



Research Triangle High School

Special Board Meeting

WTHS Charter Approval

Date and Time

Thursday July 22, 2021 at 5:30 PM EDT

Location

RTHS Board Room

Due to the focus of this meeting and the need for some physical signatures, please attend in person if possible. If you are unable to attend in person the Zoom teleconference link is:

<https://rthighschool.zoom.us/j/98283216480>

Or a dial in number is [1 301 715 8592](tel:13017158592) Meeting ID: 982 8321 6480

Agenda

| | Purpose | Presenter | Time |
|---|---------|-----------|----------------|
| I. Opening Items | | | 5:30 PM |
| A. Record Attendance | | | 2 m |
| B. Call the Meeting to Order | | | 1 m |
| II. 2021-22 School Calendar Year | | | 5:33 PM |

| | Purpose | Presenter | Time |
|---|---------|--------------|----------------|
| A. CSO Update Update on the recent hires for the new year | Discuss | Eric Grunden | 12 m |
| B. Digital Learning Days Proposal This is a proposal to update the 2021-22 School Calendar to include digital learning days on each Friday. | FYI | Eric Grunden | 15 m |
| III. Audit and Board Documentation | | | 6:00 PM |
| A. Paperwork and Document Updates This is an opportunity to update annual board Bio/CV information along with required Audit documents | FYI | Eric Grunden | 15 m |
| IV. Charter School Application | | | 6:15 PM |
| A. WTHS Application Review and Discuss the Charter School Application Headed up by Alex Quigley and Eric Grunden | Discuss | Alex Quigley | 30 m |
| B. Charter School Application Approval Vote If the board is prepared to vote on the Application tonight. If more time is needed for review then a special meeting / vote will be taken the following week prior to the July 30 due date. | Vote | Gary Rodgers | 4 m |
| V. Executive Session (If needed) | | | 6:49 PM |
| A. Personnel Matter Discussion | | | 10 m |
| VI. Closing Items | | | 6:59 PM |
| A. Adjourn Meeting | Vote | Gary Rodgers | 1 m |

Coversheet

Digital Learning Days Proposal

Section: II. 2021-22 School Calendar Year
Item: B. Digital Learning Days Proposal
Purpose: FYI
Submitted by:
Related Material: dPLT Friday Proposal.pdf

dPLT Friday Proposal

dPLT = differentiated Personalized Learning Time

Differentiation = tailoring instruction to meet individual needs

The Office of Charter Schools has indicated support for this project as an innovative use of instructional time that leverages the school's program. They have provided us with the pathway to amending our charter to incorporate these dPLT days permanently. The first step is board approval of the proposal and passage of the resolution by the board. We would then submit the approved resolution to OCS to become an amendment to our charter.

I would appreciate your consideration of the following proposal. Our team is happy to address concerns or make changes to better support the school's mission, vision, and values.

Rationale:

One of the lessons we learned during the pandemic induced remote learning was that some students thrive with adequate time for independent work and have less need for direct face-to-face instruction while others really struggle in that environment and need more small group or 1:1 instruction.

Goals:

- Recoup Covid-19-induced learning inequalities.
- Challenge students who aren't reaching their full potential.
- Support students who need additional contact time to better manage their work.
- Encourage students who lack confidence in their ability.
- Provide direct instruction as needed.
- Give time and space for small group work.
- Afford independent work time when appropriate.
- Implement interventions as identified through our MTSS¹ program.
- Identify the underlying cause(s) of student struggles.
- Address social-emotional needs.

Identifying Students:

Students who have been identified as needing more synchronous support will attend school. All other students will work asynchronously, unless they opt to be present at school for synchronous work.

A student may only join at the start of the cycle and will attend for the entire cycle.

Teachers will be provided with a list of all students in their classes. They will be asked to classify the students using the a drop down menu with the following options:

¹ Multi-Tiered System of Support: the state-mandated identification and intervention system for students.

- Asynchronous Work
- iPLT - Incomplete Assignments
- iPLT - Knowledge/Skill Direct Instruction
- iPLT - Additional Challenge/Enrichment

These students will be placed into sessions with their classroom teacher and/or instructional support staff based on their individual needs.

Accountability:

- Families and students will be notified in advance and students are REQUIRED to attend.
- Students will be marked absent in PowerSchool and parents contacted if students do not attend.
- Students who do not take advantage of the opportunity for additional support may not earn credit for the course.
- All asynchronous students will be counted present, provided they meet predetermined conditions for presence (check in or some other contact with the teacher).
- Students working asynchronously would NOT get additional assignments, but additional time to work on their assignments.

Schedule:

We would reevaluate which students come to iPLT for each “cycle”. This means that students are not locked into synchronous attendance but will be invited on the basis of need, allowing for improvement.

- Cycle 1 - September 3 - October 22
- Cycle 2 - October 29 - December 17
- Cycle 3 - January 7 - February 25
- Cycle 4 - March 4 - April 29
- Cycle 5 - May 6 - 22 (A short cycle to prepare for EOC and final accountability)

On Friday iPLT days we will run a modified early release Friday schedule. Each teacher will identify students they would like to see during the day and students will be scheduled into four blocks.

