

- Teachers will build strong, multi-year relationships with students.

Mission-Specific Goal #4: Meaningful Family Engagement

City of Trees PCS believes that families are critical partners in the educational success of their children. Accordingly, we have established the following goal:

- Our school will structure parent education, outreach and communication in such a way that fosters and encourages meaningful family involvement.

These mission-specific goals will provide a framework for teachers, administrators, and support staff to judge the quality of our instructional program and teacher education initiatives. In staff professional development and at other appropriate venues, faculty and staff will consider observations and experiences that speak to whether and how our efforts are aligned with these objectives. Ongoing collaborative efforts will also allow members of our school community to offer ideas for furthering our progress or correcting for weaknesses. Through this process of regular, ongoing reflection, we will build a school-wide culture of accountability and

commitment to these goals. In this context, formal annual assessments of the relevant constructs should largely serve to confirm the findings of ongoing informal assessment and reflection, and allow our school community an opportunity to celebrate its achievements.

Assessment Measures

Mission-Specific Goal #1: Creativity and Artistic Expression

Inherent in City of Trees PCS' curriculum is a focus on creative expression and creative thinking. In order to measure whether this aspect of the curriculum is effective we will administer the Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking (TTCT). TTCT is the world's most widely used and respected battery of norm-referenced creativity tests. These instruments have been used for identification of the creatively gifted and as a part of gifted matrices in states and districts in the USA, especially in multicultural settings, and for special populations around the world. Published by Scholastic Testing Services, Inc. in two equivalent forms, Forms A and B, the **Figural** and **Verbal TTCT** can be used for pre- and post-testing. TTCT consists of nonverbal and verbal sections, Thinking Creatively with Pictures and Thinking Creatively with Words, which are suitable for grades kindergarten through graduate school. The nonverbal forms consist of three sets of activities which require subjects to draw lines to elaborate on a single shape, to draw lines to complete a picture, and to draw as many different pictures as possible using the same shape. The verbal forms consist of six activities that require subjects to generate questions, alternative uses, and guesses. Each of the activities in each of the nonverbal and verbal forms is timed and scored for:

- **Fluency.** The total number of interpretable, meaningful, and relevant ideas generated in response to the stimulus.
- **Flexibility.** The number of different categories of relevant responses.
- **Originality.** The statistical rarity of the responses among the test subjects.
- **Elaboration.** The amount of detail in the responses.

To assess our school's progress toward its mission of developing students' imagination, the nonverbal form of the TTCT will be administered annually to all students in grades K-2, and the verbal form will be administered to all students in grades 3-8.

Mission-Specific Goal #2: Habits of Mind and Heart

City of Trees PCS is committed to a holistic approach to education which supports children in developing strong habits of mind and heart. To assess these skills and dispositions, we will adopt the **Dimensions of Learning – Habits of Mind** rubric developed by Mid-Continent Resources for Education and Learning and distributed through the Association for Curriculum, Supervision, and Development (ASCD) (Marzano, Pickering, and McTighe 1993).

This tool, developed in response to the need for a measurable approach to the widely-used habits of mind approach, consists of 15 clear, observable categories of student behavior and interaction, with descriptors for four levels of student performance. Examples of the Habits of Mind that are assessed through this tool include metacognition, ability to plan, self-evaluation, task perseverance, high internal standards for performance, and divergent thinking.

The Dimensions of Learning tools are widely used within the Coalition of Essential Schools network, and were adapted by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction as the state's framework for thinking skills. City of Trees PCS' teachers will use the Dimensions of Learning rubric to evaluate

students in grades 1-8 in the spring of each year.

Data Analysis of Student Assessments

The data will be thoroughly analyzed to maximize its usefulness as a tool to drive continuous improvement. The following comparisons and questions will inform our exploration of the results:

- School results vs. benchmark target: Are our students developing the desired skills at high levels?
- School results vs. normed results: Do our students demonstrate greater skill on this construct than other, similar students?
- Grade level comparisons: Do our students develop greater skills over time at our school?
- Sub-group comparisons: Are our students achieving comparably, or are some groups of students (e.g. boys, girls, African Americans, ELLs, special education students) lagging behind?
- Test results vs. classroom-based data: Does our students’ performance on this test confirm or contradict teachers’ assessments?
- Classroom comparisons: Are students in various classrooms performing at comparable levels?
- Grade-level averages vs. individual results: Are there any students whose performance is unusually high or low when compared to that of their peers?
- Current year’s results vs. previous results: Have students shown growth on this measure from one administration to the next? When cohorts are compared, does the trend suggest school-wide improvement over time?

Mission-Specific Goal #3: Sustained student-teacher relationships

A key hallmark of City of Trees PCS’ approach is multi-year looping in which the teacher stays with the class for two years in early childhood, five years in elementary, and three years in middle school. The goal of this structure is to allow for deep, sustained student-teacher relationships ideally suited to guide student growth over the long term. To measure our school’s success in implementing the class-teacher approach, we will closely monitor two critical indicators:

- In May of each year, at least 80% of families will report that their child has a meaningful, positive relationship with their classroom teacher.
- Multi-year looping will be the norm for students. Each cohort will have no more than two class teachers during each looping phase (PK-K; 1-5; 6-8).

Mission-Specific Goal #4: Meaningful and Effective Family Engagement

Our primary tool for measuring family engagement will be the Parent Survey of Family and Community Involvement in the Elementary and Middle Grades (Sheldon, S. B. & Epstein, J. L., 2007), recommended by the National Network of Partnership Schools at Johns Hopkins University. This nationally recognized, normed survey assesses parents’ reports of: a) school outreach to involve families; b) attitude about our school; c) present family involvement; d) parents’ responsibilities and skills (role construction and efficacy); e) social networks (with other parents and other adults); f) topics of conversation with other parents; g) family demographics, and allows space for parents’ comments.

Performance Indicators

For each of the instruments included in the Mission Accomplishment Plan, City of Trees PCS will establish measurable benchmarks which clearly outline realistic but ambitious goals as well as the

minimum acceptable levels of performance. Upon conditional approval of our petition, we will procure the technical manuals for each of the proposed assessments and establish at-risk and proficient levels of performance in accordance with the specific properties of each assessment. An example of the type of clear, measurable benchmarks we intend to establish is included below.

City of Trees PCS Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking Performance Benchmarks Adapted from Inspired Teaching Demonstration PCS		
Student Grade	At Risk	Proficient for Grade Level Placement
	<i>End of Year Performance – Average Scale Score (Percentile Rank)</i>	<i>End of Year Performance – Average Scale Score (Percentile Rank)</i>
K (6 yr olds)	109 (55 th percentile)	111 (60 th percentile)
1	110 (55 th percentile)	114 (65 th percentile)
2	111 (57 th percentile)	116 (70 th percentile)
3	104 (60 th percentile)	112 (75 th percentile)

For the Dimensions of Learning instrument, our preliminary benchmark is that 80% of students will be scored at a 3 or higher on each of the Habits of Mind.

