

# **TWO RIVERS COMMUNITY SCHOOL**

## **CHARTER APPLICATION**

### **Mission Statement:**

We will support each student's continuing discovery and development of self and community by providing a learning environment that is relevant, active and project oriented. All aspects of the student's experience at Two Rivers Community School will enhance his/her natural learning power.

Our small school climate fosters respect, responsibility and a sense of community.

We are dedicated to:

1. mastery and application of academic skills,
2. applying the latest findings of brain based research in the learning environment,
3. respecting children's individual learning styles,
4. producing exemplary, hands on learning expeditions that embody service and meet high academic standards,
5. utilizing technology to expand the learning environment,
6. presenting material in such a way that students understand the real world applications of what they are learning, and
7. providing an environment that is supportive and which promotes cooperation and teamwork as well as competitive excellence.

### **Educational Program:**

Two Rivers Community School will adopt the experiential-learning framework of the Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound school reform model with the added dimension of using brain compatible instructional strategies for its educational program. This experiential learning framework emphasizes learning by doing, with a particular focus on character growth, teamwork, literacy, and inquiry-based instructional practices. Teachers develop "learning expeditions" which are curriculum units that connect high quality academic learning to adventure, service and character development through a series of linked, in-depth investigations and products. The North Carolina Standard Course of Study is naturally integrated into the expedition. The key objective to all learning is to lead the student to responsible, productive citizenship.

### **PURPOSES OF PROPOSED CHARTER SCHOOL: GS 115C-238.29A**

Two Rivers Community School presents a model of research-based innovation that addresses all six of the purposes for charter schools in North Carolina.

#### **1. IMPROVE STUDENT LEARNING**

The focus of the teaching methodology at Two Rivers Community School is to provide learning experiences that teach academic skills and improve student learning in the context of the real world. This approach can be called environment-based education.

The Roundtable, a cooperative endeavor of education agencies from 12 states, studied the effects of environment-based education programs on student learning. The Roundtable observed the following benefits: better performance on standardized measures of academic achievement in reading, writing, math, science, and social studies, reduced discipline and classroom management problems, increased engagement and enthusiasm for learning, and greater pride in and ownership of accomplishments.

We have chosen Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound (ELOB) reform model which is environmentally based with the added dimension of using brain compatible instructional strategies as the foundation of the educational plan for Two Rivers Community School.

Student achievement is the central focus of our school's educational plan. The primary means for ensuring student achievement is job embedded professional development, from ELOB, that is based on student performance data. This includes designing the curriculum to include goals tied to the North Carolina Standard Course of Study and also contains instruction and educational objectives designed to be delivered using brain compatible strategies in both the academic and classroom management categories.

Brain compatible instructional strategies include instances of interaction with the real world, collaborative learning and intentional movement. They provide choices based on multiple intelligences, they use reciprocal teaching methods, they allocate adequate time, they teach students to identify prerequisite knowledge and skills, they provide frequent feedback, they teach students to self-assess, they facilitate making connections and they help students apply real world standards of mastery.

The ELOB model is founded on well-respected bodies of research. Analysis of the contents of the 1999 Handbook of Research on Improving Student Achievement published by Educational Research Service reveals that 58 separate studies describe practices that are embraced and encouraged in the ELOB model.

## **2. INCREASE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL STUDENTS, ESPECIALLY THOSE AT RISK OR ACADEMICALLY GIFTED**

One of the basic assumptions of our educational model is that learning results can be greatly accelerated by incorporating current brain research findings into both the curriculum structure and the educational environment. These findings are the same across ethnic, socio-economic and limited English-speaking groups, and therefore provide a broad foundation for increasing learning opportunities for a wide range of students. This approach ensures that all learners will succeed and provides many more avenues for them to do just that.

At Two Rivers Community School, we believe that all children have unique learning styles and that all children have an innate capacity to learn. The strength of our approach will be our ability to identify and adapt our curriculum to the learning styles of all children within the safe and supportive environment of the classroom. Well-crafted choices and meaningful content will further enhance our ability to meet the needs of diverse personalities across a wide range of academic levels and learning strategies.

Schubert and Melnick (1997) investigated the effects of an integrated curriculum. Their qualitative multiple site study evaluated the integrated learning of students in 11 rural, suburban and urban elementary, middle, and high schools. Their results showed that students made vivid connections among the various subject areas. They also found that incorporating curricular content in various intelligence areas offered new learning opportunities for students with difficulties in verbal or mathematical areas.

Sul Ross Elementary in Waco, Texas serves a diverse group of students, 99.5% of whom are identified as economically disadvantaged. After implementing an environmentally based educational model throughout the school, achievement in reading, math, and writing as measured on the TAAS demonstrated steady and often dramatic gains. For example, third grade scores rose between 1994-1995 and 1997-1998 from 39 to 79 in reading, from 19 to 71 in math and from 63 to 88 in writing. Fourth and fifth grade students showed similar gains. Flexible heterogeneous grouping of students at Two Rivers Community School will provide safe and challenging formats for the students. Our multi-age classrooms, where students will remain with the same teachers for two to three years in the lower grades, will accommodate students with a variety of backgrounds and abilities. Teachers and students have the time to develop meaningful relationships and build on student strengths. This gives teachers the time needed to use a variety of learning strategies and then empower both the students and staff with strategies for increased learning potential.

### **3. DIFFERENT AND INNOVATIVE METHODS**

While environmentally based curriculum integration is innovative and different in the current environment, it is not new. As reported in ERIC Digest D142, Lipson et al. (1993) traced the idea of curriculum integration to reforms of the 1930's – specifically to John Dewey's 1933 discussion of meaningful learning. Lipson et al. analyzed the underlying rationale for integrated thematic teaching and discovered that it: provides valuable focus, helps students understand why they are doing what they are doing, demonstrates coherent connections among disciplines that allow a transfer of learning from one context to another, helps students to grasp the relation of content to process, and facilitates the acquisition of an integrated knowledge base.

The development of brain based research to support the implementation of integrated thematic instruction is innovative. We now have research to support what John Dewey and many educators and parents have known intuitively for years.

### **4. NEW PROFESSIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR TEACHERS**

The environmentally based curriculum requires intensive staff professional development through continuous training. School staff members are continually involved in professional development as they write integrated conceptual curricula tied to the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. All staff will be trained and will be responsible and accountable for their respective share of the implementation process.

In order to meet the learning needs of our students we feel that we must also be as diligent in meeting the development needs of our staff. Our staff development plan is built around up-to-date findings on brain based research as it pertains to education. Knowledge of these findings is of little value if they are not implemented in the student's environment. Caine and Caine noted in their book, " Education on the Edge of Possibility," that a large percentage of teachers do not implement their own philosophy of education in their classrooms and that although theorists and educators have collectively amassed an enormous amount of research on good teaching and learning, this research has yet to be integrated into schools. Michael Fullan, dean of the faculty of education at the University of Toronto, has observed that the absence of personal transformation hampers many school change efforts. We are asking teachers and principals to teach and lead in new and different ways. ELOB offers a staff development program created to challenge assumptions and to support teachers and leaders in their own

growth. Their courses and conferences model and reflect their design principles while engaging participants as active learners. In true Outward Bound fashion, their staff development presents to the participants a greater challenge and a higher level of accomplishment than might seem possible.

A portion of our staff development will include annual Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound Summits. Summits are 7-day actual learning expeditions for educators that immerse educators in a shortened but intensive version of a school expedition. An expedition is a set of challenging integrated real world projects focused on a common theme and are multi-disciplinary. Each summit is centered on a particular content area. Participants delve into the content itself through research, activities, field work, and the completion of high quality projects. The teachers become the students, experiencing the challenges and transforming power of the hands-on projects and the collaborative experience. Summits explicitly model how to plan and lead an expedition, how to run meetings, lessons, critique sessions, field work, as well as methods for teaching academic skills and content through projects. They also provide the mechanism for building a commitment to quality work and character in a group. They are hands on: through individual and group work they model instructional strategies and demonstrate how to use the power of the group to facilitate rich learning. They are active, engaging and challenging experiences for all participants. As one principal noted, "When the teachers return from summits and I see the resulting student work, I know they have a clear understanding of how an expedition plays out." (Judy Greene, former principal of Clairemont Elementary School in Decatur, GA.)

The Academy for Educational Development reported that teachers in schools rated all of the Expeditionary Learning professional development experiences very highly, and several teachers pointed to experiences that profoundly changed their thinking. Our goal in using the ELOB Summits as part of our staff development plan is to facilitate a change in thinking that manifests in a change in classroom teaching and management. We believe that through these hands-on learning expeditions our staff will receive the same body brain compatible learning experiences that we are creating for our students. In AED surveys teachers said that Expeditionary Learning's program of staff development improved their ability to teach students of different ability levels in the same class, and be more of a guide or facilitator in helping students discover what they are supposed to learn.

"Independent evaluations by six respected organizations and researchers-American Institutions for Research, the National Staff Development Council, Academy for Educational Development, the University of Colorado Department of Education, the RAND Corporation, and Polly Ulichny of Brown University indicate that Expeditionary Learning delivers highly effective professional development to its partner schools.

"What works in the Middle: Results-Based Staff Development" is a National Staff Development Council report on a comprehensive two-year study of staff development programs that demonstrate an impact on student achievement in the middle grades. Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound was one of 26 out of almost 500 programs selected as having demonstrated a link between teacher learning and student learning.

## **5. EXPANDED CHOICES FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS**

Two Rivers Community School will rely on the parent community as an essential asset for understanding children's learning. Parents are children's first teachers and we intend to become partners in educating our children by sharing teaching strategies with parents and incorporating parents into our everyday classroom learning expeditions. Parents and community representatives become guest speakers sharing unique expertise about careers, hobbies or special interests. They become hosts as students go into the community to learn first-hand what others are doing to make the community work. There are frequent and substantive contact opportunities between the community and the school staff on behalf of students and their academic and social

development. Our Parent and Community Advisory Council will be a tool for reaching out to our extended community as well as bringing back valuable information about the practices of Two Rivers Community School. Highly qualified educators have created Two Rivers Community School and our active Parent and Community Advisory Council is manifesting it. Involved parents and educators have asked for this school and are presently pooling the resources to make it a reality.

We believe that students are begging for education that is relevant. We believe they want to understand the purpose and real-world applications of what they are learning. We are offering an alternative education that is meaningful to the student, that enhances academic achievement and supports the longer range goal of continued life long learning.

## **6. ACCOUNTABILITY FOR MEASURABLE ACHIEVEMENT RESULTS**

Two Rivers Community School will participate in annual reviews using Expeditionary Learning's implementation benchmarks. Our directors lead our faculty in examining student achievement data from state mandated assessments. Teachers examine data with colleagues to understand their class profiles and analyze the achievement of individual students.

Teachers analyze test items to understand the nature of the assessment and their students' performance in particular areas. In addition to required tests, school leaders systematically collect other kinds of student assessment data (e.g., performance assessment, reading inventories) that inform decisions about teaching and learning.

Teachers analyze examples of student work to identify problems and strengths. School leaders and teachers disaggregate and examine test scores and other data for sub-populations and study achievement patterns by socioeconomic status, gender, and ethnicity. Teachers know the achievement patterns of subgroups of students in their classrooms and of sub-populations in the school as a whole. School leaders and teachers use data to monitor and address achievement gaps.

### **EDUCATIONAL FOCUS: GS 115C-238.29B(a) GS 115C-238.29B(c)**

Two Rivers Community School facilitates learning through experiential and project based curricula utilizing meaningful content, well-crafted choices, and interaction with the community through technology and partnerships with businesses, community groups and educational institutions in threat free environments.

The driving force of our school is respect for each child's individual learning style and interactive instruction based on real world experiences that are structured to take advantage of the latest brain research findings.

### **GRADE LEVELS:**

2005: K-10

2006: K-11

2007: K-12

2008: K-12

2009: K-12

### **ENROLLMENT BY YEAR:**

2005: 220

2006: 240

2007: 260

2008: 260

2009: 260

## **IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE PROPOSED CHARTER SCHOOL**

Two Rivers Community School is evolving from the community for the community. Our approach to learning will benefit the community in the many ways that follow:

1. provide a grassroots model for educational reform,
2. provide an educational environment for children whose optimal learning potential has not been realized in the traditional school setting,
3. provide programs involving the students to better the community,
4. guide our students to be productive citizens in the community.