Each Block is 65 Minutes.

| | |
|---------------|-----------|
| 8:45 - 9:50 | 1st Block |
| 9:55 - 11:00 | 2nd Block |
| 11:00 - 12:05 | 3rd Block |
| 12:10 - 12:35 | Lunch |
| 12:40 - 1:45 | 4th Block |

A sample schedule:

| August 2021 | | | | | | |
|-------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|--|----------|
| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
| 1 | 2 New to RTHS tPLT | 3 New to RTHS tPLT | 4 New to RTHS tPLT | 5 Full Staff tPLT | 6 Full Staff tPLT | 7 |
| 8 | 9 Full Staff tPLT | 10 Full Staff tPLT | 11 First Day of Class | 12 | 13 ALL students on Friday Schedule | 14 |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 ALL students on Friday Schedule | 21 |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 Parent Engagement Day ² | 28 |
| 29 | 30 | 31 | | | | |

| September | | | | | | |
|-----------|--------------|---------|-----------|---------------|--------------------|----------|
| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
| | | | 1 | 2 | 3 iPLT Cycle 1 | 4 |
| 5 | 6 Holiday | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 iPLT Cycle 1 | 11 |
| 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 Holiday | 17 iPLT Cycle 1 | 18 |

² This day is set aside to meet with or contact parents and let them know why their child is being invited to participate

| | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|--------------------|----|
| 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 iPLT Cycle 1 | 25 |
| 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | | |

| October | | | | | | |
|---------|---|---|------------|----------|--|----------|
| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
| | | | | | 1 iPLT Cycle 1 | 2 |
| 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 iPLT Cycle 1 | 9 |
| 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 PSAT | 14 | 15 Regular Friday Schedule³ | 16 |
| 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 iPLT Cycle 1 | 23 |
| 24 | 25 Full Staff tPLT Grades Updated in Power School | 26 Full Staff tPLT Parent Engagement | 27 | 28 | 29 iPLT Cycle 2 | 30 |
| 31 | | | | | | |

| November | | | | | | |
|----------|--------|---------|-----------|----------|-------------------|----------|
| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 iPLT Cycle 2 | 6 |

³ Fridays can be used to make up for other weekdays missed instead of iPLT work.

| | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|---------------|---------------|--|----|
| 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 Holiday | 12 Regular Friday Schedule | 13 |
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 iPLT Cycle 2 | 20 |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 Holiday | 25 Holiday | 26 Holiday | 27 |
| 28 | 29 | 30 | | | | |

| December | | | | | | |
|----------|-----------------------|---|---------------|---------------|--------------------|----------|
| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
| | | | 1 | 2 | 3 iPLT Cycle 2 | 4 |
| 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 iPLT Cycle 2 | 11 |
| 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 iPLT Cycle 2 | 18 |
| 19 | 20 Full Staff tPLT | 21 Full Staff tPLT Grades Updated in Power School | 22 Holiday | 23 Holiday | 24 Holiday | 25 |
| 26 | 27 Holiday | 28 Holiday | 29 Holiday | 30 Holiday | 31 Holiday | |

| January 2022 | | | | | | |
|--------------|--|---------|-----------|----------|-------------------|----------|
| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
| | | | | | | 1 |
| 2 | 3 Full Staff tPLT Parent Engagement | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 iPLT Cycle 3 | 8 |

| | | | | | | |
|----|-------------------------|----|----|----|--------------------------------------|----|
| 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 iPLT Cycle 3 | 15 |
| 16 | 17 Holiday - MLK Day | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 Regular Friday Schedule | 22 |
| 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 iPLT Cycle 3 | 29 |
| 30 | 31 | | | | | |

| February 2022 | | | | | | |
|---------------|--|---------|-----------|----------|--------------------------------------|----------|
| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 iPLT Cycle 3 | 5 |
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 iPLT Cycle 3 | 12 |
| 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 iPLT Cycle 3 | 19 |
| 20 | 21 Holiday - Presidents Day | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 Regular Friday Schedule | 26 |
| 27 | 28 Full Staff tPLT Grades Updated in Power School | | | | | |

| March 2022 | | | | | | |
|------------|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|
| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
| | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|----|----|--|----|----|--------------------|----|
| | | 1 Full Staff tPLT Parent Engagement | 2 | 3 | 4 iPLT Cycle 4 | 5 |
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 iPLT Cycle 4 | 12 |
| 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 iPLT Cycle 4 | 19 |
| 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 iPLT Cycle 4 | 26 |
| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | | |

| April 2022 | | | | | | |
|------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--|----------|
| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
| | | | | | 1 iPLT Cycle 4 | 2 |
| 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 iPLT Cycle 4 | 9 |
| 10 | 11 Holiday | 12 Holiday | 13 Holiday | 14 Holiday | 15 Holiday | 16 |
| 17 | 18 Holiday | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 Regular Friday Schedule | 23 |
| 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 iPLT Cycle 4 | 30 |

| May 2022 | | | | | | |
|----------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
|----------|--|--|--|--|--|--|

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--------|--|---|-----------|----------|--------------------|----------|
| 1 | 2 Full Staff tPLT Grades Updated in Power School | 3 Full Staff tPLT Parent Engagement Holiday - Eid | 4 | 5 | 6 iPLT Cycle 5 | 7 |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 iPLT Cycle 5 | 14 |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 iPLT Cycle 5 | 21 |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 22 iPLT Cycle 5 | 28 |
| 29 | 30 Holiday - Memorial Day | 31 Full Staff tPLT | | | | |

| June 2022 | | | | | | |
|-----------|------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
| | | | 1 Exams | 2 Exams | 3 Exams | 4 |
| 5 | 6 Exams | 7 Exams | 8 Exams | 9 Exams | 10 Exam Make Up | 11 Graduation |
| 12 | 13 tPLT | 14 tPLT | 15 tPLT | 16 | 17 | 18 |

Addressing Concerns:

- Students who rely on school for food, social/emotional, tech support:
 - These students will be invited/allowed to attend. If they do not need face-to-face time with their teachers, they will have a separate space to complete their asynchronous work.
- Struggling students feeling like they are being “punished”:
 - We will work hard to present this as an opportunity, not a punishment. We will not

“threaten” students with iPLT. Academic needs will be met during the regular school day, so students receiving those supports may not need to attend.