For the Parent Survey of Family and Community Involvement, our preliminary benchmark is that the mean response for each domain will be 5% higher than the national norm.

Collecting, Storing, and Reporting Performance and Progress Data

Data Collection: Data intended for external reporting will typically be collected early in the final academic advisory of our school year. Formative data intended to drive any necessary improvement initiatives may be collected and analyzed earlier.

City of Trees PCS has been careful to adopt externally validated assessments that can be reliably administered by classroom teachers or administrators with only a moderate amount of training. Data collection on school and faculty goals will be supervised by the principal and curriculum specialist, with classroom teachers taking responsibility for administering student assessments in line with protocols established by the publishers of the instruments.

Data Storage: Our school will develop intra-office systems and acquire appropriate technology to meet the needs for data storage. In terms of technology, Microsoft Excel is typically sufficient to manage medium-sized data sets and perform relatively sophisticated analyses and statistical tests. This software should be sufficient to handle data storage and management needs until a Student Information System is identified and adopted. We will examine a variety of comprehensive Student Information Systems (SIS), including Pearson PowerSchool. In selecting our SIS, we will look for the following functionalities:

- User-friendly interface that can be managed easily and accurately by office staff, teachers, support staff, and administrators

- Ability to manage and integrate multiple types of student data (e.g. contact information and demographics, course schedule, teacher grades, standardized assessment data, discipline data)
- Ability to easily export data to the DCPCSB, OSSE, and other regulatory bodies
- Ability to easily export data to Excel and other commonly-used data analysis packages
- Built-in fail-safes to maintain data integrity (e.g. automatic protection from duplicate entries)
- Web-based, to allow secure remote access
- Ability to interface with handheld mobile devices
- Ability to provide parents with access to student information such as grades and assignments

School policies and practices will include measures to protect the confidentiality of individuals and appropriately restrict staff access to sensitive data. For instance, faculty and staff who handle student information will be trained in an ethical code of conduct regarding data use and privacy.

Data Reporting: Results of school-wide, mission-specific measures will be reported to all relevant stakeholders in a timely, easily-understood manner, relying on the best practices common to schools in DC to create 'school report cards,' data walls, and other means of communicating results. In addition, families will receive students' individual results on the TTCT and Habits of Mind assessments.

Timeline for Implementation

The first major task necessary for a complete Mission Accomplishment Plan is to set targets and benchmarks for several of the goals listed above, including the habits of mind and heart and meaningful and effective family engagement. Upon receiving a provisional approval of this petition, City of Trees PCS will procure copies of these instruments and review the norms and averages included in technical manuals or published studies using these instruments.

A second major task necessary for a comprehensive and rigorous approach to the use of student data is to select a SIS. We anticipate that this task will be underway by January of 2012, and completed by April of 2012. A third important task is to ensure that founding teachers and instructional staff have a thorough understanding of the constructs assessed by the mission-specific instruments, so that they can make instructional and program decisions that are aligned with the mission and mission accomplishment plan. The overall framework for assessment will be a major topic for planning-year working groups and for professional development early in the first year of our school's operation.

Finally, we must identify the specific staff members who will be responsible for administering, analyzing, and reporting data, and ensure that they have the appropriate training and preparation. We anticipate that these individuals will be identified no later than 3 months prior to the opening of our school, and that the relevant training will be provided at least six months in advance of data collection.

F. Budget

City of Trees PCS worked with GoldStar Group, Inc. to develop our budget. As discussed above in Section B.3.a, City of Trees PCS' primary financial objective is to fund its operations entirely from DC public funds and federal entitlements while creating a cash reserve that can be used for a permanent facility. By the end of 2017, we project a cash balance of \$980,062. In order to develop a conservative budget, our financial projections include only revenues that we anticipate receiving from per pupil charter schools fund, federal entitlements and from our supplemental programs (i.e., Summer Program and Before- and After Care). While we have not included additional revenues in our budget, the Board of Trustees and school staff will be committed to help raise additional school funds by pursuing public and private grant opportunities as well as holding fundraising events. While our core operations do not rely on these funds, the money that we receive from these sources will strengthen the school's financial position and improve our credit worthiness with financial institutions.

Pre-opening Expenses

The Planning Year budget is conservative and includes only \$180,000 of Title V b revenues. We project operating expenses will be \$179,478 as follows: Personnel-related costs \$110,733 (61.7% of total expenses); Student-related costs of \$35,000 (19.5%); Office-related expenses of \$24,800 (13.8%); General expenses of \$7,445 (4.1%); and Occupancy expense of \$1,500 (0.8%). We will prudently and judiciously manage cash flow throughout the Planning Year.

Two-year Operating Budget

City of Trees PCS projects DC per pupil public revenues of \$1,912,438 (or 79.5% of total revenue) in Year One and \$2,437,225 (81.0% of total revenue) in Year Two. The per pupil revenue funding is based on pre-kindergarten to second grade revenues of \$1,379,810 in Year One and pre-K to third grade revenues of \$1,675,340 in Year Two. In the first year of operations we will enroll 52 pre-kindergarten students in three classrooms; 26 kindergarteners in one classroom; and 44 first and second grade students in 2 classrooms. In the second year of operations we will have 26 pre-kindergarten students in two classrooms; 52 kindergarteners in two classrooms; and 70 first, second and third graders in three classrooms. Based on historical data, we assume that the per pupil funding level will continue to increase 3% per year, which results in a per pupil funding level of \$9,490 in fiscal year 2012-2013 and \$9,774 in fiscal year 2013-2014.

Special Education, Limited English Proficient (LEP)/Non-English Proficient per pupil funding accounts for \$144,339 of revenues in Year One and \$175,354 of revenues in Year Two. Based on city-wide and neighborhood specific statistics, we assume City of Trees PCS will have 14 Special Education students in the first year of operations (or 11% of total students) as follows: seven Level One students; five Level Two students; and two Level Three students. In Year Two we expect 17 Special Education students (or 11% of total students) based on the following: nine Level One students; six Level Two students; and two Level Three students. Based on these assumptions, we will receive \$101,635 of Special Education funds in Year One and \$122,572 in Year Two. In order to develop a conservative budget, for funding purposes we have intentionally assumed 11% Special Education students as opposed to the actual 13% of Special Education students that we anticipate enrolling based on District-wide statistics. In the first year of operations we assume ten NEP/LEP students (or 8% of total students) and twelve NEP/LEP students (or 8%) in Year Two based on city-wide statistics.