### **SUMMARY OF DECISION PROCESS**

The Board of Directors has determined the proposed size of Two Rivers Community School by conducting informal surveys of parents and other supporters of the charter school initiative in the Boone, North Carolina area regarding community needs, and after carefully evaluating many interrelated factors such as overall budget, cost and availability of suitable space, desirable teacher-to-student ratios, teacher compensation and development costs. The objective of the Board of Directors in this endeavor was to determine an initial grade range, student body size and staff size that would meet community needs and at the same time have a reasonable chance of surviving the rigors of start-up and become a significant and stable entity within the local educational community.

The educational focus for Two Rivers Community School derived from our goal to create a school differentiated within the local educational community as being a school that utilizes current educational best practices and takes advantage of innovations and strategies demonstrated to be most effective by current educational and scientific research. We recognized an opportunity to pilot these best practices, insights and strategies on a local level and serve as a proving ground through which education in our community could be continuously improved and re-vitalized.

•

Two Rivers Community School  
**EDUCATION PLAN**

**INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM GS 115C-238.29F(d)(1-5)**

**1. OUTLINE OF EDUCATION THEORY AND FOUNDATION OF THE MODEL**

The Two Rivers Community School is committed to providing quality education for all of our students. We believe that children are enthusiastic and passionate about learning if they are given the freedom to learn in a manner and setting that is compatible with their personality. Our staff is committed to adapting themselves to meet the needs of our students rather than expecting children to change the way they learn best to fit a prescribed teaching methodology.

In support of our beliefs, the steering committee of Two Rivers Community School has made a unanimous commitment to the following principles as the foundation of our educational model.

- **INTELLIGENCE IS A FUNCTION OF EXPERIENCE**

We believe that we can enhance the learning capabilities of our students by providing an education based on and applicable to real world experiences. Brain based research claims that active participation in real world experiences rather than being immersed in facts and abstractions greatly enhance the development of the brain (Kovalik and Olsen p. 1.5). “Experiences, thoughts, actions and emotions actually change the structure of the brain” (Ratey p.18).

- **CHILDREN HAVE AN INNATE PASSION FOR LEARNING**

We will support that passion and follow its lead to take students past fears into new and greater potential. We substitute contrived external motivators with understanding and appreciation for uniqueness and diversity. We understand that powerful learning (greatest depth, speed, ability to apply) takes place when children are allowed to operate consistently with their own mental capabilities (Kovalik and Olsen p. 6.11). This is a powerful natural motivator. It empowers the child because it supports their individuality, their unique contributions within their peer group and respects them as capable learners.

- **THERE ARE MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES OR WAYS OF SOLVING PROBLEMS AND OR PRODUCING SOLUTIONS**

All seven intelligences (logical-mathematical, linguistic, spatial, body-kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, and intrapersonal) are needed in various combinations to succeed in life. Being able to access the right intelligence in the right situation is liberating and leads to greater effectiveness in life. (Gardner p. x) We believe that a sound and complete education must provide a student with an experience of and the skills to access his/her multiple intelligences. Students will be allowed to learn new concepts and skills in the intelligence of their choice and then will be encouraged and challenged in the use of the other intelligences to insure their mastery.

- **THE COMMUNITY IS ONE OF OUR GREATEST RESOURCES**

We solicit and encourage active participation with and from the community. We encourage our staff and our students to avail themselves of community resources: individuals, institutions and corporate entities with experience and expertise in areas that enhance our curriculum. We do not expect our teachers to be the final authority in every subject of our student’s interest. An integral part of our curriculum is learning to utilize and interact with community resources. The community will be the main setting for our real world expeditions and the focus for our service projects.

- **WE CAN POSITIVELY IMPACT OUR CHILDREN'S CHARACTER**

Our children spend a great amount of time in the school environment. As educators, we have a responsibility to help shape the personal and communal character and sense of responsibility of our children. The foundation of all our academic work stems from the practice of positive life skills. We use outdoor adventure challenges as positive means for character building.

- **POSITIVELY DIRECTED STAFF DEVELOPMENT IS PARAMOUNT TO POSITIVELY DIRECTED CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION**

In order for our teachers to implement the goals we have set for them, it is necessary for our staff to receive the kind of support that will enable them to be personally transformed through their own learning and teaching processes. Structured and regular peer coaching sessions and support coupled with participation in professionally developed training seminars are the foundations of this support. The same considerations that we have for children's different learning styles will also influence our approach to staff training and development. The physical and emotional well being of our staff is a paramount priority in our support of their success as teachers and leaders in our school.

- **A HEALTHY LEARNING ENVIRONMENT WILL ENHANCE LEARNING.**

It is essential to support our students physically as well as mentally and emotionally. This is achieved by providing an environment that facilitates both learning and general health. Some of the characteristics of this environment will be full spectrum and natural lighting, readily available filtered drinking water, healthy ventilation, daily contact with nature and challenging physical activity.

- **AN UNDERSTANDING OF TECHNOLOGY IS ESSENTIAL IN THE 21st CENTURY.**

It is paramount that our staff is adequately trained and competent in the use of technology as it pertains to educational instruction, real life application and the health and well being of our students.

- **LEARNING IS FOSTERED IN SMALL GROUPS.**

In small groups where there are enduring relationships characterized by trust, sustained caring, and mutual respect among all members of the learning community there is greater freedom of expression and willingness to experiment. Not only does this type of environment support learning, but it also assists in the development of crucial skills like leadership, team membership, collaboration, stress management and supports the development of a sense of personal well-being.

Two Rivers Community School provides real world experiences by providing our students access to settings that allow them to learn through participation in sequences of events that are structured and designed to stimulate the development of meaningful perspectives and the understanding of principles. Science is almost always a prominent part of the experience. This linking of learning to real world experiences is the foundation of our curriculum. The fundamental role of real world experience is to enhance the brain's search for patterns and meaning by creating associations that, through observation and experience, allows the learner to develop a meaningful worldview. When a pattern is recognized by the learner, this worldview serves as the mental organizer and a lens through which the experience can be focused. It provides an "address" in the brain for processing and retaining the knowledge and skills derived from the experience (Kovalik and Olsen p. 18-2). The content of the real world experience is consistently used as a high interest area for the development of skills and acquisition of knowledge. This approach provides the best possible match between the ongoing acquisition of

knowledge and experience and the state educational standards. The knowledge and skills to be mastered in the context of real world experiences will be drawn from the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. These standards comprise the foundation for curriculum planning at Two Rivers Community School. In our curriculum development, the North Carolina Standard Course of Study will be conceptually adapted and applied within a real world context which in turn allows students to immerse themselves in understanding and learning to use the knowledge they acquire by applying it in situations directly related to their own experiences. The goal of this approach is to develop in the student a deep understanding of coherence, usefulness, relevance and importance of the knowledge acquired through these experiences.

We have chosen ten basic elements or design components for implementing our philosophy of education into the instructional model. They are modeled after the fundamental principles of integrated thematic, experiential education.

- MEANINGFUL CONTENT

We will provide meaningful interactions with real world people, processes, events and situations. Students are allowed to explore in order to construct their own context for categorizing information. The classroom is a complete immersion experience reflecting the real world experience upon which the curriculum is based.

- SOLITUDE AND REFLECTION

Students are allocated adequate time to experiment, draw their own conclusions, test their understanding in collaborative situations, revise their perspectives continually, innovate, and bring their work to completion in ways that are meaningful to them.

- CHOICE

Students are invited to select inquiries that rely on intelligences in which the student is already strong. During the practice of applying what is understood, students are encouraged to select inquiries that require intelligences in which they have not yet developed proficiency.

- IMMEDIATE FEEDBACK

Action oriented inquiries are designed so that the tasks provide natural and relevant real world feedback as the student carries out the inquiry.

- MOVEMENT

Positive focused movement is encouraged. Brain Gym® activities are structured into the learning process for the purpose of facilitating fully integrated learning.

- COLLABORATION AND COMPETITION

Some projects are designed for group work creating a need for each student to participate thus forcing students to dig deeper and seek connections and relationships that would otherwise remain hidden. Students are encouraged to excel and compete with their own personal best and with generally accepted standards of excellence.

- SUCCESS AND FAILURE

Students are assured a fair measure of success in learning in order to nurture the confidence and capacity to take risks and to continually increase the difficulty of the challenges they are willing to accept. They are also allowed

to experience failure, to overcome negative inclinations, to prevail against adversity, and to learn to turn obstacles into opportunities.

- **ABSENCE OF THREAT**

Caring adults, staff members and leaders will create and maintain an environment free from threat and put downs as they model the positive character traits we expect to foster in our students.

- **DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVITY**

Classes and learning groups are inclusive, heterogeneous and diverse with respect to age, sex, ability, native abilities, etc., thus increasing the richness of ideas, creative power, problem solving capacity and acceptance of others. Students are encouraged to investigate, value and draw upon their own different histories, talents and resources and those of others.

Ratey, John J., *A user's Guide to the Brain: Perception, Attention, and the Four Theatres of the Brain* (New York; Pantheon Books, 2001).

Susan J. Kovalik and Karen Olsen, *Exceeding Expectations: A User's Guide to Implementing Brain Research in the Classroom* (Covington, WA: Book For Educators, Inc., 2002).

Gardner, Howard. *Frames of Mind: Theory of Multiple Intelligences*. (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1985)

## **2. OUTLINE OF TEACHING APPROACHES, CURRICULUM DESIGN, INSTRUCTION METHODS, COURSES OF STUDY**

### **STAGES OF IMPLEMENTING ENVIRONMENTALLY BASED, BRAIN COMPATIBLE CURRICULUM**

- **STAGE 1: BODY/BRAIN COMPATIBLE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

**Curriculum:**

The concept of multiple intelligences, defined as problem solving and product producing capabilities, is taught early in the year and is a frequent, ongoing topic for post-lesson processing of collaborative work.

Time frames for activities and areas of study are not rigid and students have adequate time to complete their work.

**Instructional Strategies:**

-Limited choices are introduced through student selection of supplies, time allocations, materials and processes used for completing projects, and other developmentally appropriate options.

-The teacher includes real-life experiences (being-there). Immersion, and hands-on-of-the-real-thing experiences supplement classroom instruction.

-Resource people are invited to share insights and experiences in the classroom.

-The teacher is developing a variety of instructional strategies to supplement direct instruction.

-The teacher meets frequently with a professional or peer coach who supports the implementation of a body/brain-compatible learning environment for students.

- **STAGE 2: INTEGRATING CURRICULUM**

**Curriculum:**

The teacher provides for real-life experiences by basing the integrated curriculum upon a physical location, event, or situation that students can and do frequently experience through "being there." Science is either the

core for or a prominent part of curriculum integration because an understanding of science and technology is key to the role of citizenship in the 21st century.

The concepts and skills selected for the integrated curriculum reflect the overlapping answers to two questions: "What do people (workers and visitors) need to know and be able to do at the location in order to be an effective employee and user of this site?" And, "What are the most important concepts and skills from the North Carolina Standard Course of Study?"

On average at least 10-15 percent of instruction during the school year is based upon the body/brain-compatible curriculum developed for a theme.

The curriculum includes many of the elements that appear as a natural part of extension of the "being there" focus, e.g., science, math, technology, history/social studies, fine arts, as well as mathematics reading, writing, and oral expression. Integration of content is natural, not contrived.

Teacher has identified the concepts and skills to be taught to application and mastery. Key points focus on critical concepts rather than on isolated facts.

#### Instructional Strategies:

- Immersion and hands-on-of-the-real-thing are the primary input used to supplement and extend "being there" experiences.
- Instructional strategies are varied and provide the most effective methods for the particular content at hand e.g., direct instruction and discovery processes, collaboration and personal study time, mind mapping, organizing materials, and cross-age/multi-age interaction.
- Resources to support the theme are multiple, varied and rich. Resource people and experts are regular visitors to the classroom. Visits to off-campus learning sites are frequent and serve as the organizers for the curriculum being studied.
- Choices are regularly provided through inquiries and other means.
- Adequate time is allowed to let students complete their work.
- There are sufficient inquiries for each key point to ensure mastery and development of mental programs for using the knowledge and skills of the key points. Each inquiry provides students with choices and multiple opportunities for real-world applications and allows multiple ways of solving problems and producing products. Some inquiries are designed specifically to provide realistic opportunities for students to practice citizenship, e.g., social/political action activities, community service, and special classroom and school wide events.
- Collaboration is effectively used and enhances learning for academic and social growth.
- Each significant chunk of integrated curriculum concludes in a celebration of learning.
- Key points are taught using a variety of instructional strategies.
- The teachers give assistance and coaching to individuals and group as they work.