- Not meeting the needs of advanced students:
 - Invite them! If you have advanced students who aren’t reaching their potential, they should come.
- Does asynchronous work penalize students?
 - Teachers would provide feedback to students about work quality in order to ensure that asynchronous work is being done at a comparably high level to work done in class in face-to-face time. Students whose work does suggest a need for presence can be invited for face to face work.
 - To prevent content instruction loss, teachers would shift active instruction to other days and use Friday time for individual work. This would result in no net loss of instructional time.
- Unequal distribution of work between teachers:
 - All teachers will be encouraged to invite students who need additional face-to-face time. This includes AP and other advanced classes. If a teacher does have an uneven distribution we will work as a department to support them.
- Shortened weeks with holidays and testing:
 - These weeks we will use Friday as a full day the way we have this year. This schedule will be created and shared at the start of the year so it is clear for all staff and families.
- Students who request to attend:
 - Teachers will decide if they want to allow this student to attend. A student may only join at the start of the cycle and will attend for the entire cycle.
- Teachers who don’t use this time to support students:
 - Administrators and coaches will be monitoring and supporting teachers to ensure this is a productive use of everyone’s time.

Coversheet

Paperwork and Document Updates

Section: III. Audit and Board Documentation
Item: A. Paperwork and Document Updates
Purpose: FYI
Submitted by:
Related Material: COI blank.docx
nepotism form.docx
Board Information Form.docx

**Annual Statement by Director, Principal Officer and Member of a Committee
of
Contemporary Science Center**

I, _____, [Director/Officer/Member of Committee] of Contemporary Science Center (the “Corporation”) state that:

1. I have received a copy of the conflicts of interest policy of the Corporation (the “Policy”).
2. I have read and I understand the Policy.
3. I agree to comply with the Policy.
4. I understand that the Corporation is a charitable organization and that in order to maintain the Corporation’s federal tax exemption, the Corporation must engage primarily in activities that accomplish one or more of the Corporation’s tax-exempt purposes.

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Board Officer Role, if any: _____

Professional Company: _____

Nepotism Policy



- No voting members of the Board of Directors shall be an employee of a for-profit company that provides substantial services to Research Triangle High School (“RTHS”) for a fee.
- No employee of RTHS shall be immediate family to any member of the Board of Directors. For the purpose of this policy, immediate family has the meaning set forth in G.S. 115C-12.2, which states immediate family is a spouse, fiancée, life-partner, parent, child, brother, sister, grandparent, or grandchild. The term includes the step, half, and in law relationships.
- No employee of RTHS shall be a voting member of the RTHS Board of Directors.
- No teacher or staff member that is immediate family of the chief administrator shall be hired without the Board of Directors evaluating their credentials, establishing a structure to prevent conflicts of interest, and notifying the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, with evidence, that this process has occurred.
- Board members and their immediate family members (as defined below) will be excluded from consideration for employment by the organization.
- It is well accepted that employment of relatives in the same area of an organization can cause serious conflicts and problems with favoritism and employee morale. In these circumstances, all parties, including supervisors, leave themselves open to charges of inequitable consideration in decisions concerning work assignments, performance evaluations, promotions, demotions, disciplinary actions, and discharge. In addition to claims of partiality in treatment at work, personal conflicts from outside the work environment can be carried into day-to-day working relationships. It is RTHS’s policy that relatives of persons currently employed by RTHS may be hired only if they will not be working directly for or supervising a relative. If already employed, they cannot be transferred into such a reporting relationship. If the relative relationship is established after employment, the individuals concerned shall decide who is to be transferred. If that decision is not made within 30 calendar days, management shall decide.
- In other cases where a conflict or the potential for conflict arises, even if there is no supervisory relationship involved, the parties may be separated by reassignment or terminated from employment.

- **Employment of spouses:**
With respect to the employment of relatives, RTHS reserves the right to:
 - a. Refuse to place one spouse under the direct supervision of the other spouse where such has the potential for creating an adverse effect on supervision, safety, security, or morale.
 - b. Refuse to place both spouses in the same department, division, program or facility where such has the potential for creating an adverse effect on supervision, safety, security, morale, or involves potential conflicts of interest.

- **Employment of other relatives:**
Relatives, up to and including first cousins of any RTHS employee, member of the RTHS board of directors, or any:
 - a. Person exercising, hiring, promotion, and termination authority may not be hired into RTHS without approval of the chief school officer or the executive committee of the board of directors.
 - b. Relatives within the third degree of kinship by blood or marriage of any RTHS employee, regardless of status, will not be hired in the same department, division, program, or facility where such has the potential for creating an adverse effect on supervision, safety, security, morale or involves potential conflicts of interest without the written prior approval of the chief school officer.
 - c. If two (2) employees marry, become related, or cohabit and a conflict arises, only one (1) of the employees will be permitted to stay with RTHS unless reasonable accommodations can be made to eliminate the potential problems. The decision as to which relative will remain with RTHS must be made by the two (2) employees within three (3) calendar days or by RTHS on the basis of service value.

Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Date: _____

Charter School Board Member Information Form

Note: To be completed individually by each proposed founding charter school board member. All forms must be signed by hand.

Serving on a public charter school board is a position of public trust and as a board member of a North Carolina public charter school; you are responsible for ensuring the quality of the school's entire program, competent stewardship of public funds, and the school's fulfillment of its public obligations and all terms of its charter.

As part of the application for a new charter school, the State Board of Education requests that each prospective board member respond individually to this questionnaire. Where narrative responses are required, brief responses are sufficient.

The purpose of this questionnaire is twofold: 1) to give application reviewers a clearer introduction to the applicant team behind each school proposal in advance of the applicant interview, in order to be better prepared for the interview; and 2) to encourage board members to reflect individually as well as collectively on their common mission, purposes, and obligations at the earliest stage of school development.

Background

1. Name of charter school on whose Board of Directors you intend to serve:

2. Full name:

Home Address:

Business Name and Address:

Telephone No.:

E-mail address:

3. Brief educational and employment history.

4. Have you previously served on a board of a school district, another charter school, a non-public school or any not-for-profit corporation?

No:

Yes:

5. How were you recruited to join this Board of Directors? Why do you wish to serve on the board of the proposed charter school?

6. What is your understanding of the appropriate role of a public charter school board member?

7. Describe any previous experience you have that is relevant to serving on the charter school's board (e.g., other board service). If you have not had previous experience of this nature, explain why you have the capability to be an effective board member.