With respect to per pupil facilities allowance, we assume the base funding level will increase 3% per year based on historical data. Based on this assumption and a target enrollment of 122 in Year One, we project a facilities allowance of \$388,829. In Year Two with 148 students enrolled, we project a facilities allowance of \$485,171.

First year revenue projections also include \$337,659 of federal entitlements and federal funding, which represents 14.0% of total revenues. Federal entitlements in Year One are comprised of \$46,114 of No Child Left Behind funds and \$31,545 of Federal Lunch Reimbursement funds; and federal funding includes \$260,000 of Title V b funds. With respect to the No Child Left Behind funds, we assume a Year One enrollment of 122 students, of which 70 will be K-12 students, and Year Two enrollment of 148 students, of which 122 will be K-12. Based on city-wide and neighborhood specific data, we expect that 50% of the K-12 students (or 35 students in Year One and 61 students in Year Two) will qualify for free and reduced lunch. Based on these assumptions, we project No Child Left Behind funds of \$46,114 and \$82,781 in Year One and Year Two, respectively.

The private funds that we project in our budget are generated from school lunch sales and our before- and After Care program. We project receiving school lunch funds of \$66,665 and \$83,298 in Year One and Year Two, respectively. We project our Before Care and After Care program will generate \$88,561 in Year One and \$104,621 in Year Two. We anticipate that 79 students will participate in the Before Care and After Care program in Year One and 96 students in Year Two.

Line item expenses are based on average DCPS costs and are adjusted for inflation each year. Year One projected operating expenses total \$2,314,723 as follows: Staff-related expenses of \$1,373,020 (59.3% of total expenses); Student-related expenses of \$185,050 (8.0%); Occupancy expense of \$356,496 (15.4%); Office-related expenses of \$210,793 (9.1%); General expenses of \$151,312 (6.5%); and Unforeseen expenses of \$38,053 (1.6%).

In Year Two of operations, we project total operating expenses of \$2,626,110 based on the following: Staff-related expenses of \$1,677,018 (63.9% of total expenses); Student-related expenses of \$130,598 (5.0%); Occupancy expense of \$374,012 (14.2%); Office-related expenses of \$205,273 (7.8%); General expenses of \$201,139 (7.7%); and Unforeseen expenses of \$38,071 (1.5%).

Estimated Five-Year Budget Projections

As mentioned above, our five-year budget projections illustrate that we will be able to cover our operating expenses relying only on per pupil funding, federal entitlements and supplemental program funds. Fundraising activity will only strengthen the school's financial position. As with the two-year operating budget, line item expenses for the five-year projections are based on average DCPS costs and are adjusted for inflation each year.

Capital Budget

Our projected fixed asset capital budget for Year One is \$122,800 and Year Two is \$16,184. In Year One, we will purchase the following fixed assets: Classroom Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment (FF&E) of \$48,000 (39.1%); Classroom Computers of \$35,000 (28.5%); Computer Administration of \$28,100 (22.9%); and Administration FF&E of \$11,700 (9.5%). We anticipate spending \$16,184 on fixed assets in Year Two as follows: Classroom FF&E of \$8,240 (50.9%); Classroom Computers of \$3,000 (18.5%); Computer Administration of \$2,163 (13.4%); and Administration FF&E of \$2,781 (17.2%).

Cash Flow Projection for Year One

City of Trees PCS projects a positive cash balance at the end of each month during the first year of operations, as seen in the attached Year One cash flow projection. We recognize that careful cash management is crucial to successfully launching a charter school. In order to mitigate cash flow risk, we will plan to secure a \$100,000 revolving line of credit with our financial institution in case we encounter unforeseen expenses or per pupil funds are delayed. As mentioned above, one of our primary objectives is to build a cash reserve to develop strong credit worthiness and to help fund a permanent facility.

**City of Trees Public Charter School
Table of Contents**

Applicant Information Sheet

Executive Summary.....1

A. Educational Plan.....3
 1. Mission and Purposes of Proposed Public Charter School.....3
 2. Charter School Curriculum.....16
 3. Student Performance.....47
 4. Support for Learning.....56

B. Business Plan.....70
 1. Planning and Establishment.....70
 2. Governance and Management.....81
 3. Finance.....88
 4. Facilities.....93
 5. Recruiting and Marketing.....95

C. Plan of Operation.....103
 1. Student Policies and Procedures.....103
 2. Human Resource Information.....104
 3. Arrangements for Meeting District and Federal Requirements.....116
 4. Implementation of the Charter.....117

D. Public Charter School Mission Accomplishment Plan.....127

E. Certifications (Assurances Form).....E

F. Budget.....F

G. Résumés, Board Member Agreements, and Statements of Interest and Qualifications.....G

H. Conflict of Interest Forms.....H

I. Demographic Analysis Form.....I

J. Required Documents.....J
 o Charter School Board of Trustees Job Description
 o Charter School Individual Trustees Performance Expectations
 o Articles of Incorporation
 o By-laws
 o Code of Ethics

- o Board Conflict of Interest Statement
- o Description of Curriculum

K. Optional Documents.....K
 o Letters of Support

**District of Columbia Public Charter School Board
Demographic Analysis Form
2011 Application Review Process**

Name of Proposed School: City of Trees Public Charter School
Proposed Location: Greater Shaw-Logan Circle Neighborhood, NW

Projected Age Range and Number of Students Expected to Enroll:
a. In 2012-2013 From Age 4/Pre-k to Age 7/Grade 2 Number of students 122
b. At Full Capacity From Age 4/Pre-k to Age 13/Grade 8 Number of students 244

1. Please provide the following information for schools that serve **the same age/grades** as you propose and are located in the neighborhood where you propose to establish your charter school:

Name	Projected Enrollment/ Capacity 2010-2011 ¹	Actual Enrollment 2010-2011 ¹	Type	% Low Income ²	DCCAS Performance (% Proficient) SY 2009-2010 Reading/Math ³	Percentage of Highly Qualified Teachers ⁴
Cleveland ES	320	264	DCPS	85	64/82	32
Garrison ES	470	208	DCPS	90	52/45	71
Seaton ES	430	258	DCPS	88	48/40	61
Thomson ES	320	398	DCPS	81	46/52	69
Shaw MS at Garnet-Patterson	390	300	DCPS	87	21/26	57
Walker Jones Education Campus	850	225	DCPS	90	26/32	79
Center City PCS-Shaw		234	PCS	88	34/24	86
Community Academy PCS Butler Campus		228	PCS	92	44/51	100
KIPP DC: Will Academy PCS		321	PCS	81	65/77	100
Meridian PCS		520	PCS	81	64/65	100
SAIL PCS		167	PCS	76	24/12	73
St. Augustine School		187	Private	N/A	N/A	N/A

2. Please check the ONE statement that best describes your recruitment strategy and provide a rationale for the chosen strategy:

I will recruit exclusively in the neighborhood where I plan to locate my charter school.