#### • STAGE 3: CREATING A YEARLONG THEME

##### Curriculum:

A yearlong theme serves as the framework for content development. On average, more than 35 percent of instruction during the school year is based upon body/brain-compatible curriculum developed for this theme. Curriculum content, as expressed in the key points, enhances pattern seeking, making it easier for students to perceive and understand the most important idea and concepts in the curriculum. Inquiries are designed to help students make connections to the real world, to practice using the concepts and skills of the key points, and to develop mental programs and store them for long-term memory. Inquiries that provide experiences in citizenship, such as social/political action activities and collaborative grouping practices, occur weekly.

The content of the theme is consistently used as a high interest area for applying the skills/knowledge in at least one basic skill area (e.g. math, reading, writing).

Curriculum for collaborative assignments is specifically designed for group work.

**Instructional Strategies:**

- All instructional time during the theme and for a growing portion of time during the remainder of the day is based upon the progression: sensory input from "BEING THERE" EXPERIENCE to CONCEPTS to LANGUAGE to APPLICATION TO REAL WORLD to LONG TERM MEMORY.
- Collaborations are used daily whenever it will enhance pattern seeking and program building.
- Time is allocated in accordance with the nature of the tasks and student and teacher need for adequate time. Such time allocations are made in recognition of the need to develop programs for using knowledge and skills in real-world contexts.
- Peers and cross-age tutors substantially increase teaching and practice time for students in areas of individual need.

- **STAGE 4: CITIZENSHIP AND INTEGRATION OF BASIC SKILLS THROUGH A MICRO COMMUNITY**

**Curriculum:**

Curriculum is based predominantly on visitable locations that provide "being there" experiences and connections with the real world.

The yearlong theme includes a compelling rationale statement for the conceptual ideas and provides an unforgettable pattern shaper for students. On average, more than two-thirds of instructional time during the school year is based upon body/brain-compatible curriculum developed for this yearlong theme.

The context of the theme is used daily as meaningful content for teaching at least two areas of basic skills (e.g., math, reading, writing, oral expressions, second and primary language acquisition) and is used for applying all the basic skills.

The development and practice of citizenship continues to be a central focus. A school-wide, ongoing micro society provides realistic and believable experiences applicable in the governing and commerce of our democratic society. These experiences are used to learn and practice the basic skills.

**Instructional Strategies:**

- Learning experiences are predominantly based on "being there," immersion, and hands-on-the-real-thing; the teacher regularly utilizes on-site explorations and discovery processes to make learning real for students.
- Basic skills taught within the theme are taught as a means to an end, not as an end in themselves. Thus, while the teacher utilizes specific techniques for teaching the basic skills on a daily basis, students primarily focus on the meaningful content that the basic skills help unlock.
- The teacher takes advantage of the power of "incidental learning" to build mental programs applying the basic skills.
- Choices, to allow for individual students' ways of learning, interests, and needs, are consistently provided.
- Students use technology as a natural extension for their senses to explore and learn.

- **STAGE 5: SCHOOL-WIDE IMPLEMENTATION**

**Curriculum:**

The yearlong theme serves as the framework for content development and implementation for all basic skills and concepts 90% of the day/year. Key points and inquiries effectively enhance pattern seeking and program building.

Body/brain-compatible curriculum is implemented school-wide providing consistency for students as they move through the school.

The curricular elements of Stages 3 and 4 are maintained and deepened, especially the focus on citizenship through social/political action and micro-community.

All basic skills are taught and practiced through the other subject areas.

Instructional Strategies:

-All instructional strategies identified in Stages 1 through 4 are in place 90% of the year.

-Students have the same teacher for two or more consecutive years due either to multi-age grouping or the teacher moving with the students.

-The teacher utilizes the power of incidental learning during both planned instructional strategies and unplanned teachable moments.

-Technology in the classroom allows teachers and students full access to databases and communication systems throughout the country and the world. It is used to extend, not replace, "being there" experiences which provide a starting point for understanding and applying concepts and skills in real-world situations.

STAGES OF IMPLEMENTATION are adapted from "Exceeding Expectations" by Susan Kovalik.

### **3. OUTLINE OF METHODS FOR MEETING THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN**

Two Rivers integrated thematic, experiential curriculum and "Schools Attuned" training for our staff will decrease our need for specialized services. Schools Attuned is a professional development and service delivery program that helps educators acquire the knowledge and skills, and offers a system of innovative tools, to meet the diverse learning needs of K-12 students. With a minimum of 35 hours of intensive training, 10 hours of follow-up, and ongoing online learning support, the program equips general classroom teachers to make the best instructional decisions to ensure that each student can find academic and social success. When implemented within schools this program has enriched the way all children are educated. "All Kinds of Minds Research Brief," June 2003 reported that as a result of Schools Attuned training and implementation, teachers reported:

-being better prepared to work with special needs children in their classrooms,

-special education testing referrals decreased significantly,

-special education placements and pull-out services decreased significantly, and

-reduction in the provision of special services.

Schools Attuned has had a positive impact on disciplinary problems, including decreased referrals, office visits and suspensions.

Brain Gym movement activities will also be used with all of our students to help make learning easier, to draw out hidden potential, and switch on brain integration mechanisms. By providing the sensory input that leads to concept development through real world expeditions, the disparate experiential backgrounds of our students will be mitigated as a major issue in the student's ability to master new concepts and skills. Science experiences are used prominently in our school to help overcome the gap in the level of experiences and backgrounds of students. These experiences will also help us to provide quality learning experiences for all children and enable our students to be prepared for the science testing that will be implemented in the future.

Our enriched curriculum will eliminate the need for some diagnostic/prescriptive services, but not all. For the students needing specialized help, we will offer assistance within the bounds of the curriculum and it will be tied closely to the theme of their classroom experiences, thus promoting inclusion. In the process of providing these

rich experiences for all children we will be addressing the issues described in the No Child Left Behind Act, Sec. 1001 (3) Statement of Purpose: "Closing the achievement gap between high and low performing children, especially between minority and non-minority students, and between disadvantaged children and their more advantaged peers."

The U.S. Department of Education has funded two studies to examine special education in charter schools. One of these studies, conducted by the research firm, Westat, is called Charter Schools and Students with Disabilities: A National Study (Fiore, Harwell, Blackorby, & Finnigan, 2000). It involved visits to 32 charter schools where parents, teachers and students were interviewed about why the parents chose to enroll their children with disabilities in a charter school, the ways charter schools serve those students, and how successful charter schools have been in meeting their goals. The study found that by almost all accounts, students with and without disabilities receive more individualized attention at the charter school than they did at their previous school. Although accountability is a central feature of charter schools, most of them have little data to document the impact of their program on students with disabilities. However, parents and students themselves are confident about the students' success at charter schools. Factors identified as supporting student success include caring and dedicated teachers and small schools and classes.

#### **4. STATEMENT OF ENTRANCE AND EXIT REQUIREMENTS AND GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

##### **HIGH SCHOOL CURRICULUM**

The educational content of grades 9-12 will bring into focus and intensify the purpose of the educational philosophy of the previous years. We will pursue in depth the Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound Educational Reform Model as we connect standards-based academic content with real-world perspectives and applications.

ELOB's school model is predicated on the same values as Outward Bound: building a sense of teamwork and community to help all achieve their personal bests in pursuit of shared goals. In this case, the goals are academic and character improvement beyond the expected.

The quest for these kinds of growth and learning and achievement is not just an individual but also a collective effort. ELOB has a number of core values and structures that support this.

Learning expeditions and projects are usually group endeavors, though each student is accountable for his or her participation and contribution. There is a collective power in building and maintaining high academic standards for all in the group. Students are on a shared mission to prepare their individual and collective work for group exhibitions and events.

Both individual and group service work strengthen the school community and the broader community.

Fieldwork connects individual students and groups of students to the wider community, and weds academics to community support and pride.

Core instructional practices, such as the use of authentic tasks and audiences, formal group critique and reflection sessions, Socratic seminars, and shared original research will build a culture of group investment in academics.

Character building is embedded in school structures and academics, and has both an individual and a group focus. School structures support teamwork: crews, teaching teams, classroom meetings, adventure activities, shared exhibitions and presentations of work all encourage individual excellence in the context of the group's pursuit of excellence.

## ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF OUR SCHOOL DESIGN

- **A CREW STRUCTURE**

Crews are similar to advisories: a group of not more than 12-15 students is assigned to a faculty member or other staff member for four years. These crews meet at least twice a week (often, daily). In addition to supporting the individual academic careers of each student, they build friendship, teamwork, character and community through team projects, adventure, and service.

- **FLEXIBLE BLOCK SCHEDULE**

Course scheduling is in extended blocks (90 minutes or more) to allow for project work and in-depth investigation. Also, scheduling protocols are flexible enough to allow for significant time for longer enterprises: major group projects, fieldwork, exhibition and presentation preparation, and internships.

- **TEACHING TEAMS**

Teachers are organized in teams to allow for interdisciplinary planning and peer support and critique. The school schedule provides for at least three hours per week of common team planning time.

- **ACTIVE INTERDISCIPLINARY LEARNING**

Curriculum and instruction reflects the Expeditionary Learning components of learning expeditions and active pedagogy. Instructional practices emphasize student inquiry, critical thinking, and craftsmanship. Students engage in original research and create high quality academic products to share with outside audiences. Learning expeditions -- deep, interdisciplinary investigations of rich academic topics -- bring together teachers from different disciplines or enrich the work of individual teachers in discipline-specific classrooms.

- **SCHOOL-WIDE PORTFOLIO CULTURE**

All students maintain portfolios of their achievements in academics, service, and the arts. These portfolios will be at the core of student assessment. Students reflect on their achievements, needs, and goals publicly through formal portfolio reviews or presentations. Senior project includes portfolio component.

## BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL

The school will assume that all students are capable of high level work and will prepare all students to have the option of attending further schooling beyond high school. An active program of connecting students to higher education -- counseling, school visits, assistance with portfolio preparation and career planning, help in the application process -- is a part of every student's academic life.

Students with their work done at the end of the semester can also choose from a variety of 8-day intensive courses. Juniors are encouraged to take advantage of mini-internship opportunities during their intensives. Seniors are required to participate in a semester-long senior expedition (Senior Mastery Process) directed at furthering their goals for life after high school. The post-secondary options coordinator teaches a class that helps them plan their senior expeditions.

## RESPONSIBILITIES BEYOND ACADEMICS

- **SERVICE AND ADVENTURE**

Service is a part of student life in two ways: an ethic of service will be developed in students through daily practices that help maintain the school facility and school culture; and opportunities will be provided for

genuine service learning through service projects that go beyond token charity work to involve students in extended service connected to their academic learning. Adventure is integrated into the academic work, the physical education curriculum and the values of the school culture to help build courage, character, team skills and community.

- **FIELDWORK AND INTERNSHIPS**

Fieldwork is a regular part of curricular studies. Students ground their learning in the real world, not just through visits, but through academic work that engages them in real world settings. Internships and apprenticeships are available as a part of the school experience.

To support a rigorous academic curriculum designed to meet or exceed state and national education standards, Two Rivers Community School students must demonstrate high achievement in five developmental areas specific to the high school curriculum: Academic Content, Technology, Personal Development, Communication and Thinking and Learning.

- **ACADEMIC CONTENT**

Two Rivers Community School curriculum will provide students with a broad range of choices after they graduate. They will have met college entrance requirements. They will have taken at least 3 and 2/3 years of classes in each of the core subject areas (english, math, science, and social studies), acquired at least two years of Spanish, and participated in electives in physical education and the arts. The post- secondary options coordinator will also support students by setting up internships; hosting career fairs; taking students to visit colleges, trade schools and employers; and helping students with the college application and financial aid process.

Two Rivers Community School graduates will meet the College/University Preparatory requirements. Graduates will also be required to pass the North Carolina High School Exit Exam and complete the Seniors Mastery Project.

- **PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT, ADVENTURE AND FITNESS**

Outward Bound courses, adventure, fitness and nutrition for students and faculty are integrated into academic work, the physical education curriculum, and the values of the school to help build courage, character, teamwork and community. All first-year students and faculty will participate in a weeklong Outward Bound course. They will also participate in physical exercise and monitor their progress in fitness and nutrition.

- **TECHNOLOGY**

Using technology will be a vital part of the learning process for all Two Rivers Community School students. Students will learn to evaluate for specific purposes the various technologies that are available, then select the technologies that are most appropriate to serve that purpose. Technology tools available to Two Rivers Community School students include graphing calculators, desktop computers, laptop computers, scanners, digital still and video cameras, and printers and plotters.