8. Describe the specific knowledge and experience that you would bring to the board.

School Mission and Program

1. What is your understanding of the school's mission and guiding beliefs?

2. What is your understanding of the school's proposed educational program?

3. What do you believe to be the characteristics of a successful school?

4. How will you know that the school is succeeding (or not) in its mission?

Governance

1. Describe the role that the board will play in the school's operation.

2. How will you know if the school is successful at the end of the first year of operation?

3. How will you know at the end of five years of the schools is successful?

4. What specific steps do you think the charter school board will need to take to ensure that the school is successful?

5. How would you handle a situation in which you believe one or more members of the school's board were acting unethically or not in the best interests of the school?

*Please include the following with your Information Form

- a **one page** resume

*If you responded within the application that disciplinary action has been taken against any past or present professional licenses, provide a detailed response below outlining the disciplinary action taken and the license validity. [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Certification

I, _____, certify to the best of my knowledge and ability that the information I am providing to the North Carolina State Board of Education as a prospective board member for _____ Charter School is true and correct in every respect.

Signature

Date

Coversheet

WTHS Application

Section: IV. Charter School Application
Item: A. WTHS Application
Purpose: Discuss
Submitted by:
Related Material: Preview of WTHS Application.pdf

***Q14. Describe the rationale for the number of students and grade levels served in year one and the basis for the growth plan outlined above.**

The targeted population of WTHS will be 9th-12th graders whose families are interested in a STEM education and an option for school choice. We anticipate the population of WTHS to reflect the demographics of Orange, Durham, Chatham, Alamance and Wake Counties (see attached table).

To ensure that there are no barriers to a WTHS education, we will provide transportation and lunch for our students. Orange County was selected due to its growing population and demand for high-quality charter high schools (Eno River Academy had a waitlist of over 800 students for the 2019-20 school year). While Orange County is our targeted area for the physical location of the school, we expect to attract students from neighboring counties (Durham, Chatham, Alamance, Wake etc.) and throughout the Triangle.

The growth plan is based upon that of RTHS, as this is a replication.

***Q105. Please state the mission statement of the proposed charter school (35 words or less)**

- **The mission statement defines the organization's purpose and primary objectives, describing why it exists.**
- **The mission statement should indicate in measurable terms what the school intends to do, for whom, and to what degree.**

The mission of West Triangle High School is to increase access to globally competitive Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) education for students and teachers in Orange County and the surrounding area by incubating, proving and scaling innovative models of teaching and learning.

***Q106. Please state the vision statement of the proposed school.**

- **What will the school look like when it is achieving the mission?**
- **The vision statement outlines how the school will operate and what it will achieve in the long term.**

West Triangle High School (WTHS) aims to close the global achievement gap across a diverse population with different achievement levels, as a model and opportunity for other schools in NC. This vision will be completed by the following tenets:

1. Create a new STEM-focused school

The Contemporary Science Center (CSC) was established in 2004 to allow science students across the state to change their understanding of what STEM work is really like by experiencing the developments of Research Triangle companies. After four successful years without its own space, the CSC opened its own teaching immersion Lab in Durham in 2008, in partnership with the Museum of Life + Science, with support of Biogen Idec Foundation and the North Carolina Biotechnology Center (NCBC). Over the past 3 years the CSC Lab has grown to serve over 900 teachers and students per year.

After the opening of the CSC Lab, the mission of the CSC was expanded to focus on deeper, broader impact on North Carolina's education system. In summer 2010, recommendations from a few key leaders of the Board of Directors of Research Triangle Foundation, the Research Triangle Park managing entity, set CSC on this new path intended to have a stronger and broader impact on STEM education in the state than the original CSC program alone has been able to achieve. Today, the CSC is developing an innovative public STEM school that will model and scale new ways to educate, using the entrepreneurship, talent and resources of the Research Triangle to ultimately change the face of education in North Carolina. The RTHS will be designed to incorporate the kinds of authentic, rigorous experiences that the CSC has provided for the past seven years.

2. Create opportunities for inspiration through individual and group experiences outside the classroom

The scientific community is one of the most important segments of the state's economy with a vital hub in RTP. The Contemporary Science Center (CSC) opened with the assistance of Research Triangle companies who helped define how to integrate their ongoing product development into high school-level curricula. The CSC has taken this curriculum and developed the Field Study—a program to nurture students' enthusiasm for careers in science and math, as well as improving their understanding of core competencies in their standard courses. Field Studies are hands-on, rigorous experiences of RTP companies' work, presented as problem-based learning for middle and high school students in science and math courses. The CSC has developed seven successful Field Studies over its past seven years, becoming experts in the development of immersive, problem-focused units based on corporate STEM research and development for teenagers. The CSC's core knowledge of how to design and implement attitude-changing hands-on experiences is the foundation of RTHS.

3. Recruit and train great STEM teachers who are able to prepare and inspire students

In the recent Our Kids Won't Wait Report, a cadre of statewide education experts recommended that North Carolina establish goals and plans to increase the pipeline of highly qualified teachers in the state, accelerate the establishment of regional leadership academies and harness technology to fill the current staff development void for school leaders. RTHS intends to intentionally target these very needs identified by the Public School Forum report through its programmatic focus on augmenting the pipeline of new and early-career teachers learning strong STEM teaching skills.

***Q107. Educational Need and Targeted Student Population of the Proposed Charter School**
Provide a description of the Targeted Population in terms of demographics. In your description, include how this population will reflect the racial and ethnic composition of the school system in which it is located. Additionally, how it will reflect the socioeconomic status of the LEA, SWD population, and ELL population of the district? See G.S. 115C-218.45(e).

West Triangle High School (WTHS) is an independent public charter high school with a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) focus, designed to bring a globally competitive education to a broad spectrum of students. The school is committed to enrolling students who reflect Orange County's diversity in ethnicity, socioeconomic status, rural vs. urban composition, gender and

non-English-speaking origins. WTHS will be a place where students can learn in unique and innovative ways in order to prepare them for the global workplace of the 21st century.