¹For DCPS, capacity and enrollment statistics are from the DCPS Master Facilities Plan 2010, available at <http://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/About+DCPS/Strategic+Documents/Master+Facilities+Plan>. For Public Charter Schools, statistics are from the 2010-2011 Public Charter School List, at www.focusdc.org. Private school statistics are from school profiles at www.greatschools.org.

²Data reflects Poverty data from the 2009-2010 Educator Quality Data by Local Education Agency and 2009-2010 Educator Quality Data by School reports available at the Educator Quality Data and Reporting section of the D.C. Office of State Superintendent of Education website, <http://www.osse.dc.gov/seo/site/default.asp>

³Data Source: www.nclb.osse.dc.gov

⁴Data reflects %HQ Classes data from the 2009-2010 Educator Quality Data by Local Education Agency and 2009-2010 Educator Quality Data by School reports available at the Educator Quality Data and Reporting section of the D.C. Office of State Superintendent of Education website, <http://www.osse.dc.gov/seo/site/default.asp>

**District of Columbia Public Charter School Board
Demographic Analysis Form
2011 Application Review Process**

- I will primarily focus my recruitment efforts in neighborhoods other than the one where I plan to locate my school. Please _____ list _____ those neighborhoods_____
- I will primarily focus my recruitment efforts in targeting specific populations of students, regardless of their neighborhood. Please describe the target population you intend to recruit (i.e., youth placed at risk, special needs, non-native English speakers, etc.) _____
- I will conduct a citywide recruitment effort for my school.

Rationale:

Founding group members and contributors believe fully in the recruitment of students from across the District. City of Trees PCS will be the only Waldorf-inspired charter school in the District, and we feel it is important to ensure that families of all students citywide are aware of the school's compelling educational approach and have an equal opportunity to enroll in the school.

3. Based on the information provided above, provide the following information:

- a. Describe how your proposed charter school will compete with existing schools as it relates to the recruitment of students and highly qualified teachers and securing an adequate facility.

We will be strongly competitive with student recruitment due to our highly-differentiated, internationally-known educational approach and our comprehensive recruitment strategies. Waldorf education is composed of developmentally appropriate teaching that nurtures children's innate love of learning, and the employment of staff who believe in every student's ability to achieve at high levels. Over the past fifteen years, the Waldorf approach has been incorporated into the public school setting, and recent data shows the efficacy of this approach in closing the persistent educational gaps among sub-populations of students. City of Trees PCS will offer the only Waldorf-inspired public school in the District, presenting students with an opportunity to succeed academically and as individuals. To gauge interest in this type of educational model, the Founders developed introductory Waldorf-inspired parent-child classes, that are currently full with waitlists for enrollment. Almost 250 people have joined the City of Trees PCS community list serv, which also demonstrates support for the school. We believe, based on this strong initial interest in the school, that there is a citywide demand for this type of unique educational model which includes best practice features such as small school size, multi-year looping of teachers, consistent class composition through the grades, and structured daily periods and rhythms that will provide a stable environment in which students are known as individuals and develop meaningful relationships with teachers and classmates.

Another facet of the school that we feel will enhance successful recruitment of students is its emphasis on creating a positive, healthy impact on the surrounding community and its families. Through various activities such as festivals, student exhibitions, family workshops and classes, we expect to foster a strong, active community of families and stakeholders all focused on educating and raising socially and emotionally healthy children who are prepared for adolescence and adulthood.

We expect the both the Waldorf model and our competitive salaries and method and sources of recruitment will also be helpful in terms of competing for qualified teachers. We believe some teachers will seek the school out simply because it is Waldorf-inspired. Others will seek it out because they find the principles embodied by Waldorf align with their own teaching philosophies, regardless of whether they were familiar with the model previously. Based on its mission and philosophy, we expect City of Trees PCS will attract highly qualified teachers who are determined to engage students in the learning process in the three ways signature to Waldorf: actively, emotionally and thoughtfully. At the time of this writing, we have received ten unsolicited resumes and job inquires from experienced elementary school teachers, which we feel indicates that the unique teaching environment being designed is attractive to teachers even upon the school's very inception. The number of interested teachers that have reached out to us just over the past year would staff the school in year one, and we expect to receive more interest as the school is further established. We will advertise nationally and locally, post our positions at local colleges and universities, and submit announcements to Waldorf Teachers Training Centers. We will make a particular effort to recruit a diverse teacher population, in particular African American and Latino teachers to ensure that staff are representative of the diversity of DC and of our student population. Being the only Waldorf-inspired public school in the area will give the school visibility on the regional and national levels, which will help recruitment efforts. We expect teachers with Waldorf backgrounds and highly effective public school teachers whose methods

**District of Columbia Public Charter School Board
Demographic Analysis Form
2011 Application Review Process**

align with Waldorf education to show strong interest in teaching at City of Trees PCS. Locally, we will leverage relationships with the Nova Institute to create programs in which teaching students will observe and be trained in Waldorf methodology. City of Trees PCS will also offer teachers several valuable professional development opportunities in partnership with the Nova Institute, including summer professional development programs. These programs and others will provide the teachers with resources to continue their personal and professional development at City of Trees PCS.

Having recognized that the task of securing an adequate facility is very competitive and demanding, we proactively began the search process in November 2010. The Board of Trustees created a Facilities Committee tasked with developing a facilities plan and exploring options in the greater Shaw-Logan Circle neighborhood. The members of the Facilities Committee have extensive knowledge of Waldorf education, real estate finance, brokerage, city planning and architecture, which will all contribute to the effectiveness and success of our facilities search. We have also had ongoing discussions with Building Hope regarding incubator space for City of Trees PCS which could provide an interim facility for the first three years until a permanent facility is secured for year four (2015-2016). Washington Parks & People have also approached us with a proposal to locate our school at the Josephine Butler Parks Center, adjacent to Meridian Hill Park. Ideal location options will include facilities accessible by public transportation that are in close proximity to outdoor space and that have ample space for creative expression and free play for the early education classrooms. In addition, the Facilities Committee is exploring commercial real estate properties with the assistance of Dennis Perkins at CB Richard Ellis. And lastly, the Facilities Committee will explore vacant DCPS sites that are available for sole tenancy or co-location with another school. All aspects of the facilities search outlined above lead us to believe that we will be able to secure and prepare a suitable home for City of Trees PCS in time for its projected opening in 2012 and beyond.

- b. Provide a description of the proposed charter school's student recruitment strategies should the school initially locate in an area other than the intended location. Specifically, explain if students will be recruited from the area where you intend to locate or where the school will initially be located, and the short- and long-term impact of such a strategy.