Two Rivers Community School students will develop professional quality presentations in PowerPoint and other applications to showcase not only what they have learned within the core curriculum areas, but also to show they can successfully integrate audio and video clips, pictures, and animation into advanced software applications.

To help prepare students for this expectation of advanced technological knowledge, the Two Rivers Community School will have three specific technology courses, two of which are required for graduation. All ninth grade students must pass Beginning Computer Applications, a ten-week course that introduces them to the basic

concepts of Microsoft Office products, including Word, Excel and Power Point. All seniors must pass Web Design, in which they create an online portfolio that highlights their educational experiences at Two Rivers Community School. Students learn to digitize their work and develop a web site as their final project. Senior students whose skills surpass those expected in Web Design will be given special projects to complete. The Two Rivers Community School will also offer an elective, Advanced Computer Applications, in which students learn about advanced uses the Microsoft Office suite, as well as applications using the Internet such as e-commerce applications, databases and additional interactive programs.

- **COMMUNICATION**

Effective communication skills are integral to the success of all Two Rivers Community School students. From the students' first day of orientation they will learn the importance of effectively communicating their ideas and wishes in both formal and informal settings. Throughout their daily activities, making formal presentations before groups, students will learn about different styles of communication and the challenges associated with communicating with diverse groups of people.

Two Rivers Community School students will demonstrate a variety of communication skills that include reading, writing, speaking, listening, persuasion, negotiation, and conflict resolution. They are expected to evaluate the validity of information that they receive and the effectiveness of communication strategies that they choose.

The culmination of Two Rivers Community School students' communication skills is in the Senior Mastery Process, which requires a 15-20-page paper, a Power Point presentation and an oral defense of their experiences. To help prepare students for the Two Rivers Community School's expectation of advanced communication skills, Two Rivers Community School requires all students to take and pass four years of English Language courses.

As we begin the 21st century, we find that our global community has become much smaller and much more integrated than ever before. To address Two Rivers Community School's expectations that students be responsible citizens in this global community, Two Rivers Community School requires all students to pass two courses in a foreign language.

- **THINKING AND LEARNING**

Critical thinking, problem solving, systematic thinking, and learning how to learn are emphasized in all the academic areas. Each student will also participate in "The Mind That's Mine" curriculum.

The Mind That's Mine curriculum enables students to find out how their minds work, what their current strengths are, and what they can do to make their minds work even better.

This curriculum focuses on how students learn, how they learn-to-learn, and how their different abilities enable them to acquire the skills they need to succeed. Different students have different kinds of minds, abilities, unique patterns of strengths and weaknesses, and individual affinities. This program encourages students to recognize, tolerate, and respect individual differences in learning and behavior.

Students are continually assessed in all five areas, and all Two Rivers Community School learning activities are built around these five developmental foundations.

A strong sense of community will be created within the school that values tolerance, compassion, diversity, and learning, as well as a community of support outside the school that draws community members in as active and engaged partners in the teaching and learning process. Members of the broader community continually interact with all facets of the Two Rivers Community School's development and implementation to develop projects and

lessons that will help students make the connection between what is learned in the classroom and how it applies in the real world. This experience culminates in the Senior Mastery Process (SMP).

One hundred per cent of our total population will benefit from the career preparation curriculum developed.

Two Rivers Community School students participate in the learning experiences that are stretched over their four years of high school with Two Rivers Community School.

Career awareness and exploration begin in the FRESHMAN year with students being introduced to "The Mind That's Mine" as a way to gain insight into their learning and work styles, participating in a Job Shadowing Project in which they first interview various professionals about their career choices and then spend an afternoon with members of the local business community. They will write an initial resume and participate in mock interviews.

SOPHMORES will continue with further career awareness and exploration activities. This curricular component is currently under development using the same standards and benchmarks, connections to career education and expectations for high academic rigor as was used in creating the foundation activities and the Senior Mastery Process. The learning experiences during those initial years pave the way for students to begin the Senior Mastery Process with an even greater sense of direction and self-confidence than would not otherwise be possible. All students must successfully complete the Senior Mastery Process, a work-based learning program, to be considered eligible for graduation.

The Senior Mastery Process was developed based on the belief that students must have opportunities to link what they learn in school to the real world. Its primary purpose is to provide students with an opportunity to learn through experience in an environment where they can make valuable connections between learning in the classroom and learning beyond school. The goal is to enable them to become self-initiating learners by developing their own learning plans, choosing research projects that are interesting and challenging to them, and outlining a procedure to successfully implement them. This experience helps students develop an awareness of the skills and attitudes required to function as productive, contributing members of the community. It enables students to engage in real-life problem solving, in which they are regarded as valuable and unique individuals whose ideas and opinions are respected and considered seriously.

- **THREE PARTS OF THE SENIOR MASTERY PROCESS**

The SMP is a three-part program that begins in the students' JUNIOR year. Each part lasts for one ten-week quarter. The first part is the Junior Workshop, a seminar to help students develop the focus, materials, skills and plan for completing the second two parts of the SMP. The four components are:

- (1) learning about self,
- (2) learning about careers,
- (3) learning job search skills, and
- (4) developing a professional portfolio

The second part is the SENIOR Practicum, in which students complete 75 hours of fieldwork in a career area they have researched and identified as a possible future career. Students work with an Adult Partner in the workplace who provides meaningful learning opportunities for the students. After successfully completing both the Junior Workshop and the Senior Practicum, the students take Senior Workshop, the third part of the SMP. It supports each student's work on the creation of his/her final assessment product, writing of a substantive reflection paper, and preparation for the defense of the research findings.

• **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE SENIOR MASTERY PROCESS**

The primary purpose of the Senior Mastery Process, indeed the entire career preparation curricular elements of Two Rivers Community School is to encourage students to make personal and significant connections between what they learn in classes and the goals they have for their professional futures.

Our goal is to facilitate their development as self-initiating learners as they:

- Gain an awareness of various career and educational opportunities
- Investigate their career interests and individual learning and work styles,
- Develop their own Senior Mastery Research and Project plan
- Network in the community to identify a challenging, supportive practicum placement
- Gather hard and empirical data related to their research question in a supervised, work-based learning experience
- Evaluate what they learned "on-the-job" and through their research in a final reflection paper
- Present their findings and defend them to a committee of involved adults

Students will be affected in a number of ways by their participation in the SMP.

- They will demonstrate an increased level of independence, responsibility and self-confidence.
- They will develop a more informed understanding of themselves.
- They will possess several important professional documents including a formal resume and portfolio.
- They will recognize the elements of strong work-place etiquette and its importance to success.
- They will have a realistic knowledge of what "work" is and the expectations of employers.
- They will develop greater understanding of the importance of effective networking, communication, and on-the-job learning.
- They will have the tools to make informed decisions regarding post-secondary school education and employment.

The SMP is designed to meet a wide variety of student and partner needs in ways that draw on the unique strengths that each brings to the entire experience. Early in the process, those who participate may gain a shared understanding of what work means to each other and the ways in which professionals move from school to work. Later, students and Adult Partners alike may develop meaningful relationships within the context of the Practicum, sharing their unique perspectives on work and school, increasing each other's comfort level and understanding of the other as well as promoting strong ties within the community. Employers of the Adult Partners may also gain the opportunity to enhance their corporate citizenship, play a significant role in the development of the future work force and further their commitment to the community as a whole.

The Henry Ford Academy developed this innovative high school program and has agreed to mentor and train our staff enabling us to duplicate this award-winning program. In January 2002, the Henry Ford Academy received the Michigan Governor's Excellence in Practice Award for its Senior Mastery Process the Academy's ultimate achievement in terms of connecting the classroom and the real world, a program developed with extensive Ford input. The Senior Mastery Process also received a 2001 Michigan Association of Public School Academies' Summit Award for its strong links between the classroom and the real world. The Henry Ford Academy was awarded the 2001 James D. Mac Connell Award by the Council of Educational Facility Planners International. The award recognizes schools for their community involvement and innovative planning and design.

**METHODS OF DOCUMENTING SUCCESS GS 115C-238.29B(b)(2)**

Two Rivers Community School will utilize assessment to both inform and drive our curricular design. Effective assessment will report what a child understands as well as what a teacher needs to emphasize.

The staff at Two Rivers Community School will develop a balanced assessment system that combines large-scale standardized tests and day-to-day classroom assessments in ways that maximize student success.

We realize that once-a-year test scores do not provide a sufficient assessment basis for the development of an effective curriculum. High quality assessment information collected at the classroom level such as: oral presentations, interaction with peers, writing, mathematics, problem solving, reading, designing scientific experiments and portfolios which cannot be sampled sufficiently by large scale assessment, will be used to enlarge our understanding of student capabilities and curriculum effectiveness.

Student portfolios document the quality of a student's thinking about significant issues, will show evidence of the effort a student has made, and demonstrate a student's developing knowledge, growth in understanding of principles and refinement of skills over time. These portfolios begin with work collected into folders, and they become true portfolios when students select particular exemplary or important pieces and reflect on them in structured ways. Students graduate to further study based on the content of their portfolio and their demonstration of mastery of the standards set for them by presenting their portfolios to a panel of educators and parents. When teachers look at student portfolios as a group, they get a broad sense of what students understand and what their capabilities are. Thus portfolios serve as "data" that help inform teaching practices at the school.

We also involve students in the classroom processes of assessment development, record keeping, and communication. This will facilitate their commitment to their personal and to the school's academic success. A comprehensive international literature review and analysis conducted by Paul Black and Dylan Williams of Kings University in London and reported in the November 1998 Phi Delta Kappa reveals almost unprecedented jumps in student achievement attributable to improved quality of classroom assessment. Further, these researchers go into great detail about the role that student involved assessment, record keeping and communication has played in increasing achievement. Student involved classroom assessment also sets the stage for our students to become life-long learners. By involving students in the classroom assessment process, we put them in touch with the tools needed to check and fix their own writing, reading, etc.

**State Board Required: ABC Accountability Tests** (State Board Policy HSA-P-001).

( X ) We will participate in the ABCs Accountability Model and conduct the statewide testing as in all NC public schools

## **EXPECTATIONS FOR ACHIEVEMENT**

### Benchmarks for Success

- All students would score at or above grade level on literacy measures or show substantial progress toward that goal.
- All students would demonstrate high quality work through presentations and portfolios.
- All students would pass all required district/state examinations.
- 100% of students would graduate.
- Attendance would be at or above 90 percent.
- All students would perform satisfactorily on specified character/community measures.

- All students would meet fitness and nutrition standards.
- All students would be prepared to enter college.
- Student performance exceeds citywide, district-wide, and other aggregated measures with respect to:
  - Attendance
  - Reduced student mobility
  - Graduation
  - The school community, students and adults, would demonstrate qualities of support, respect, compassion, tenacity, and willingness to embrace challenge.
  - Parent participation will increase.
  - Ninety percent or more of graduates will be admitted to college.

The goal of our educational model--and the innate drive of the human mind--is mastery. Mastery, not in the sense of: mastery learning of each of the 834 discrete skills of reading, but rather mastery as in competence: capacity, sufficiency; possession of required skill, knowledge, qualification; sufficient means for a modest livelihood. Mastering a skill or a concept includes knowing when and how to apply it in the real world in similar but varying circumstances. It has been incorporated into a mental program for storage in long-term memory. Such mastery and competence is at the heart of positive self-concept; it gives a sense of empowerment and ability to direct one's life. It is the brain's innate search for meaning.

We ask two simple but powerful questions about assessing our students' learning:

- What do we want students to understand? (key points)
- What do we want them to do with what they understand? (inquiries)

Our educational model uses real-life settings and real-world levels of expectations. The model assesses what's worth assessing rather than what's easy to assess.

Four relevant indicators for determining mastery as proposed by Renata and Geoffrey Caine (Making Connections: Teaching and Learning and the Human Brain, p. 156):

1. The ability to use the language of a discipline or subject in complex situations and in social interaction,
2. The ability to perform appropriately in unanticipated situations,
3. The ability to solve real problems using the skills and concepts,
4. The ability to show, explain, or teach the idea or skill to another person who has a real need to know.

These approaches to assessing mastery focus on competence in real life rather than performances on artificial tasks found only in school.

Authentic assessment is possible because the curriculum itself is authentic. In ITI that means that the curriculum is conceptually stated rather than a collection of factoids, is based in the real world, and is age appropriate. Key points state clearly what's worth learning and, therefore, what's worth assessing. They provide the base for instructional planning, they serve as an official communiqué to parents and peers about curriculum content and expectations, and they can record what is being taught and learned in the classroom. Key points are the forces for assessment tools and procedures. Early in the curriculum planning, the state standards and goals are translated into key points that are conceptual, based on the real world, and meaningful enough to be transferred into long term memory.