The proposed school will abide by the charter school legislation, G.S. 115C-238.29F(g)(5), as stated below:

A charter school shall not discriminate against any student on the basis of ethnicity, national origin, gender, or disability. Except as otherwise provided by law or the mission of the school as set out in the charter, the school shall not limit admission to students on the basis of intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, athletic ability, disability, race, creed, gender, national origin, religion, or ancestry.

West Triangle High School will be fundamentally committed to targeting a population that is representative of Orange County and the surrounding counties/school districts. It is our desire to enroll students who reflect the region's diversity in ethnicity, socioeconomic status, rural vs. urban composition, gender and non-English-speaking origins. We hope to achieve a balance of these groups in sufficient cohort numbers such that the students can develop internal support groups.

Orange County is home to 51,792 households and currently provides high school aged students only one charter school option.

https://www.orangecountync.gov/DocumentCenter/View/7563/Appendix-A_Demographics?bidId=

Please see the [attached](#) spreadsheet for more information regarding expected demographics of West Triangle High School.

***Q108. What are the enrollment trends and academic performance outcomes of surrounding schools in the selected community? What elements of your educational model will meet the needs of your target student population?**

The Orange County School System serves 7,231 students in 13 schools. Of those 13 schools, three of those are high schools. Within the district, 10.82% identified as English Language Learners (ELLs), 14.82% receive special education services, 41.80% eligible for Free & Reduced Price School Meals and 17.34% Academically & Intellectually Gifted (AIG). Also within Orange County is the Chapel-Hill/Carrboro City Schools district that served 11,732 total students in the 2020-21 school year, with 3,910 of those students being high schoolers. 16.6% of those high schoolers qualify for Free & Reduced Price School Meals. No high school within Chapel-Hill/Carrboro City Schools is specifically STEM focused, differentiating WTHS from traditional options and giving parents a STEM based public school option for their children. Orange County currently has one charter school option for high schoolers, Eno River Academy High School, which had a wait list of 820 students in 2019-20. The demand for quality charter schools is clearly present in Orange County, and West Triangle High School will fulfill this demand.

In replication of RTHS, WTHS is committed to enrolling students who reflect the Triangle region's diversity in ethnicity, socioeconomic status, rural vs. urban composition, gender and

non-English-speaking origins. WTHS will be a place where this broad spectrum of students can learn in unique and innovative ways in order to prepare them for the global workplace of the 21st century. The school will rely upon cutting-edge instructional techniques that blend online material and industry-based experiences into a college-preparatory curriculum. Coursework will be personalized, meaning that students will be guided to develop the independent self-directed learning skills required to succeed in this curriculum, as a way to prepare them for our mobile, connected world. WTHS will have a strong Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) focus, requiring all students to graduate as scientifically literate citizens, *and* offering the guidance and support to help all students from a broad background achieve that goal. The school will equally offer a solid liberal arts curriculum including the arts and sports. WTHS will be a school for students who are interested in their professional futures. Our goal will be to graduate young people who are both prepared for college-level studies, and have learned how to demonstrate the 21st century skills that global companies seek.

***Q109. What will be the total projected enrollment at the charter school and what percentage of the Average Daily Membership (ADM) does that reflect when compared to the Local Education Agency (LEA) of the same offered grade levels? (i.e. If the proposed school will be grades 9-12, only compare the total enrollment to the total enrollment of the LEA in grades 9-12).**

The total projected enrollment of West Triangle High School at scale is 600 students. We expect to attract students throughout the Triangle and neighboring counties/school districts. Please find attached the percentage of the ADM of WTHS reflected when compared to other neighboring school districts.

***Q110. Summarize what the proposed school will do differently than the schools that are now serving the targeted population. What will make this school unique and more effective than the currently available public-school options?**

The WTHS mission is strong and easily replicable. The mission of WTHS is designed to increase access to globally competitive stem education and WTHS would follow the same.

WTHS will be able to meet the needs of a broad spectrum of students because of its unique school design. The school will use a personalized approach that allows students choice and self-direction in learning. The program uses a mastery approach which allows for students to complete work and demonstrate skill acquisition based on their own need. The program is criterion-based, meaning that mastery determines advancement to new material and to the next course or grade level. This approach allows the school to tailor course options and time spent in active learning to the needs of the student, allowing for both acceleration and support for learners with additional challenges. By developing students into strong, self-directed learners, students are better prepared for college and to join a remote workforce. In summary, WTHS will offer students a unique and more effective learning experience through the following pillars:

1. **Personalized Learning:** We personalize the entire learning experience for students at RTHS/WTHS through a comprehensive learning management system that pushes students to direct their own learning and equips teachers to guide students through that process.
2. **Project Based Approach:** We take a constructivist approach to most learning endeavors, pushing students to develop their critical thinking skills, mirroring the type of collaboration that happens in the modern college and knowledge work environments.
3. **Mastery Based Assessment:** The goal of instruction is student mastery, so we provide an assessment platform and structure that allows students and teachers to focus on mastery rather than performance.
4. **College Preparatory Academics for All:** We provide college prep coursework in a personalized manner that ensures all our students will be prepared for entrance into 4-year college at the end of their tenure at WTHS.
5. **STEM Focus:** We leverage science, technology, engineering, and mathematics to accelerate our students' preparation for the competitive global environment.

***Q111. Describe the relationships that have been established to generate support for the school. How have you assessed demand for the school? Briefly describe these activities and summarize their results**

We have established a WTHS Advisory Committee of community members and stakeholders with connections to Orange County and the surrounding area who are committed to supporting the establishment of WTHS. This Advisory Committee will also serve as potential board members to join the RTHS-WTHS board should the application move forward. Our Advisory Committee consists of community members (Annia Huff, Alison Blake, Dawn Imershein, Aimee Rhodes, Bob Hill), RTHS teachers (Monica Strada, Angela Cooper, Jeff Guilford, John Wood, Mamie Hall), and RTHS students (Aidan Quigley, Emmaline Rhodes).