Should City of Trees PCS be located outside of the Shaw-Logan Circle neighborhood, either temporarily or permanently, we do not anticipate a change to our citywide student recruitment strategy. Ideally, the school would still be in a location accessible to most students by public transportation, and we would continue to recruit and enroll students from throughout the city.

- c. Provide a justification for the intended location if a strong presence of charter schools currently exists or will do so in the future. Describe how your proposed charter school will be successful given the surrounding schools.

In bringing the Waldorf-inspired approach to the District's urban public school setting for the first time, we feel it is important to locate in a neighborhood in the heart of the city that is considered a microcosm of the city itself in terms of racial, ethnic, and socio-economic diversity. This belief has led us to choose the greater Shaw-Logan Circle neighborhood as a fitting location for City of Trees PCS. While a handful of public charter schools do exist in Shaw-Logan Circle, we feel City of Trees PCS will stand out as a unique choice as the sole Waldorf-inspired public charter school not only among those in the neighborhood, but among all District schools. Another reason Shaw-Logan Circle is a good match for our model of education is because student performance on the 2010 DC CAS in schools in the Shaw-Logan Circle neighborhood illustrates that the academic needs of students are clearly not being met by the current public and charter school options. Of the five neighborhood traditional public schools, only one has more than 50% of their students score proficient in both reading and math. Of the six public charter school options in the neighborhood, only two have more than 50% of their students score proficient on the DC CAS in both reading and math. Please see the Educational Plan, Section 1.a. Educational Needs of the Target Student Population for more of this discussion.

We expect City of Trees PCS to be successful given the surrounding schools in large part because it employs a unique, well-established differentiated model of education. DC Public Schools now offer either Montessori-inspired (5 programs) or Reggio-Emilia-inspired (5 programs) differentiated education models, with some similarities to Waldorf, but only at the pre-school through kindergarten levels. All ten of these schools had waitlists for the grade

**District of Columbia Public Charter School Board
Demographic Analysis Form
2011 Application Review Process**

levels offering these programs, according to the DCPS lottery results, which speaks to the growing interest in applying this approach in public school settings. The only DC Public School with such a model of education currently existing in the Shaw-Logan Circle neighborhood is the Walker-Jones Education Campus, which offers a Reggio Emilia-inspired model at the pre-school and pre-kindergarten levels. It is located at the southeastern most corner of our target neighborhood. One other school is located in Northwest DC (but outside of Shaw-Logan Circle), and the other eight schools are located either in Northeast or Southeast neighborhoods. In addition to the DC Public School offerings, two existing public charter schools employ Montessori or Reggio Emilia models—Latin American Montessori Bilingual PCS (Montessori model) and Community Academy PCS – Amos II Early Education Campus (Reggio Emilia-inspired). Both are located outside Shaw-Logan Circle as well, but offer further evidence of a growing interest in these types of models in urban public school settings. City of Trees PCS will be the only school in the District to use the best practices of developmentally staged, multi-year looping, Waldorf-inspired methods of differentiated education, and the approach will be used at each grade level rather than solely at the early education levels, making it a highly attractive choice among the other neighborhood and citywide schools.

As a small school with a unique educational philosophy, we also expect to have high quality relationships with the public charter and traditional public schools in the neighborhood that will contribute to both the overall success of City of Trees PCS, as well as the other schools. Because all schools seek to expand high quality educational opportunities for children and their families, we anticipate collaboration with our school neighbors. We believe that we will eventually partner with both neighborhood and city-wide schools to learn from each other in implementing best practices such as multi-disciplinary theme units, play-based early childhood learning, arts-infused learning, holistic child development approaches in teaching and learning, and the use of outdoors activities to promote student learning and achievement.

Monthly Cash Flow Projection

DESCRIPTION	Pre-Opening	Month 1 July	Month 2 August	Month 3 Sept	Month 4 Oct	Month 5 Nov	Month 6 Dec	Month 7 Jan	Month 8 Feb	Month 9 March	Month 10 April	Month 11 May	Month 12 June	Total
Office Expenses														
Office Supplies and Materials	-	1,525	1,525	1,525	1,525	1,525	1,525	1,525	1,525	1,525	1,525	1,525	1,525	18,300
Office Furnishings and Equipment	3,000	39,800	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	39,800
Office Equipment Rental and Maintenance	-	450	450	450	450	450	450	450	450	450	450	450	450	5,400
Telephone/Telecommunications	3,600	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	9,600
Legal, Accounting and Payroll Services	15,000	5,539	5,539	5,539	5,539	15,539	5,539	11,372	11,372	11,372	11,372	11,372	11,372	111,463
Printing and Copying	2,000	508	508	508	508	508	508	508	508	508	508	508	508	6,100
Postage and Shipping	1,200	153	153	153	153	153	153	153	153	153	153	153	153	1,830
Other	-	-	1,664	1,664	1,664	1,664	1,664	1,664	1,664	1,664	1,664	1,664	1,664	18,300
Occupancy Expenses														
Rent	1,500	24,667	24,667	24,667	24,667	24,667	24,667	24,667	24,667	24,667	24,667	24,667	24,667	296,000
Mortgage Interest Payments	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Maintenance and Repairs	-	395	395	395	395	395	395	395	395	395	395	395	395	4,736
Leasehold Improvements	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Utilities	-	1,603	1,603	1,603	1,603	1,603	1,603	1,603	1,603	1,603	1,603	1,603	1,603	19,240
Janitorial Supplies	-	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	4,800
Equipment Rental and Maintenance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Contracted Building Services	-	2,643	2,643	2,643	2,643	2,643	2,643	2,643	2,643	2,643	2,643	2,643	2,643	31,720
General Expenses														
Insurance	3,000	18,300	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18,300
Interest Expense	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transportation	-	-	-	2,804	2,804	2,804	2,804	2,804	2,804	2,804	2,804	2,804	-	25,240
Food Service	-	-	-	10,912	10,912	10,912	10,912	10,912	10,912	10,912	10,912	10,912	-	98,210
Administration Fee	-	-	-	-	-	9,562	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9,562
Other General Expense	1,200	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Unforeseen Expenses	3,245	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	38,053	38,053
6. Total Expenses	179,478	234,767	66,355	193,640	193,640	213,202	193,640	199,473	199,473	199,473	199,473	199,473	222,115	2,314,723
7. Fund Balance (end of month)	522	243,865	177,509	4,622	538,001	379,564	240,689	477,019	332,310	187,602	423,931	279,223	91,121	91,121