Inquiries require the kinds of observable actions from students that allow a teacher to determine whether the student has accurate understanding of a key point (concept or skill), can use it in real-world contexts, and has wired this capability into long-term memory. Mastery has occurred when students can apply the concept/skill in ways described by the Caines. Such a level of mastery ensures that the concept/skill has been wired into long-term memory, precisely the point of schooling.

Rubrics are used to specifically describe the attributes of a successful product.

Before formal assessment takes place the student must have successfully completed a number of inquiries representing all the multiple intelligences. The inquiries must call for real-world performances assessed with real-world expectations and standards. The inquiries will have provided the student with enough practice to ensure that the knowledge/skills are worked into long-term memory.

The primary purpose of assessment is to improve teaching and learning.

To determine whether learning has taken place our educational model offers two kinds of criteria to help make the decision:

The 3 Cs of Assessment and Inquiries

The 3 Cs of Assessment:

1. Correct--conforming to fact or truth; free from error; accurate
2. Complete--having all parts or elements
3. Comprehensive--of large scope; inclusive extensive mental range or grasp

These criteria are used by both students and their teachers in assessing day-to-day work. They are tools that help students focus on real-world standards of performance.

Here is an example of how the 3 Cs apply to the task of cleaning the kitchen:

Correct – Dishes are in the dishwasher.

Complete – Dishes are in the dishwasher; pots and pans are washed and put away.

Comprehensive – Dishes are in the dishwasher; pots and pans have been washed and put away; the stove and counter area has been wiped, the table cleaned and place mats shaken; the sink is scrubbed; floor is swept and the trash taken out.

Inquiries are ready-made performance-based assessment tools. While not all inquiries carry the burden of formal assessment, all require observable action of students.

For classroom purposes, assessment helps improve the teaching-learning process. Applying the 3 Cs to students' performance to an inquiry plus drawing on teacher experience analyzing student projects are usually adequate to determine mastery.

For more formal assessment purposes and when communicating with parents and colleagues, inquiries may need to be adapted to make judgment less subjective and more objective. To build in objectivity, all the needed assessment elements are clearly there--who will know what, who will be able to apply what skills or knowledge, how well, by what standard and when.

Becoming a lifelong learner requires taking responsibility for one's learning seeking and keeping at it until mastery is achieved. A first step is giving students the game card-a chart that lists every key point for each component. This is a permanent part of each student's notebook and a key part of his/her assessment portfolio.

Students are responsible for selecting and conducting demonstrations of their mastery. This helps students develop an appreciation for what it means to know something in depth.

Crewmembers assess each other's inquiry using the 3 Cs of assessment. Each member initials the inquiry and returns it to the student who requested feedback. Only after rewording the inquiry and making all necessary corrections does the work go to the teacher for feedback.

Assessment is based on mastery. Feedback is given on a mastered/passed or not-yet-mastered/no-credit-yet basis, not on a pass/fail basis. Timeliness is flexible. Mastering a key point the last day of school counts as much as mastering it in the first week.

Eventually, the internal student motivator becomes the satisfaction of mastery itself and the confidence for knowing one is a competent problem-solver, which is a necessary ingredient for a contributing member of society.

Celebrations of learning give our students a chance to share their knowledge in ways that solidify long-term memory. They are orchestrated revisits of key points and important inquiries that allow students to show off their newly acquired skills and expertise and, in the process, enhance mental program building. As such they are serious work as well as a celebrations of learning.

Celebrations of Learning are another way to build doing into the curriculum and instruction. By adding audience and asking that students switch roles from learning to teacher, they invite students to re-experience the importance and power of the concepts and skills of the curriculum.

Students are required to maintain working portfolios in major subject areas and master presentation portfolios. The portfolio system has content requirements that align with learning expedition products and standards. Working portfolios and master presentation portfolios show growth over time. Portfolios include rubrics for major projects and assignments. Students include multiple drafts and reflections to show how their work has improved and how they have met standards.

### Admission to the School

Two Rivers Community School was formed under the 1996 Charter Schools Act. Any child who is qualified under the laws of this state for admission to a public school is qualified for admission to this charter school, provided that age and grade requirements are met. Students entering kindergarten must turn five years old on or before the 15th of October of the school year.

The School's educational programs are open to all children, without distinction to race, gender, age, disability, creed, national origin, religion, or ancestry to provide broad access to its educational programs, and to serve society in such a way that treats with equal dignity the diversity of individuals and groups that comprise the social whole. Admission to Two Rivers Community School will not be determined on the basis of intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, athletic ability, disability, race, creed, gender, national origin, religion, or ancestry.

As a public charter school, Two Rivers Community School may not charge tuition, but may charge reasonable fees in line with other public schools.

### Enrollment

The open enrollment period each year (typically during January and February) will be approximately six weeks in length, during which time applications for admission will be accepted and students will be enrolled. All eligible students who apply will be enrolled until full enrollment is reached. When full enrollment is reached waiting lists for relevant grade levels will be created and students will be chosen, in order, from waiting lists to fill vacancies (see “Lottery” below for additional details).

During open enrollment, members of the School administration will provide informational meetings that will provide an overview of the School’s mission and educational program, a brochure, academic calendar, summary of course offerings, application, and other pertinent information to make an informed decision about enrolling in the School.

### Enrollment Preferences

Children of the School’s administration and staff may be granted priority for available openings. Priority may also be granted to children of the School’s Board of Directors (during the first year only), so long as they are limited to no more than ten percent (10%) of the School’s total enrollment or to 20 students, whichever is less. Siblings of currently enrolled students, admitted in the current or previous year, will be given priority on a space available basis.

### Lottery

If the number of qualified applicants for any grade level exceeds its capacity during open enrollment, TRCS will conduct a lottery within each grade level, assigning a number to each applicant until all spots are filled. After all spots are filled, all other applicants will be assigned a number on a waiting list by the same procedure. The lottery procedure will be as follows:

The lottery will take place around February 15th (exact dates will vary from year to year) as part of a meeting of the TRCS Board of Directors.

Eligible applications will have been sorted by grade level.

A card bearing the name and grade level for the upcoming year of each applicant is made. Each card is placed in an unmarked envelope that is labeled in the right hand corner with the applicant’s grade level.

The envelopes are sealed and pooled by grade level in a larger envelope with the total number of applicants for the grade level marked on the outside.

To begin, all of the kindergarten envelopes are placed in a large clear container, and a Board officer or designee draws envelopes one by one with the Board secretary recording the lottery order number and names one by one on a ledger. The lottery order number is concurrently recorded on the child’s application and lottery card. This process continues until all envelopes have been drawn and thus recorded. The first 40 names will be placed on the first and second class rosters by grade (20 students per class), and the remaining names will be placed on a waiting list.

The above process is repeated for each grade level.

The lottery cards, applications, and ledger are then double checked for accuracy.

Note: If a lottery is held, all applicants (including those wait-listed during the previous year) are placed in the lottery. Students on the waiting list in the current year are required to file an application during open enrollment to be included in the spring lottery for fall enrollment.

### Admissions Policies

The School administration will send either a “notice of acceptance” or “wait-listed” letter to the parent of each applicant. The parent or legal guardian of each child chosen for admission must then confirm the child’s eligibility for enrollment within 14 days of receipt of the notice of acceptance.

Prior to admittance, the following documentation for each accepted student must be submitted by his or her parent or legal guardian:

- Copy of birth certificate
- Immunization record
- Social security number
- Records transferred from previous school

In addition, parents and students (new and continuing) will be asked to read and sign the School-Family Agreement to formalize their understanding of and common commitment to the mission and educational program of the School, and the roles and responsibilities that are shared by the School, parents, and student in providing for each child’s education.

If the above steps are not completed, admission to the School will be forfeited, and the child’s name will be added to the general pool of applicants by grade level awaiting the next available lottery.

The School administration will also ask that at least one parent of each student attends the Annual Parent Orientation meeting at the beginning of the school year. At this meeting the School Director will review important points regarding the School’s academic program, important policies and procedures, School-family expectations, fundraising events, and other news of interest.

### Completion of Enrollment

To complete the enrollment process, both new and continuing students must attend class at the beginning of the school year. The attendance policies to complete enrollment in Two Rivers Community School include the following:

Each student must attend classes on the first day of school. If a student does not attend the first day of class, and the Director has not received prior written notice and provided authorization for the absence, the child is at risk of losing his or her enrollment status, and the Director may enroll another child through the lottery process.

The School will try and contact the parents of any child who is absent, however it is the responsibility of a parent or legal guardian to notify the Director in writing in advance of any absence.

If a child is legally absent more than the first five days of school, without prior written notification to and authorization by the Director, the child will automatically forfeit his or her space to the next child on the School’s waiting list.

If a child is illegally absent more than the first five days of school, with or without prior written notification to and authorization by the Director, the child will automatically forfeit his or her space to the next child on the School’s waiting list.

In accordance with the Student Information Management System (SIMS) of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, even if a student has attended the first day of school, but subsequently missed 10 or more consecutive days in the first 20 days of school, the student cannot be included in the schools list of enrolled students, unless the absences are legal.

Note: Legal Absences include illness or injury, quarantine, death in the immediate family, medical or dental appointments, court or administrative proceedings, religious holidays or observances, and valid educational opportunity with approval prior to the absence. The NCDPI does not consider a valid educational opportunity

with approval prior to the absence an acceptable legal absence until after the child has attended school and completed enrollment.

Parents and students will be asked to support the School's policies of providing a coherent and continuous education program for all students. With absences, not only is the educational progress for the absent student at-risk, but the educational progress for the group becomes interrupted when teachers become burdened with providing an individualized instruction schedule before, during, and after each absence takes place. In addition, because the revenue that the School receives is based on student enrollment at the beginning of the year, absences minimize the educational dollars available that the School has carefully budgeted for each child's education.

## **TIMELINE AND USE OF STATE STARTUP FUNDS**

### **March-August 2004**

- Contact and visit each of the charter schools and Experiential Learning Outward Bound schools in northwestern North Carolina.
- Meet with the District Superintendent for Watauga County Schools and other school leaders in the community informing them of our intent and educational model.
- Refine the core message to parents.
- Refine the marketing strategy
- Identify the major components and leaders of the local media network.
- Contact and collaborate with community leaders, organizations, and agencies, and research and schedule ideal venues for regular public presentations to educate parents about charter schools and the benefits of the Two Rivers Community School educational program.
- Prepare copy for articles, press releases, public service announcements, display ads, posters, brochures, direct mail pieces, presentation banners, and web site content pages.
- Develop fund raising strategy and prepare materials.
- Research direct mail services.

### **August 2004**

- Budget for Planning Year due to Office of Charter Schools.
- Decision regarding participation in State benefits plan.
- Documentation of fingerprinting/background checks of Board Chair, Finance Officer or Treasurer and/or any other person eligible to write checks.
- Finalize contract with Acadia NorthStar for fiscal and student information management.

### **September 2004**

- Hire directors early to facilitate development of school.
- Hire a web designer to create, test, and finalize the Two Rivers Community School web site, and a graphics designer and printing company to design and print the display ads, flyers, direct mail pieces, presentation banners, posters, and brochures.
- Organize and set up venues for public presentations.
- Begin to implement fund raising strategy.

Two Rivers Community School

- Open school savings and checking accounts and set up interim financial management.
- Provide progress report to district.
- Plan for initial training of Board.
- Prepare contract with consulting service for staff development.
- Prepare lease contract with facility owner.
- Prepare plan with owner of facility for up fitting the building for school use.

**October 2004**

- Contact the leaders of the local media: provide local newspapers with press releases and ads, meet with reporters and submit articles to local newspapers and magazines, provide public service announcements to local radio stations and line up radio and TV show interviews, and distribute posters.
- Begin to hold regular public presentations for parents in each county.
- Continue to widen contacts with and endorsements from community leaders, organizations, and agencies.
- Talk with parents of local preschools about TRCS kindergarten and elementary school program.
- Finalize Two Rivers Community School's curriculum guide, instructional program and evaluation plans, and contract to complete the school's policy and procedural handbooks, forms and contracts needed to start and operate the school.
- Detailed educational plan will be presented to the Office of Charter Schools

**November/December 2004-**

- Continue with press and media campaign.
- Continue to widen contacts with and endorsements from community.
- Continue public presentations for parents in each county.
- Set-up presentations to area parents groups and after-school clubs and organizations.
- Form a School Technology Committee to begin design of an integrated school-wide computer network with both academic and administrative components.
- Set up information tables in local malls and area festivals.