Please refer to our feasibility analysis for further information regarding the demand opportunity for the school.

***Q112. Attach Appendix A: Evidence of Community/Parent Support.**

- Provide evidence that demonstrates parents and guardians have committed to enrolling their children in your school.
- You must provide evidence through a narrative or visual of this educational need through survey data, or times and locations of public meetings discussing this proposed charter school.
- (Please do not provide more than one sample survey form).

Attached you will find lottery data indicating the number of applicants for RTHS and the number of accepted applicants for the last five years. On average, students currently attending RTHS live 25-45 minutes away. We believe the demand for RTHS alone speaks for the potential demand for WTHS. In addition, we have secured verbal commitment from over five K-8 charter schools in the area that have expressed a desire to enter into articulation agreements with the school. Finally, please refer to the

feasibility analysis that is attached in APPENDIX ??? that details the extensive increase in school age population over the next 5-10 years in this area.

***Q114. Provide a brief narrative to coincide with each applicable legislative purpose(s).**

WTHS will provide parents and students with educational opportunities that are unique to its STEM-centered learning and individualized education planning. By pursuing our mission, WTHS will meet each of the Six Legislative Purposes of Charter Schools:

1. Create professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunities to be responsible for the learning program at the school site.

The founding of WTHS will provide unique professional opportunities for teachers not available in traditional public school systems. At WTHS, similarly to Research Triangle High School, teachers will have the opportunity to uniquely design their course in a manner that aligns with our personalized learning, mastery based approach that relies on strong cognitive skills. Additionally, as a replication, WTHS will provide unique opportunities for teachers to participate in the development, founding, and management of a charter school. We also envision collaboration between the faculty of the two campuses through sharing PD and resources and in some cases teaching courses on both sites. Currently, a small group of RTHS teachers sits on the WTHS Advisory Board and we anticipate a joint RTHS-WTHS Teacher Advisory group once the school has opened.

2. Hold schools accountable for meeting measurable student achievement results.

Competition in virtually any sector elevates quality and drives innovation. WTHS will provide public school competition in a market sector that currently lacks options for students and families who deserve to have choice and agency in where their child pursues high school. Schools that consistently receive students year after year, regardless of the school's academic outcomes or programmatic offerings, feel no actual pressure to innovate, improve, or produce higher student achievement results. WTHS will provide a public STEM-centered, college-preparatory, personalized, educational program in an intimate high school setting that is based on the proven model of one of the best high schools in the state. The school will provide competition for neighboring traditional and charter high schools, which is the most powerful method to hold schools accountable for emitting measurable achievement results.

3. Provide parents and students with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public-school system

WTHS will be one of a handful of STEM-focused public high schools in the area and one of only five stand alone public charter high schools in the state. Moreover, as a stand alone public charter high school, WTHS will provide an incredibly unique opportunity, rarely available in the public, charter, or private school setting, for entering ninth graders to establish and reset their academic, artistic, athletic, and most importantly, social identity in high school. In most traditional public high schools, students enter from a set of feeder middle schools, thereby entering high schools with established friend groups, cliques, patterns of behavior, and

identities. The same is certainly true for most K-12 or 6-12 charter and private schools, but to an even greater extent as students come from an even smaller student population and in many cases have been together since early elementary school. While these structures allow for students to grow up together, they also unfortunately cement student identities and social dynamics early in the children's development. Children grow and change dramatically through their middle school years. Unfortunately, for the majority of students, the social and physiological baggage from elementary and middle school gets carried right into high school. WTHS will provide the same type of rare opportunity that RTHS provides for its students to start "fresh" in ninth grade. At RTHS, students come from over 40 different middle schools, and a number from home school settings. These students can reset and enter a safe and supportive environment as they start their high school career. This characteristic is a unique choice that is limited in the traditional public and charter public school systems.

4. **Improving Student Learning**

In addition to the unique way in which students will enter the school, no other high school in the area offers a unique and proven personalized, mastery based learning approach in a small setting. Many traditional public schools have "Schools of Engineering" or small school designs within larger campuses, but those schools are still large public high schools. Those students will need to compete with all of the other students in the large school in athletics and other programs, they will sit in the same lunch room, they will share the same facility. The size of our school alone with roughly 600 students will be less than half the size of most high schools in the area. Size matters dramatically for traditional high schools. While large public high schools are more financially viable for school districts, allow schools to provide winning athletic teams in the top conferences, and offer a rich set of course offerings, they are not well designed for all students. The personalized learning approach at WTHS is student-centered, proving successful for a wide range of children's strengths and abilities.

WTHS will be one of a limited number of schools in the area to provide instruction to students in how to learn in a manner more reflective of a modern workplace. The personalized, blended model of instruction will offer a broad spectrum of students access to a wide variety of ways to learn – online and offline – blended together into a college and work-focused curriculum that will prepare them for careers in the 21st century. The innovative offerings of the school are chosen as the way to reach more students with more material, more often.

5. **Increasing learning opportunities for all students, with a special emphasis on at-risk or gifted students.** Students will be engaged in active, social, and creative learning experiences in and out of the classroom. "Active, social and creative learning" is the foundation of Constructivist education and will be implemented based on the experiences of the RTHS. This personalized approach will allow the students to reach learners at both ends of the spectrum. At-risk students will receive a far more personalized approach that will put them in a position to access the college-preparatory coursework provided by WTHS and gifted students will have the opportunity to push themselves to pursue independent learning. Additionally, our model of Digital Learning Days or DLDs will give teachers the opportunity to differentiate their instruction for students,

meeting at-risk students where they are and pushing gifted students to higher levels of cognitive stress.