Planning Year Budget

DESCRIPTION	BUDGETED AMOUNTS			
	Column A	Column B	Column C	Column D
REVENUES	501(c)3 School Applicant	Education Management Organization	Total Revenues by Funding Source	Expenditures as a Percent of Total Public Funding
1 Per Pupil Charter Payments	-		0	
2 Per Pupil Facilities Allowance	-		0	
3 Federal Entitlements	180,000		180,000	
4 Other Government Funding/Grants	-		0	
5 Total Public Funding	180,000		180,000	
6 Private Grants and Donations	-		0	
7 Activity Fees	-		0	
8 Loans	-		0	
9 Other Income (please describe in footnote)	-		0	
10 Total Non-Public Funding	-		0	
11 EMO Management Fee (= line 73, col. G)			0	
12				
13				
14 TOTAL REVENUES	\$180,000			
EXPENSES	501(c)3 School Applicant	Education Management Organization	Combined Total	Expenditures as a Percent of Total Public Funding
Personnel Salaries and Benefits				
15 Principal/Executive Salary	0		-	0%
16 Teachers Salaries	0		-	0%
17 Teacher Aides/Assistance Salaries	0		-	0%
18 Other Education Professionals Salaries	0		-	0%
19 Business/Operations Salaries	0		-	0%
20 Clerical Salaries	0		-	0%
21 Custodial Salaries	0		-	0%
22 Other Staff Salaries	0		-	0%
23 Employee Benefits	0		-	0%
24 Contracted Staff	109,583		109,583	61%
25 Staff Development Costs	1,150		1,150	1%
26				0%
27 Subtotal: Personnel Costs	\$110,733	\$0	\$110,733	62%
28				
Direct Student Costs				
30 Textbooks	0		-	0%
31 Student Supplies and Materials	0		-	0%
32 Library and Media Center Materials	0		-	0%
33 Computers and Materials	25,000		25,000	14%
34 Other Instructional Equipment	0		-	0%
35 Classroom Furnishings and Supplies	0		-	0%
36 Student Assessment Materials	0		-	0%
37 Contracted Student Services	0		-	0%
38 Miscellaneous Student Costs	10,000		10,000	6%
39				0%
40 Subtotal: Direct Student Costs	\$35,000	\$0	\$35,000	19%
41				
Occupancy Expenses				
43 Rent	1,500		1,500	1%
44 Mortgage Principal Payments	-		-	0%
45 Mortgage Interest Payments	-		-	0%
46 Building Maintenance and Repairs	-		-	0%
47 Renovation/Leasehold Improvements	-		-	0%
48 Utilities	-		-	0%
49 Janitorial Supplies	-		-	0%
50 Equipment Rental and Maintenance	-		-	0%
51 Contracted Building Services	-		-	0%

Planning Year Budget

52					0%
53	Subtotal: Occupancy Expenses	<u>\$1,500</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$1,500</u>	<u>1%</u>
54					
55	Office Expenses				
56	Office Supplies and Materials	0		-	0%
57	Office Furnishings and Equipment	3,000		3,000	2%
58	Office Equipment Rental and Maintenance	0		-	0%
59	Telephone/Telecommunications	3,600		3,600	2%
60	Legal, Accounting and Payroll Services	15,000		15,000	8%
61	Printing and Copying	2,000		2,000	1%
62	Postage and Shipping	1,200		1,200	1%
63	Other	0		-	0%
64					0%
65	Subtotal: Office Expenses	<u>\$24,800</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$24,800</u>	<u>14%</u>
66					
67	General Expenses				
68	Insurance	3,000		3,000	2%
69	Interest Expense	0		-	0%
70	Transportation	0		-	0%
71	Food Service	0		-	0%
72	Administration Fee (to PCSB)	0		-	0%
73	EMO Management Fee	0		-	0%
74	Other General Expense	1,200		1,200	1%
75	Unforeseen Expenses	3,245		3,245	2%
76	Subtotal: General Expenses	<u>\$7,445</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$7,445</u>	<u>4%</u>
77					
78	TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>\$179,478</u>			
79					
80	EXCESS (OR DEFICIENCY)				
81	Excess (or deficit) retained by schoc	<u>\$522</u>			
82	Excess (or deficit) retained by EMC				

ASSUMPTIONS

Student Enrollment	<u>0</u>
Facility Size (square footage)	<u>-</u>
Average Teacher Salary	<u>-</u>
Teachers	<u>0</u>
Student/Teacher Ratio	<u>n/a</u>

NOTES:

Monthly Cash Flow Projection - Planning Year

DESCRIPTION	Pre-Opening	Month 1 July	Month 2 August	Month 3 Sept	Month 4 Oct	Month 5 Nov	Month 6 Dec	Month 7 Jan	Month 8 Feb	Month 9 March	Month 10 April	Month 11 May	Month 12 June	Total
Office Expenses														
Office Supplies and Materials		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Office Furnishings and Equipment		-	-	-	-	-	-	3,000	-	-	-	-	-	3,000
Office Equipment Rental and Maintenance		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Telephone/Telecommunications		-	-	-	-	-	-	600	600	600	600	600	600	3,600
Legal, Accounting and Payroll Services		-	-	-	-	-	-	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	15,000
Printing and Copying		-	-	-	-	-	-	333	333	333	333	333	333	2,000
Postage and Shipping		-	-	-	-	-	-	200	200	200	200	200	200	1,200
Other		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Occupancy Expenses														
Rent		-	-	-	-	-	-	250	250	250	250	250	250	1,500
Mortgage Interest Payments		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Maintenance and Repairs		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Leasehold Improvements		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Utilities		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Janitorial Supplies		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Equipment Rental and Maintenance		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Contracted Building Services		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
General Expenses														
Insurance		-	-	-	-	-	-	3,000	-	-	-	-	-	3,000
Interest Expense		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transportation		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Food Service		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Administration Fee		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other General Expense		-	-	-	-	-	-	200	200	200	200	200	200	1,200
Unforeseen Expenses		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,245	3,245
6. Total Expenses	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	35,206	24,206	24,206	30,872	30,872	34,117	179,478
7. Fund Balance (end of month)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	64,794	40,589	51,589	44,922	38,256	522	522