**December 17, 2004**

- Progress report submitted to OCS and to District.

**January, 2005**

- Continue contacts made with the local media: provide local newspaper reporters, radio and TV show hosts with more in depth articles about the school. Focus presentations to clarify any misconceptions about charter schools and the TRCS educational program.
- Prepare additional press releases and letters to the editor of local newspapers.
- Request Watauga County newspapers to prepare an educational series on the value of charter schools.
- Continue with regular public presentations for parents in each county.
- Continue with additional presentations to community organizations and agencies.
- Finalize school calendar and academic schedule.
- Open enrollment period runs from January to mid February.
- Recruitment of students and teachers formally begins.
- Applications are reviewed as they arrive and organized by grade.

**February 2005**

- Training of Board of Directors completed.

Two Rivers Community School

- Enrollment period closes if maximum student numbers are reached.
- Notice of lottery is sent by regular mail to the parents or guardian of each applicant (if necessary).
- Lottery is held (if necessary).

**March 2005**

- Progress report submitted to OCS and to District.
- Notice of acceptances and “wait-listed” are mailed.
- Parents of each child chosen for admission must contact the School administration within (14) days of receipt of notice of acceptance.

**May 1, 2005**

- Begin to purchase and install school computer network.
- Purchase needed classroom/office furnishings, equipment, and supplies.

**May 28, 2005**

- SIMS/UERS training is scheduled or completed by the Directors and/or school designee and verification forwarded to the OCS.
- Finalization of human resources issues: Background Checks, Certification Documented, Personnel Contracts.
- Hiring of teachers and checking of credentials completed.
- Detailed budget plan for year one (1) operation due to OCS.

**June 1, 2005**

- Formalize student information and fiscal management systems with Acadia NorthStar.
- Obtain necessary property, liability, health, and student accident insurance coverage.
- Set up school offices, furnishings, and equipment.
- Staff Development Plan completed with resources/consultants identified.
- Set up school and classroom furnishings, equipment, books and supplies.

**July 2005**

- Finalize school safety procedures and information systems.
- Finalize needed contracted services (custodial, transportation).
- Design, contract for, and install school signs.
- Staff Development conducted (3 weeks), including: Operational procedures, curriculum/instructional approach, mission, philosophy, strategies, exceptional children’s instruction, and documentation.
- Staff finalizes syllabi, lesson plans, and prepare classrooms for opening day.

**August 22, 2005**

- Open House for students and parents.
- Provide progress report to the District.

**August 25, 2005**

- Conduct Parent Orientation meetings and include: Mission and Purposes of School, Curriculum Model, Disciplinary Code, School Calendar, Introduction of Board of Directors and Faculty, Distribution of Parent Handbook, and other information deemed necessary.

**August 29, 2005**

Convocation and start of classes.

## **BUSINESS PLAN**

### **PROJECTED TYPES OF STAFF: GS 115C-238.29B(12)(e)**

Two Directors (one serving as a part time teacher and one serving as a counselor); Teachers; Assistant Teachers; Clerical; Janitorial

### **QUALIFICATION REQUIRED FOR INDIVIDUALS: GS 115C-238.29B(b)(10)**

*Based on the list of positions provided above give qualifications and licenses that each position must have to perform the job function(s). Describe the plan to meet the licensure requirements for teachers and paraprofessionals as prescribed by law.*

- Directors

Two Rivers Community School will seek two individuals with a minimum of a Master's degree or equivalent expertise who demonstrate strong leadership skills and experience in the areas of administration, management, and education and/or counseling. These individuals must support the teaching staff in planning and all other teaching duties; therefore, teaching experience is preferred. A candidate with a history of forging successful community and school partnerships will be needed. Knowledge of and experience with the principles and practice of Experiential Learning is essential. We seek a person who will nurture individual relationships with each and every child and strive to create a boady brain compatible educational environment for children. The directors need to be committed to intensive, ongoing professional development focused on the School's vision and mission and to modeling the learning and behavior required from students. The directors will participate in at least 15-20 days of professional development every year in the summer and during the school year.

- Teachers

A school is only as good as its teachers. TRCS will conduct a rigorous search for teachers with creativity, innovative skills, and a passion for teaching and learning.

The teachers need to be committed to intensive, ongoing professional development focused on the School's vision and mission and to modeling the learning and behavior required from students. The teachers will participate in at least 15-20 days of professional development every year in the summer and during the school year.

The teaching staff will meet the license and certification requirements as outlined in North Carolina Charter School law as well as meeting the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act.

- Assistant Teachers

Two Rivers Community School

Two Rivers Community School will search for individuals who are seeking a four year degree in education. Knowledge of Experiential Learning and the educational needs of children is preferred. These individuals will meet the requirements of No Child Left Behind as well as all NC requirements.

- Counselor

The counselor will work directly with the high school teachers in every aspect of the learning environment and will therefore need to have successful experience collaborating, problem solving and working with a team. The counselor will be especially active in implementing the Senior Mastery Process and working with each student individually. We will look for a certified school counselor with a proven successful experience relating to high school students. Our counselor will also be a local resident, familiar with our community and its resources.

- Clerical

Clerical activities will include bookkeeping, telephone and public reception, other general office duties, and administrative support. This person will be the first voice and face that many people encounter at our school, so the successful applicant will have a sunny disposition as well as experience in the aforementioned areas.

- Janitorial

We will look for janitorial workers that are friendly and like to be around children.

## AUDITS

### **PROGRAM AUDITS:** GS 115C-238.29B(b)(6)

A committee appointed by the Board of Directors shall audit the programs annually in the month of February. The Board shall reserve the right to engage independent contractors to assist in this endeavor. Contractors shall have substantial experience in one or more of the following areas: classroom teaching, curriculum design, progressive school principles and design, alternate assessment models, non-profit management, charter school and/or business administration, and fundraising. An individual holding a Master's Degree in Special Education who possesses the expertise to assure that our program for exceptional children is of the highest quality and that we are in compliance with all applicable state and federal regulations shall conduct a separate Special Education Audit. The committee shall submit a report of its findings to the Board to be included in the annual report.

### **FINANCIAL AUDITS:** GS 115C-238.29F(f)(1)

In July, the firm Merritt, Pettway, Mills, and Hockaday will be contracted to perform the annual financial single audit for Two Rivers Community School. The firm will also conduct an external audit of student records. Merritt, Pettway, Mills and Hockaday have extensive audit experience with educational institutions and come highly recommended. The financial audit will follow general acceptable accounting procedures (GAAP).

Two Rivers Community School

Firm: Merritt, Pettway, Mills, and Hockaday  
Mailing Address: Post Office Box 1036  
Zebulon, NC 27597-1036  
Telephone: (919) 269-7405  
Fax: (919) 269-8728

## **MARKETING PLAN**

GS 115C.238.29F(g)(1-7)

The focus of the marketing plan for Two Rivers Community School has been, and will continue to be, to educate our community as to the mission of our school. Specific plans include, but will not be limited to, the following:

### Activities through December 2004

Create a school brochure, which will include, in addition to features and benefits of an education from Two Rivers Community School, general information on the charter school program and legislation as it exists in North Carolina. This brochure will also summarize the plans for Two Rivers Community School. Names, contact numbers, web site information and mission statement will be included. The marketing theme for the 2005/06 school year will be: "Expeditions in understanding."

Place a copy of our charter school application, and a copy of the charter school legislation, on reserve in each of the Watauga, Avery and Ashe County public libraries.

Prepare additional press releases and/or letters to the editor, describing our school and the charter school program in general, as well as updating the status on our charter application..

Ask local newspapers to prepare an educational series on the charter school legislation.

Develop materials for and initiate a comprehensive fundraising project.

Set up interviews to be aired on locally broadcast television and radio stations.

Design and launch a web site, which will include information about the school's mission, educational plans, and other features. Links will be included to the NC Charter School Office, Expeditionary Learning, Susan Kovalik, Brain Gym, etc. Application status updates will be posted on the website and sent via email to list serve subscribers who want to receive updates. A database has already been created to begin a mailing list of those who have demonstrated an interest in the school.

Institute our plan to encourage diversity among our student body. Through our diversity plan, we will strive to attract a student body from all ranges of socio-economic strata by broad distribution of TRCS materials, broadcasting information on a range of local radio stations and personal contact by charter school staff and volunteers.

Develop partnerships with community organizations and businesses.

Official announcement of employment will be made upon approval of our charter.

### Activities for January 2005

We will hold a public information meetings. Representatives from area charter schools with proven track records will be invited to attend and answer questions. Applications for school admission and for staff positions will be accepted during this month. Job descriptions and application forms for both staff positions and admission to the school will be posted on our web site.

### Activities for February 2005

Application period will be closed for students, and a lottery will be held if over-enrollment has occurred. If all available spaces have not been filled on each grade level, the enrollment period will be extended. Representatives from the school will be available to distribute brochures and answer questions at Blowing Rock Winter Fest.

### Activities for March 2005

Two Rivers Community School

An orientation and welcome meeting will be held with the school Director, teachers, board members, students and parents. Representatives from the school will be available to distribute brochures and answer questions at various spring festivals and events around the High Country.

Activities for April 2005

Updates will be sent to the media on a regular basis. Representatives from the school will be available to distribute brochures and answer questions at the other annual spring festivals and community events. We will begin publicizing our open house to be held in June.

Activities for May 2005

Final information about the opening of Two Rivers Community School will be provided to the news media. Representatives from the school will be available to distribute brochures and answer questions at the annual Fourth of July festivals held in Boone and Blowing Rock.

Activities for June 2005

An open house will be held.

Ongoing marketing activities for the school year:

We will actively participate in the "School News" page of the local newspaper, submitting articles and photographs of our student body and their activities. We will also take advantage of as many speaking opportunities as possible by offering programs to local civic groups such as Rotary Club, Kiwanis Club, Toastmasters, etc.

Brochures will be distributed through local businesses, the Chambers of Commerce, libraries, doctors' offices, health departments in each county, Departments of Social Services, home-school groups, recreational facilities, religious facilities of all denominations, daycare centers. Brochures will also be sent to anyone making written, email, or telephone inquiries, or inquiries at booths during the spring and summer festivals.

Advertisements for public meetings will be placed in local newspapers, in free publications and on community bulletin boards. Fliers will also be posted in grocery stores, businesses, and schools and other sites with public bulletin boards.

Bylaws of Two Rivers Community School, Inc.

ARTICLE I: Name of Non-Profit Corporation

Section 1: Name

The name of the non-profit corporation is TWO RIVERS COMMUNITY SCHOOL, INC. (the Corporation), duly authorized under the statutes of the State of North Carolina.

Section 2: Principal Office

The principal office of the Corporation is located in the town of Boone, in Watauga County, in the State of North Carolina. The street address of the initial registered office of the Corporation is 196 Windy Drive, Boone, North Carolina, 28607 and the name of the initial registered agent at such address is Linda Rigell.

ARTICLE II: Purposes

Section 1: Purposes

The purpose of TWO RIVERS COMMUNITY SCHOOL, INC. is to establish a charter school under North Carolina Charter School Statues and to pursue related educational endeavors.

ARTICLE III: Board of Directors

Section 1: Powers

The activities, affairs and business of the Corporation shall be conducted by or under the direction of the Board of Directors hereinafter referred to as the Board.