6. **Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods.** The entire design of RTHS, and therefore the design of WTHS requires and encourages teachers to use different teaching methods. By structuring student learning in a personalized way and conducting assessments in a manner that meets children at the point of error and intervention, the model empowers teachers to do the one thing they rarely find they can do - differentiate and individualize their instruction. Furthermore, teachers must deliver high levels of content using blended and flipped practices, and all content must be delivered to students online. Students at RTHS, for example, were perhaps better prepared for the pandemic than others, as learning was conducted via laptop and teachers had always placed their coursework online prior to COVID-19.

***Q115. Provide specific and measurable goals for the proposed school for the first 5 years of operation outlining expectations for the proposed school's operations, academics, finance, and governance. Address how often, who, and when the information will be communicated to the governing board and other stakeholders.**

1. Performance on applicable state and national assessments comparable to existing schools in same LEA (reported annually)
2. Graduation rate in excess of 90% (reported annually after year four)
3. School budget will retain a minimum 10% reserve each academic year (cashflow reported monthly; annual report on final status)
4. Annual financial audits will return no findings (reported annually)
5. School will be in compliance with all aspects of OCS Performance Framework (reported annually)

See attached for a set of targets for goals for each of these categories. The board will have five committees committed to these goals and will ensure that the goals are reviewed on a monthly, quarterly, or annually basis. The Chief School Officer will create a dashboard that will summarize the school's current year-to-date performance in each core area. On an annual basis, WTHS will partner with its sister school, RTHS, to undergo a School Review in which the teachers and leaders from RTHS will spend a day on campus conducting interviews and observing operations and classes to assess the school's alignment to the mission and vision that both schools share. The review findings will be shared with WTHS leaders, board members and a select group of staff.

***Q116. How will the governing board know that the proposed public charter school is working toward attaining their mission statement?**

The Governing Board will be responsible for ensuring that the academic program of WTHS is successful, that the school's program and operation are faithful to the terms of its charter, and that the school is a viable organization. The Board will assess program activities to ensure that WTHS is not drifting away from its original purposes to ensure all students are achieving at the highest levels. The Board will ensure effective organizational planning such that it includes concrete, measurable goals consistent with the charter and accountability plan. The Board will ensure adequate resources by supporting and approving fundraising targets and goals and carrying out the development plan. The board will meet regularly with the school's leadership to ensure that the mission is being acted upon and supported.

Also, on an annual basis, WTHS will partner with its sister school, RTHS, to undergo a School Review in which a select group of teachers, leaders and board members from RTHS, as well as at least one external observer, will spend a day on campus conducting interviews and observing operations and classes in order to assess the school's alignment to the mission and vision. The review findings will be shared with WTHS leaders, board members and a select group of staff and parents. Parent surveys will be conducted on a yearly basis. In both cases, an action plan will be put in place to ensure alignment with the school's mission.

***Q117. Provide a detailed description of the overall instructional program of the proposed charter school, including:**

- **major instructional methods**
- **assessment strategies, and**
- **explain how this instructional program and model meet the needs of the targeted student population**

WTHS plans to replicate the three core principles that have been successful at RTHS:

- Personalized learning delivered via a comprehensive learning management system (Summit Learning Platform or equivalent framework system) coupled with mastery-based assessment strategy
- Rigorous college-prep academics
 - Strong extra-curricular and athletic opportunities
- Creating strong, independent, self-directed learners that meets our students individual needs

Personalized Learning and Mastery-Based Assessments

WTHS will use a personalized learning approach to instruction. This method consists of three principal aspects: first, mastery learning. Students will be presented information by teachers through direct instruction, inquiry activities, pre-recorded lectures, readings from primary sources, simulations, or other high quality resources from outside the school. Students will be asked to practice skills based on this instruction and will take assessments to demonstrate retention of knowledge and acquisition of skills. Students will take these assessments and receive feedback from their instructors on their progress, with suggestions about how to improve mastery. Once they are able to pass the assessments at a certain

level, they are considered to have demonstrated mastery and will progress to another instructional unit. Students may take these assessments as many times as necessary on their own schedule, provided they are making reasonable progress in the course. These assessments can be automated or given by the teacher and can take different forms. They are not repeating the same assessment over and over; they will draw from a test bank so that students are not simply memorizing answers. Students attending WTHS will span a wide range of abilities, socioeconomic statuses, support structures, previous schooling experiences, and future goals. We believe that our personalized approach best addresses this set of needs, and our experience at RTHS supports this thinking.

College-Prep Academics

WTHS will rely upon cutting-edge instructional techniques that blend online material and industry-based experiences into a college-preparatory curriculum. WTHS will replicate the unique way that RTHS has been able to ensure a rigorous college-preparatory curriculum in a personalized manner as described above. Students will have the ability to take numerous AP courses. As a small school and in collaboration with RTHS, students will have the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities and competitive sports. For example, the school will invest heavily in a robotics program, competitive athletics, drama, music, the arts, etc. More importantly, we know that students, particularly those who haven't been afforded the opportunities of their wealthier peers in the grades preceding high school, succeed through an independent learning approach. By leveraging the learning management system and technology-based instruction, WTHS will be able to increase the amount of content taught to our students and better prepare them for college. Additionally, we expect to attract many high-performing students ---gives themselves the ability to push themselves as far as possible. For example, all freshmen are in the same biology class, but those who want more of a challenge can work with their teachers to be provided with honors level content.