Two-Year Operating Budget Worksheet: Year ONE

DESCRIPTION		BUDGETED AMOUNTS			
		Column A	Column B	Column C	Column D
REVENUES		501(c)3 School Applicant	Education Management Organization	Total Revenues by Funding Source	Expenditures as a Percent of Total Public Funding
1	Per Pupil Charter Payments	1,524,149		1,524,149	
2	Per Pupil Facilities Allowance	388,289		388,289	
3	Federal Entitlements	306,114		306,114	
4	Other Government Funding/Grants	31,545		31,545	
5	Total Public Funding	2,250,097		2,250,097	
6	Private Grants and Donations	-		0	
7	Activity Fees	88,561		88,561	
8	Loans	-		0	
9	Other Income (please describe in footnote)	66,665		66,665	
10	Total Non-Public Funding	155,226		155,226	
11	EMO Management Fee (= line 73, col. G)			0	
12					
13					
14	TOTAL REVENUES	\$2,405,323			
EXPENSES		501(c)3 School Applicant	Education Management Organization	Combined Total	Expenditures as a Percent of Total Public Funding
Personnel Salaries and Benefits					
15	Principal/Executive Salary	180,000		180,000	8%
16	Teachers Salaries	347,823		347,823	15%
17	Teacher Aides/Assistance Salaries	210,000		210,000	9%
18	Other Education Professionals Salaries	250,000		250,000	11%
19	Business/Operations Salaries	55,000		55,000	2%
20	Clerical Salaries	0		-	0%
21	Custodial Salaries	0		-	0%
22	Other Staff Salaries	25,000		25,000	1%
23	Employee Benefits	162,474		162,474	7%
24	Contracted Staff	113,510		113,510	5%
25	Staff Development Costs	29,213		29,213	1%
26					0%
27	Subtotal: Personnel Costs	\$1,373,020	\$0	\$1,373,020	61%
28					
29	Direct Student Costs				
30	Textbooks	0		-	0%
31	Student Supplies and Materials	67,100		67,100	3%
32	Library and Media Center Materials	0		-	0%
33	Computers and Materials	35,000		35,000	2%
34	Other Instructional Equipment	0		-	0%
35	Classroom Furnishings and Supplies	48,000		48,000	2%
36	Student Assessment Materials	6,100		6,100	0%
37	Contracted Student Services	22,750		22,750	1%
38	Miscellaneous Student Costs	6,100		6,100	0%
39					0%
40	Subtotal: Direct Student Costs	\$185,050	\$0	\$185,050	8%
41					
42	Occupancy Expenses				
43	Rent	296,000		296,000	13%
44	Mortgage Principal Payments	0		-	0%
45	Mortgage Interest Payments	0		-	0%
46	Building Maintenance and Repairs	4,736		4,736	0%
47	Renovation/Leasehold Improvements	0		-	0%
48	Utilities	19,240		19,240	1%
49	Janitorial Supplies	4,800		4,800	0%
50	Equipment Rental and Maintenance	0		-	0%
51	Contracted Building Services	31,720		31,720	1%

Two-Year Operating Budget Worksheet: Year ONE

52					0%
53	Subtotal: Occupancy Expenses	<u>\$356,496</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$356,496</u>	<u>16%</u>
54					
55	Office Expenses				
56	Office Supplies and Materials	18,300		18,300	1%
57	Office Furnishings and Equipment	39,800		39,800	2%
58	Office Equipment Rental and Maintenance	5,400		5,400	0%
59	Telephone/Telecommunications	9,600		9,600	0%
60	Legal, Accounting and Payroll Services	111,463		111,463	5%
61	Printing and Copying	6,100		6,100	0%
62	Postage and Shipping	1,830		1,830	0%
63	Other	18,300		18,300	1%
64					0%
65	Subtotal: Office Expenses	<u>\$210,793</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$210,793</u>	<u>9%</u>
66					
67	General Expenses				
68	Insurance	18,300		18,300	1%
69	Interest Expense	0		-	0%
70	Transportation	25,240		25,240	1%
71	Food Service	98,210		98,210	4%
72	Administration Fee (to PCSB)	9,562		9,562	0%
73	EMO Management Fee	0		-	0%
74	Other General Expense	0		-	0%
75	Unforeseen Expenses	38,053		38,053	2%
76	Subtotal: General Expenses	<u>\$189,365</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$189,365</u>	<u>8%</u>
77					
78	TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>\$2,314,723</u>			
79					
80	EXCESS (OR DEFICIENCY)				
81	Excess (or deficit) retained by schoc	<u>\$90,600</u>			
82	Excess (or deficit) retained by EMC				

ASSUMPTIONS

Student Enrollment	<u>122</u>
Facility Size (square footage)	<u>11,840</u>
Average Teacher Salary	<u>57,971</u>
Teachers	<u>6</u>
Student/Teacher Ratio	<u>20 to 1</u>

NOTES:

Two-Year Operating Budget Worksheet: Year TWO

DESCRIPTION		BUDGETED AMOUNTS			
		Column A	Column B	Column C	Column D
REVENUES		501(c)3 School Applicant	Education Management Organization	Total Revenues by Funding Source	Expenditures as a Percent of Total Public Funding
1	Per Pupil Charter Payments	1,952,054		1,952,054	
2	Per Pupil Facilities Allowance	485,171		485,171	
3	Federal Entitlements	342,781		342,781	
4	Other Government Funding/Grants	39,416		39,416	
5	Total Public Funding	2,819,422		2,819,422	
6	Private Grants and Donations	-		0	
7	Activity Fees	104,621		104,621	
8	Loans	-		0	
9	Other Income (please describe in footnote)	83,298		83,298	
10	Total Non-Public Funding	187,919		187,919	
11	EMO Management Fee (= line 73, col. G)			0	
12					
13					
14	TOTAL REVENUES	\$3,007,341			

DESCRIPTION		BUDGETED AMOUNTS			
		501(c)3 School Applicant	Education Management Organization	Combined Total	Expenditures as a Percent of Total Public Funding
EXPENSES		501(c)3 School Applicant	Education Management Organization	Combined Total	Expenditures as a Percent of Total Public Funding
Personnel Salaries and Benefits					
15	Principal/Executive Salary	185,400		185,400	7%
16	Teachers Salaries	500,168		500,168	18%
17	Teacher Aides/Assistance Salaries	252,350		252,350	9%
18	Other Education Professionals Salaries	288,400		288,400	10%
19	Business/Operations Salaries	56,650		56,650	2%
20	Clerical Salaries	36,050		36,050	1%
21	Custodial Salaries	0		-	0%
22	Other Staff Salaries	25,750		25,750	1%
23	Employee Benefits	204,839		204,839	7%
24	Contracted Staff	100,260		100,260	4%
25	Staff Development Costs	27,150		27,150	1%
26					0%
27	Subtotal: Personnel Costs	\$1,677,018	\$0	\$1,677,018	59%
28					
29	Direct Student Costs				
30	Textbooks	0		-	0%
31	Student Supplies and Materials	83,842		83,842	3%
32	Library and Media Center Materials	0		-	0%
33	Computers and Materials	3,000		3,000	0%
34	Other Instructional Equipment	0		-	0%
35	Classroom Furnishings and Supplies	8,240		8,240	0%
36	Student Assessment Materials	7,622		7,622	0%
37	Contracted Student Services	26,555		26,555	1%
38	Miscellaneous Student Costs	1,339		1,339	0%
39					0%
40	Subtotal: Direct Student Costs	\$130,598	\$0	\$130,598	5%
41					
42	Occupancy Expenses				
43	Rent	304,880		304,880	11%
44	Mortgage Principal Payments	0		-	0%
45	Mortgage Interest Payments	0		-	0%
46	Building Maintenance and Repairs	4,736		4,736	0%
47	Renovation/Leasehold Improvements	0		-	0%
48	Utilities	19,817		19,817	1%
49	Janitorial Supplies	4,944		4,944	0%
50	Equipment Rental and Maintenance	0		-	0%
51	Contracted Building Services	39,634		39,634	1%
52					0%
53	Subtotal: Occupancy Expenses	\$374,012	\$0	\$374,012	13%
54					
55	Office Expenses				