Section 2: Number, Qualifications, Election, and Tenure

a) The number of directors constituting the Board of Directors shall be nine (9) voting members. The Co-directors of Two Rivers Community School shall be members of the Board of Directors, but shall be non-voting members. Other non-voting members may be appointed by a resolution of the Board at any time.

b) A person needs to be at least eighteen (18) years old to be qualified as a Director. Paid employees of the Corporation may serve on the Board of Directors only as non-voting members.

c) Any qualified person seeking to become a Director of the Board will submit an application including a resume and explanation of why he/she is seeking membership to the Board. When a vacancy or vacancies occur, either by death, resignation, removal from office, end of term, tenure limit, and/or for any other reason the remaining Board Members will review the applications submitted and elect the applicant(s) seeking to become members of the Board of Directors. The sitting Board Members may conduct interviews with the perspective Board Candidates.

d) With the exception of the very first planning board, each director shall hold office for a period of two years. The terms for the Board of Directors shall be staggered. Three (3) members of the first board shall serve a term of one year, three (3) members will serve a term of two years and three (3) members will serve a term of three years. At the end of the first year, subsequent directors will serve three-year terms.

e) The terms of three Directors appointed by the Planning Committee shall expire on the first anniversary of their appointment date. Three Directors shall have their terms expire on June 30, 2006. Three Directors shall have their terms expire on June 30, 2007. Except non-voting employee Directors, no person appointed or elected to a three-year term shall serve more than three (3) consecutive three-year terms or more than four terms over that person's lifetime. However, each Director shall continue in office until the successor in that office shall have been duly appointed or until the current Director shall resign or become disqualified or until that Director shall have been removed.

f) The term of service for non-voting members shall be timed to terminate at the time of the Annual Meeting in June. Non-voting members may be added to or removed from the Board at any time by a simple majority of the voting membership of the Board.

g) To progress with greatest efficiency and harmony, the School will be guided by Board members who are committed to the mission, philosophy, and goals of the School, as expressed in the institution's Charter and Bylaws; and by individuals who possess the professional expertise, practical experience, and skills to create a dynamic, progressing and expanding school. The members of the Board will have a collective range of expertise, so that as a group they are competent, confident, and highly effective. In addition to parents and other qualified members of the public, experts in law, building, finance, management, accounting, curriculum, community organization and fund raising will be considered. The head of the School Parent/Community Association shall serve as a voting member of the Board but shall not be eligible to be an officer.

Section 3: Duties of Directors

a) The Board of Directors shall perform any and all duties imposed on them collectively and individually by law, the Articles of Incorporation or by these Bylaws. Directors shall stand in a fiduciary relation to the corporation and shall discharge the duties of the respective positions in good faith, and with the diligence and care which reasonably prudent men and women would exercise in similar circumstances and like positions.

b) The Board of Directors shall appoint, remove, and employ the Co-directors of Two Rivers Community School who will also serve as non-voting members of the Board of Directors of Two Rivers Community School.

- c) The Board of Directors shall review the employment recommendations of the Human Resources Committee and make final referrals to the Co-Directors of Two Rivers Community School.
- d) The Board of Directors shall meet at such times and places as required by these Bylaws. The board will consider a Director with two consecutive unapproved absences from regular meetings as having resigned. Both absences and approval of absences from regular Board meetings shall be recorded in the meeting minutes.

e) The Board of Directors shall register their individual addresses with the Secretary of Two Rivers Community School, Inc.

f) Individual Directors are required to regularly attend Board meetings and be willing to take the time to be introduced to and become familiar with the School and its mission, philosophy, goals, and charter; to study these Bylaws; to learn about the organization and structure of the School's governance and administration; and to understand the duties, responsibilities and obligations required of a member of the Board.

g) Directors are responsible to the Two Rivers Community School community for the successful management, operation and on going concerns of the School. The Board creates and advises on policy matters; the School administration implements Board policy. Individual Board members do not participate in implementing policy, i.e., engaging in specific management, personnel, or curricular issues. Board members shall not individually address, discuss or assert opinions or decisions on matters of board or administrative business or converse with members of the press or with members of the public except as directed as a matter of policy by the entire Board.

#### Section 4: Regular Meetings

a) Regular meetings shall be held monthly unless otherwise designated by the chair of the Board of Directors, by written call of a majority of its members, or by resolution of the Board. A regular annual meeting of the Board of Directors shall be held during the month of June each year. In general, regular meetings of the Board shall be conducted on the second Monday of each month at a time agreeable to the majority of the Board.

b) All regular meetings of the Board of Directors shall meet the requirements of the North Carolina open meeting laws as set forth in Article 33C of Chapter 143 of the General Statutes.

#### Section 5: Substitute Regular Meetings

If any regular meeting shall not be held as designated in section 4, above, a substitute meeting may be called by the chair or by two or more of the Directors. This meeting may be designated as a regular meeting.

#### Section 6: Special Meetings

a) The persons authorized to call Special Meetings of the Board are the Chair or at least two Directors. All Board Members must be notified not less than four (4) days in advance of the place and time of a Special Board Meeting, such notice to be made pursuant to Section 7, below.

b) Public notice of the meeting shall be given 48 hours in advance by a means deemed appropriate, lawful and in accordance with the Open Meeting Laws and Board policy.

#### Section 7: Notice of Meetings

Notice of any regular meeting, including the Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors shall be given to the Board Members at least one-week (seven days) prior thereto. Notice of any special meeting of the Board of Directors shall be given at least four(4) days prior thereto. All notices shall be in writing delivered personally or sent by mail, email, telegram or fax to the address of each Director as shown on the records of the Corporation.

#### Section 8: Quorum

The presence of a majority of the members of the Board of Directors at a meeting duly assembled shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. If less than a quorum is present at the time and place of any meeting the Directors present may adjourn the meeting until a quorum shall be present.

#### Section 9: Voting

a) Except as otherwise expressly provided by statute, or by the Charter of the Corporation, or by these Bylaws, the action of a majority of the Directors present at a meeting in which there is a quorum shall be the action of the

Board of Directors. A Director who is present at a meeting where there is an action on corporate matters shall be presumed to have assented to the action taken unless a contrary vote is recorded or otherwise entered into the minutes of the meeting.

b) A proxy to vote on behalf of a Board member may only be presented to the Board by another Director. A Director may present a proxy vote for only one other Director. Any and all proxies must be specifically stated, presented in writing and signed by the Director casting the proxy vote. If a proxy varies in any way from the motion being presented, the proxy will be considered void. All proxies with original signatures shall be retained by the Secretary as part of the official record of a vote.

#### Section 10: Resignation of Directors

A Director may resign at any time by giving notice in writing to the Chair or Secretary of the Corporation. Such resignation shall take effect at the time specified, or if no time is specified, at the time the chair or Secretary receives such resignation.

#### Section 11: Vacancies

If a vacancy should occur in the Board of Directors by death, resignation, disqualification, or otherwise, the remaining Directors may continue to conduct the Corporation's business. The vacancy may be filled as provided in Section 2c of this Article III. If a vacancy is not filled within sixty days, such vacancy may be filled by the vote of less than a quorum, or by the sole remaining Director if there is only one Director remaining, even though such majority is less than a quorum. A Director who is chosen in this manner shall hold office for the unexpired portion of the term of the person whom the newly elected Director succeeds.

#### Section 12: Compensation

Directors shall serve without compensation for their services to the Board. However, a person who is a Director may receive compensation for serving in another capacity in the Charter School for which there should be reasonable compensation, e.g., compensation as a substitute teacher for a short period of time.

#### Section 13: Director's Adverse Interest

If any Director has an adverse interest in a corporate transaction, such Director must make full disclosure to the Board of the adverse interest as soon as such Director knows, or should know of its existence. Upon full disclosure, the Board may approve the transaction only by a good faith vote of a majority of the disinterested Directors present, regardless of being less than a quorum. However, no such transaction may be approved if it would constitute self-dealing prohibited under sections 4941 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or the corresponding provisions of any later federal tax laws, or if it would result in the imposition of any excise tax under any other provision of Chapter 49A of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or the corresponding provisions of any later federal tax laws.

#### Section 14: Certain Director Liability

A Director shall be subject to the liabilities imposed by law upon Directors. In addition, all Directors who vote for or assent to any distribution of assets of the Corporation contrary to any lawful restrictions in the Non-profit Corporation Act of the State of North Carolina, the corporate Charter, or the Bylaws, shall be jointly and severally liable to the Corporation for the amount of such distribution. Furthermore, such liabilities shall not exceed the debts, obligations and liabilities existing at the time of the vote or assent where the Director relied and acted in good faith on financial statements of the Corporation to be correct and to be based on generally accepted principles of sound accounting practice by the chair or the Treasurer, or certified by an independent public accountant or firm of such accountants to fairly reflect the financial condition of the Corporation.

### ARTICLE IV: Officers of the Board of Directors

#### Section 1: Designation of Officers of the Board of Directors

Two Rivers Community School

a) The BOARD shall elect from its own membership the following officers: a Chair, a Vice-chair, a Treasurer and a Secretary. Elections of Officers of the Board of Directors shall be conducted annually at the Annual meeting in the month of June. Other officers may be deemed necessary by the Board for the effective conduct of the affairs of Two Rivers Community School, Inc. Should such officers be required, these Bylaws shall be amended to include the new officer's title and duties before that officer may be elected by the Board. Any two offices or more may be held by one person, except the offices of chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. No officer shall sign or execute any document in more than one capacity.

b) Other officers, as needed, may be appointed in accordance with the provisions of Section 3 of this article and may be elected by the Board at the Annual Meeting.

Section 2: Duties of Officers of the Board of Directors

a) Officers shall stand in a fiduciary relation to the Corporation and shall discharge the duties of their respective positions in good faith, and with that diligence and care which reasonably prudent men and women would exercise in similar circumstances and like positions.

b) Duties of the Chair of the Board Of Directors include responsibility to ensure the steady progress of the Two Rivers Community School in accordance with national and local educational laws, the Charter of the School, and the principles and policies of Experiential Learning Based education. The Chair presides at all of the Board meetings. The agenda for regular meetings is prepared by the Chair based on agenda items suggested by the Director of the Two Rivers Community School, members of the Board, members of the public or the School administration. The Chair acts as a facilitator to ensure that the discussion of agenda items proceeds in a timely manner. In the event that the Chair is unable to preside at a meeting, the Board shall be presided over by the following officers in the following order according to attendance: Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer. If no officer is present to preside, a quorum is not considered established.

c) Duties of the Vice-chair of the Board of Directors shall be equivalent to those of the Chair. It is therefore the Vice-chair's duty to remain, at all times, cognizant of any duties, responsibilities or actions being undertaken by the Chair and be prepared to undertake, at the request of the Chair, or in absence or disability of the chair, the Vice-chair shall perform all the duties of the chair and when so acting shall have all the powers of, and be subject to all the restrictions upon, the Chair. The Chair may delegate some of the responsibilities and duties of the Chair to the Vice-chair from time to time in order to ensure that the Vice-chair is adequately prepared to assume the duties and responsibilities of the Chair, should the need arise.

d) Duties of the Treasurer of the Board of Directors include general oversight of all the financial activities of Two Rivers Community School, Inc. The Treasurer will represent the Board during any financial audit. The Treasurer's signature shall be one of the two required on any check issued by Two Rivers Community School, Inc. The Treasurer shall report on the financial activities of the preceding month at each meeting of the Board. The Treasurer shall have supervision over the funds, receipts, disbursements and securities of the corporation. The Treasurer shall perform such other duties and have such other authority as may be assigned or granted by the Board of Directors. The Treasurer may be required to give a bond for the faithful performance of the duties of the office in such form and amount as the Board of Directors may determine.

e) Duties of the Secretary of the Board Of Directors include but are not limited to the following; informing Board Members of scheduled meetings, recording the minutes of each meeting and maintaining concise and accurate records of all policy and planning decisions, and perform a parliamentary review of said decisions, and amendments to said decisions. The Secretary shall be the custodian of the records, reports, certificates, and other official documents of the Corporation, and affix the Seal of the Corporation to all legal documents executed by the Corporation. Board policy decisions and revisions shall be compiled by the Secretary in an Official Board of Directors Policy Manual. The Secretary shall distribute copies of the minutes of each meeting to all members of the Board, to the School Director, and any members of the general public in attendance at regular board meetings.

f) In case of absence of any officer of the corporation or for any other reason that the Board may deem sufficient, the Board may delegate authority of duties of such officer to any other officer or to any Director provided a majority of the entire Board of Directors concurs therein.

Section 3: Removal

The officers specifically designated in Section I of this Article IV may be removed either with or without cause, by vote of the majority of the Board of Directors present at any regular meeting; or at a special meeting of the Board called for that purpose. The officers appointed in accordance with the provisions of Section 3 of this Article may be removed, either with or without cause, by the Board of Directors, by a majority vote of the Directors present at any meeting. The removal of any person from office shall be done without prejudice to the contract rights, if any, of the person so removed.

Section 4: Resignations

Any officer may resign at any time by giving written notice to the Board of Directors or to the Chair or Secretary of Two Rivers Community School, Inc., or, if that officer was appointed by an officer or agent in accordance with Section 3 of this Article, by giving written notice to the appointing officer or agent.

Section 5: Vacancies

A vacancy in any office because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification, or any other cause, shall be filled for the unexpired portion of the term of such office in the manner prescribed by these Bylaws for regular appointments or elections to such offices.

ARTICLE V: Committees of the Board of Directors.

Section 1: Standing Committee Membership

Members of the Board are encouraged to serve on at least one of the standing committees of the Board of Directors.