Two-Year Operating Budget Worksheet: Year TWO

56	Office Supplies and Materials	22,866		22,866	1%
57	Office Furnishings and Equipment	4,944		4,944	0%
58	Office Equipment Rental and Maintenance	5,562		5,562	0%
59	Telephone/Telecommunications	9,888		9,888	0%
60	Legal, Accounting and Payroll Services	118,804		118,804	4%
61	Printing and Copying	7,622		7,622	0%
62	Postage and Shipping	2,287		2,287	0%
63	Other	33,300		33,300	1%
64					0%
65	Subtotal: Office Expenses	\$205,273	\$0	\$205,273	7%
66					
67	General Expenses				
68	Insurance	22,866		22,866	1%
69	Interest Expense	0		-	0%
70	Transportation	43,372		43,372	2%
71	Food Service	122,714		122,714	4%
72	Administration Fee (to PCSB)	12,186		12,186	0%
73	EMO Management Fee	0		-	0%
74	Other General Expense	0		-	0%
75	Unforeseen Expenses	38,071		38,071	1%
76	Subtotal: General Expenses	\$239,209	\$0	\$239,209	8%
77					
78	TOTAL EXPENSES	\$2,626,110			
79					
80	EXCESS (OR DEFICIENCY)				
81	Excess (or deficit) retained by schoc	\$381,231			
82	Excess (or deficit) retained by EMC				

ASSUMPTIONS

Student Enrollment	148
Facility Size (square footage)	11,840
Average Teacher Salary	59,213
Teachers	8
Student/Teacher Ratio	19 to 1

NOTES:

Five-Year Estimated Budget Worksheet

DESCRIPTION	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
REVENUES					
Per Pupil Charter Payments	1,912,438	2,437,225	2,851,333	3,356,327	3,841,082
Federal Entitlements	337,659	382,197	148,153	174,573	197,598
Income from Grants and Donations	-	-	-	-	-
Activity Fees	88,561	104,621	121,565	139,432	156,008
Other Income	66,665	83,298	100,869	119,420	136,533
TOTAL REVENUES	2,405,323	3,007,341	3,221,921	3,789,752	4,331,221
EXPENSES					
Personnel Salaries and Benefits	1,373,020	1,677,018	1,933,464	2,234,484	2,432,140
Direct Student Costs	185,050	130,598	154,199	194,108	201,893
Occupancy	356,496	374,012	625,444	651,354	677,093
Office Expenses	210,793	205,273	215,141	242,951	254,580
General Expenses	189,365	239,209	291,455	341,401	385,478
TOTAL EXPENSES	2,314,723	2,626,110	3,219,703	3,664,298	3,951,184
EXCESS (OR DEFICIENCY)	90,600	381,231	2,218	125,455	380,037

Capital Budget

CAPITAL BUDGET	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
1600 · FF&E - Classroom	48,000	8,240	8,487	8,742	9,004
1610 · FF&E - Administration	11,700	2,781	1,910	2,295	1,013
1620 · Computers - Classroom	35,000	3,000	3,000	18,000	3,000
1630 · Computers - Administration	28,100	2,163	1,273	5,737	2,532
1830 · Leasehold improvements	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	122,800	16,184	14,670	34,773	15,549

Monthly Cash Flow Projection

DESCRIPTION	Pre-Opening	Month 1 July	Month 2 August	Month 3 Sept	Month 4 Oct	Month 5 Nov	Month 6 Dec	Month 7 Jan	Month 8 Feb	Month 9 March	Month 10 April	Month 11 May	Month 12 June	Total
Office Expenses														
Office Supplies and Materials	-	1,525	1,525	1,525	1,525	1,525	1,525	1,525	1,525	1,525	1,525	1,525	1,525	18,300
Office Furnishings and Equipmer	3,000	39,800	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	39,800
Office Equipment Rental and Maintenance	-	450	450	450	450	450	450	450	450	450	450	450	450	5,400
Telephone/Telecommunications	3,600	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	9,600
Legal, Accounting and Payroll Services	15,000	5,539	5,539	5,539	5,539	15,539	5,539	11,372	11,372	11,372	11,372	11,372	11,372	111,463
Printing and Copying	2,000	508	508	508	508	508	508	508	508	508	508	508	508	6,100
Postage and Shipping	1,200	153	153	153	153	153	153	153	153	153	153	153	153	1,830
Other	-	-	1,664	1,664	1,664	1,664	1,664	1,664	1,664	1,664	1,664	1,664	1,664	18,300
Occupancy Expenses														
Rent	1,500	24,667	24,667	24,667	24,667	24,667	24,667	24,667	24,667	24,667	24,667	24,667	24,667	296,000
Mortgage Interest Payments	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Maintenance and Repairs	-	395	395	395	395	395	395	395	395	395	395	395	395	4,736
Leasehold Improvements	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Utilities	-	1,603	1,603	1,603	1,603	1,603	1,603	1,603	1,603	1,603	1,603	1,603	1,603	19,240
Janitorial Supplies	-	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	4,800
Equipment Rental and Maintenance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Contracted Building Services	-	2,643	2,643	2,643	2,643	2,643	2,643	2,643	2,643	2,643	2,643	2,643	2,643	31,720
General Expenses														
Insurance	3,000	18,300	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18,300
Interest Expense	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transportation	-	-	-	2,804	2,804	2,804	2,804	2,804	2,804	2,804	2,804	2,804	2,804	25,240
Food Service	-	-	-	10,912	10,912	10,912	10,912	10,912	10,912	10,912	10,912	10,912	10,912	98,210
Administration Fee	-	-	-	-	-	9,562	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9,562
Other General Expense	1,200	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Unforeseen Expenses	3,245	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	38,053	38,053
6. Total Expenses	179,478	234,767	66,355	193,640	193,640	213,202	193,640	199,473	199,473	199,473	199,473	199,473	222,115	2,314,723
7. Fund Balance (end of month)	522	243,865	177,509	4,622	538,001	379,564	240,689	477,019	332,310	187,602	423,931	279,223	91,121	91,121