Section 2: Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall act on behalf of the Board of Directors between meetings, but shall be limited in the scope of its activities as follows: it may not approve the transfer of property from the School, amend the Bylaws, approve individual expenditures over \$10,000, or enter into contracts in the name of the School. The Chair of the Board of Directors shall be the Chair of the Executive Committee. If the Chair is unable to preside at a meeting, he or she may appoint another member of the Executive Committee to preside.

Section 3: Committee for Finance and Administration.

The Committee for Finance and Administration shall convene to review monies, budgets, audited or unaudited financial statements and reports; to assess financial and administrative needs; and to advise priorities as they relate to the fiscal management of the School. The committee shall ensure that the principles and guidelines for budget management and reporting, and for efficient purchasing and approval of expenditures are implemented. The Committee shall advise the School Director on matters pertinent to the financial functioning of the School, taking into consideration the business and professional expertise of Board members.

Section 4: Committee for Academic Standards.

The Committee for Academic Standards shall ensure that high standards are being maintained in the standard academic curriculum and review any significant changes to or modifications of the academic curriculum with the School Director to ensure that the quality of teaching in the School continues to be enhanced.

Section 5: Development Committee

The Development Committee facilitates fund raising projects and advises on matters of public relations, student recruitment strategies and programs, and development projects of the School.

Section 6: Building and Grounds Committee

Two Rivers Community School

The Building and Grounds Committee shall consult on construction of new buildings and additions for the School. The committee will also oversee and help plan renovation, maintenance, and beautification of existing School buildings and grounds.

Section 7: Committee on School Leadership

The Committee on School Leadership shall evaluate the functioning of the Board in light of the scheduled Board meeting. The report includes recognition of strengths as well as suggestions for more effective functioning of the Board. The committee also serves as a search committee for new members of the Board or a new Director, if the need arises, proposing qualified candidate names to the entire Board. The committee also oversees the orientation program for all new members of the Board, including the orientation program for the founding members of the Board of Directors.

Section 8: Human Resources Committee

- a) The Human Resources Committee shall review all applications for employment at Two Rivers Community School and make recommendations to the Board regarding suitability of each candidate or applicant.
- b) The Human Resources Committee shall review all annual performance reviews of paid staff and after reviewing the recommendations of the Co-Directors of Two Rivers Community School, make recommendations to the Board of Directors concerning the retention and/or promotion of paid staff of Two Rivers Community School. The Human Resource Committee shall review annually and keep current all job descriptions, all designations of duties and responsibilities and all procedures involving the hiring, retention and termination of staff for Two Rivers Community School. A member of the Human Resources committee shall be present at all hiring interviews, performance reviews and exit interviews for staff of Two Rivers Community School.

Section 9: Committee Meetings and Reports to the Board

Committees shall meet as needed. Meetings may be called by the Chair of the Board of Directors or the Chair of a committee. A simple majority of members of a committee of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum. The Chair of the committee shall report the committee's resolutions and action steps at the Board meeting that follows the committee meeting. The committee's report shall be included in the minutes of the Board meeting.

Section 10: Other Committees

Other Committees may be formed at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE VI: Procedures and Restrictions

Section 1: Contracts

Except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws, the Board of Directors may authorize any officer or agent to enter into any contract or to execute or deliver any instrument on behalf of the Corporation, and such authority may be general or confined to specific instances.

Section 2: Loans

No loans shall be contracted on behalf of the Corporation and no evidences of indebtedness shall be issued in its name, unless and except as authorized by the Board of Directors. Any officer or agent of the Corporation thereunto so authorized may affect loans or advances for the Corporation and for such loans and advances may make, execute, and deliver promissory notes, bonds, or other evidences of indebtedness of the Corporation.

Section 3: Deposits

All funds of the Corporation shall be deposited from time to time to the credit of the Corporation in such banks or trust companies or with such bankers or other depositories as the Board of Directors may select, or as may be selected by any officer or agent of the Corporation to whom such power may from time to time be given by the Board of Directors.

Section 4: Checks and Drafts

All notes, drafts, acceptances, checks and endorsements or other evidences of

Two Rivers Community School

indebtedness shall be signed by the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson or Secretary and by the Treasurer, or in such other manner as the Board of Directors may determine. Endorsements for deposit to the credit of the Corporation in any of its duly authorized depositories will be made by the School Director or Treasurer or by any officer or agent who may be designated by resolution of the Board of Directors in such manner as such resolution may provide.

Section 5: Gifts

The Board of Directors may accept on behalf of the Corporation any contribution, gift, bequest, or devise for the general purposes or for any special or educational purposes of Two Rivers Community School, Inc. Individual Directors may not accept gifts on behalf of Two Rivers Community School, Inc.

ARTICLE VII: Duties of Co-directors of Two Rivers Community School

Section 1: Duties of Co-directors of Two Rivers Community School, Inc.

- a) The Co-directors of Two Rivers Community School shall be responsible for the day-to-day operation of the School.
- b) The Co-directors of Two Rivers Community School shall receive the recommendations of the Human Resources Committee and the Board regarding matters pertaining to hiring, retaining, removing, promotions and compensation of staff and shall make final determinations that are consistent with the mission and values of Two Rivers Community School, Inc. and that facilitate and promote the efficient day-to-day operation of the School.
- c) The Co-directors of Two Rivers Community School shall at the completion of each school year, conduct annual performance reviews for each of the paid staff of Two Rivers Community School.

ARTICLE VIII: General Provisions

Section 1: Corporate Seal

The corporate seal shall be in such form as shall be approved by the Board of Directors.

Section 2: Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the corporation shall be from July 1st until June 30th, inclusive. The fiscal year of the corporation may be re-established from time to time by resolution of the Board of Directors.

Section 3: Amendments to Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation

- a) These Bylaws may be altered, amended, or repealed, and new Bylaws may be adopted at any regular or special meeting upon a two-thirds vote of the Directors currently in office, provided however, that notice shall be given of the intention to alter, amend, or repeal or to adopt new Bylaws at such meeting at least seven (7) days prior to such meeting in writing delivered personally or sent by mail, telegram or fax to the address of each Director as shown on the records of the Corporation.
- b) The original, or a current copy, of the Two Rivers Community School Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation as amended or otherwise altered to date, bearing the corporate seal and certified by the Secretary and Chair of the Board of Directors, shall be recorded and kept in a book or binder that shall remain in the School Director's Office. Such book or binder shall be open to inspection by anyone requesting to do so at all reasonable times during office hours.

Section 4: Books and Records

The Corporation shall retain in perpetuity or until such time as a majority of the Board approves their destruction or disposal, correct and complete books and records of all accounts, minutes of the proceedings of its Board of Directors, documents submitted to or approved by the Board, resolutions of the Board of Directors, versions of Bylaws and articles of incorporation, amendments to Bylaws and articles of incorporation and all proxies submitted to the Board.

### Section 5: Meeting Regulation

All meetings of the Corporation including annual, special, and other shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order and subject to the following guidelines for meetings.

### Section 6: Officer and Director Indemnification

- a) The Corporation shall indemnify any Director officer or former Director or officer of the Corporation or any person who may have served at its request as a director or officer of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust, or other enterprise against liabilities and reasonable litigation expenses, including attorneys' fees, incurred by the Director in connection with any action, suit or proceeding in which that Director is made or threatened to be made a party by reason of being or having been such Director or officer, except in relation to matters as to which the Director shall be adjudged in such action, suit or proceeding to have acted in bad faith or to have been liable or guilty by reason of willful misconduct in the performance of duty. The indemnification authorized by this Section 6 (a) shall be in addition to that permitted by General Statutes Sections 55A-17.2 or 55~17.3 or North Carolina General Statutes or as authorized in these Bylaws.
- b) The corporation may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who is or was a Director, officer, employee or agent of the corporation or is or was serving at the request of the corporation as a director, officer, employee, or agent of the corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust, or other enterprise against any liability asserted against and incurred by the person in such capacity, or arising out of the officer's status as such, whether or not the corporation would have the power to indemnify that officer against such liability.
- c) Expenses incurred by a Director, officer, employee or agent in defending a civil or criminal action suit, or proceeding may be paid by the corporation in advance of the final disposition of such action, suit or proceeding as authorized by the Board of Directors in the specific case upon receipt of an undertaking by or on behalf of the Director, officer, employee or agent to repay such amount unless it shall be ultimately determined that the person is entitled to be indemnified by the corporation as authorized in Section 55A-17.2 or 55A-17.3 of North Carolina General Statutes or as authorized in these Bylaws.

### Section 7: Conflict of Interest

No Director, officer, or employee of the corporation shall obtain any direct or indirect economic stake in any entity participating in the programs of the corporation, and the corporation shall not employ any individual who serves as a Director or officer of such an entity, or an individual who owns a stake in any such entity. It is the policy of the corporation that no Director, officer, or employee of the corporation shall receive any personal or private benefit resulting from the activities of the Corporation or from the receipt by the Corporation of funds from the State of North Carolina or from any other source, apart from reasonable compensation for services rendered and reimbursement for reasonable expenses incurred in the conduct of the business of the Corporation. In furtherance of this policy, the Board of Directors shall have the power to make such rules and regulations concerning conflicts of interest as it deems appropriate from time to time.

### Section 8: Gender

The masculine gender, where it may have been used from time to time in these Bylaws shall be considered inclusive of both feminine and masculine persons.

### Section 9: Prohibited Activities

- a) The Corporation shall comply with 501(c)(3) prohibitions against substantial lobbying and involvement in political campaigns for public candidates. No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of or be distributable to, its members; Directors, officers, or other private persons.
- b) Notwithstanding any other provisions of these articles, the Corporation shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by a corporation exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of

the Internal Revenue Code or (b) by a corporation, contributions to which are deductible under Section 17Q(c)(2) of the Code.

c) No part of the net earnings of Two Rivers Charter School, Inc. shall be used to the benefit of or be distributable to, its members, Directors, officers, or other private persons.

#### Section 10: Non-Discrimination

The Board of Directors upholds the principle that there shall be no discrimination against any person in admission, employment, or otherwise because of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, age, or disability, in violation of existing federal, state, and local laws or regulations.

#### Section 11: Disposal of Assets

a) Upon the dissolution of the Corporation, the Board of Directors shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all of the liabilities of the corporation, dispose of all of the assets of the Corporation as directed pursuant to North Carolina General Statutes.

### Operational Narrative

The School's Board of Directors will be the governing body for the institution, responsible for setting broad policy, reviewing long-range planning, and ensuring fiscal solvency. Its focus is strategic. The Board will meet monthly and have all of the powers necessary for carrying out the purposes of the School as stated in the School's Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation. The School Directors and head of the Parent/Community Association will be members of the Board. The School will at all times be operated by the Board in accordance with GS 115C-238.29A et seq. and all other applicable laws and regulations.

The School Administration will consist of the school's Co-directors and lead teachers. Its focus is tactical.

The Board and the School Administration will ensure compliance with all applicable federal laws and regulations, including those that govern employment, environment, disabilities, civil rights, children with special needs, transportation, and student records.

The primary responsibilities of the School Board of Directors and Administration are as follows:

The School Board of Directors:

1. adopts, upholds, and serves to fulfill the mission, philosophy, and goals of the School,
2. establishes policies for governance that uphold the national, state, and local laws governing public charter schools in North Carolina,
3. hires, evaluates, and retains the School Co-directors,
4. recommends to the Directors (and administration) priorities, short-term and long-term plans, and broad policies for the successful operation of the School, supports the School administration, faculty, and staff to ensure the precise and complete implementation of all aspects of the academic program, curriculum, and instruction,
5. reviews the financial statements of the School, ensuring financial stability, budget viability and state compliance,

6. reviews and evaluates the School's academic and administrative achievements and progress toward its annual goals,
7. maintains accurate up-to-date records of the business conducted at all Board meetings, and
8. recommends the hiring and, if necessary, the removal of members of the school staff to the Directors.

The School Administration:

1. maintains compliance with all national, state, and local legal requirements and fiscal standards for the operation of the School,
2. puts into place and oversees procedures for the planning, development, and evaluation of the academic program, including the curriculum and quality of instruction,
3. oversees the successful business management of the School,
4. oversees the effective implementation of all aspects of curriculum and instruction in the School,
5. ensures that the interests of students, faculty, and administration are properly addressed and integrated in a timely way,
6. represents the School to parents, the local community, the media, and continually seek to strengthen communication and understanding of the value and achievements of the School,
7. oversees the accreditation or other licensing processes by governmental and private bodies, and
8. makes the final decision for the hiring and placement of staff.