Creating strong, independent, self-directed learners that meets our students individual needs

A critical element of the school's educational philosophy is metacognition, teaching students how to own their own learning. This array of individual skills that are applied to student work that can be developed independently, such as the ability to develop a hypothesis, argue a claim, cite sources, analyze and manipulate data. There are currently 38 of these skills in the system the school is planning to employ, but teachers choose which to emphasize. Students do longer form, more creative, and in-depth work in the form of "projects" which require them to demonstrate mastery of these cognitive skills. A clear rubric exists and students are scored on the basis of their ability to conform to the rubric. Teachers grade the appropriate cognitive skills multiple times over the course of the year so that improvement can be demonstrated. Grading is done on the basis of growth: if a student does a better job of demonstrating the skill relative to the rubric, a higher grade is given. This encourages pursuit of skill mastery because teachers give specific feedback on how to improve the skill, rather than a student chasing a holistic grade. A growth approach to grading helps with differentiation by setting a different ceiling for each student and taking into account where they began with their skill mastery. This allows all students to show growth even if they are challenged by meeting grade level standards. Finally, and the most

important part, is feedback. Teachers give students timely, appropriate, and frequent feedback on attempted work. They look at assessment results and direct students to work on specific topics rather than the student having to guess at what they know and do not know. With this guidance, we reinforce students' skills at studying and have the opportunity to use current, scientifically valid study methods to encourage students to develop their own self-directed learning skills. When students are working on projects, their work is stored in files accessible to students and teachers simultaneously so that teachers can offer feedback in real time even if the student is not present at school. This feedback directly drives the growth-based grading cycle so that students are targeting the specific skills they need to demonstrate mastery.

There are several advantages to this program in addition to those mentioned. First, because resources are stored online, students have access to course material at all times and anywhere they have internet access. This robust system, used for several years at RTHS to support weather closures, served RTHS students during the remote periods of the COVID quarantine and allowed for continuity of instruction without having to develop an online method of supporting learning. This reduces nonproductive time and increases the number of minutes students are able to be engaged with tasks throughout the year. It is well-documented that the longer students can be engaged with high quality learning material the more successful they will be. Second, since the grading system is based on improvement, it avoids a common problem in traditional systems where students find themselves late in the school year realizing that mathematically they are eliminated from passing because of lower-quality work submitted earlier in the year. The system that has been employed at RTHS and will be employed at WTHS expects that students will make greater improvement during the later parts of the year. This keeps students engaged for longer periods of time, and reduces the frequency of instances when students will give up because they know they have no hope of passing their courses. At RTHS, we have noticed a very low repeat rate for students (see attached spreadsheet) in part due to this continued chance for success.

***Q122. Curriculum and Instructional Design**

Describe the basic learning environment (e.g., classroom-based, independent study), including class size and structure for each grade span (i.e. elementary, middle, high) the school would ultimately serve.

Students are assigned to classrooms with a teacher as in a traditional environment. We believe that the classroom model is highly supportive of students and a culture of support and achievement. WTHS will use a seven period day, with each period spanning 50 minutes of instructional time, with the exception of Fridays, when classes will be shorter and students dismissed early in order to allow for full-faculty professional development time. During these classroom periods, students engage in a variety of instructional activities. First, there is PLT, or "personalized learning time". On these days, students choose the area they want to study and use the online resources to support their work. This allows the teacher to work directly with students during the period either by request or when the teacher feels the student needs help. On the basis of student work the teacher can pull students out for small group instruction or, when necessary, take the entire class for more traditional whole group instruction, whether direct or

following some other pedagogical structure. Students may take assessments during this time. PLT is used for individual skill and content knowledge development primarily. Other days are "project" days, when students work in groups or individually on their longer-form project work. Again, the teacher can work with the whole class, small groups, or individuals as needed. This flexibility allows for much more effective instruction. Class time is governed by the "flipped" model of instruction, where traditional "homework" (usually defined as individual practice work) is done during the class period, but traditional instruction/presentation is captured online using videos or other resources and students do this work outside of class. This gives the teacher the ability to use their skill and talents for each student rather than simply for content presentation. Personalization leverages the flipped concept to enable teachers to be more present and available for students at the times that they need it, but also adds student choice and further develops the independence that students need to be successful beyond high school.

Classes at WTHS will be targeted to an average of 24 students per class, with the exception of more demanding courses requiring more support, such as Math 1 or EC service classrooms. In those cases, numbers will be less to facilitate more concentrated instruction. Math 1 will be limited to 15 students per class section and EC classes to lower than that.

***Q123. Identify how this curriculum aligns with the proposed charter school's mission, targeted student population, and North Carolina Accountability Model. Provide evidence that the chosen curriculum has been successful with the target student population, how the plan will drive academic improvement for all students, and how it has been successful in closing achievement gaps.**

Since WTHS is a replication of RTHS, the curriculum's alignment can be demonstrated by RTHS' performance on state measures. The past four years of SPG scores for the school are A, A, B, B, which suggests that the curriculum is successful. 2020 SAT data for RTHS show that the school had the 7th highest SAT total score average in NC, and 6th highest math score average. Since RTHS is a STEM-focused school, and no explicit SAT preparation is taught, this also reinforces the idea that the curriculum is a match for the school's students and mission.

[Attached](#) are documents showing that Black students at RTHS have outgained their peers in NC during their time of enrollment as measured by comparison of students meeting the ACT benchmarks.

***Q124. Describe the primary instructional strategies that the school will expect teachers to master and explain why these strategies will result in increased academic achievement for the targeted student population for each grade span (i.e. elementary, middle, high) the school would ultimately serve.**

The primary instructional strategies WTHS teachers will need to master to support personalized learning are (a) supporting mastery learning, (b) developing student skills using a growth model, and (c) offering timely, supportive feedback on student work.

(a) Supporting mastery learning: teachers may employ any method they choose to present students with information but that presentation must support repeated exposure consistent with research on learning and study skills (eg. spaced practice, retrieval practice), and that instruction must be captured for reuse

by students. Teachers must review student progress on assessments and offer specific support for concepts that are demonstrated to be weak in students.

(b) Growth model for development of skills: instead of expecting students to have mastery of all skills needed to produce high quality work, teachers must pre-assess and determine what range of skills students manifest and prescribe pathways to increased mastery. Teachers will repeatedly review student work as submitted and allow for resubmission with specific direction as to how to develop the skills in question. Use of a clear and explicit rubric is required. This model also requires teaching students how to create and set goals and how to manage an approach to mastery.

(c) Feedback: students cannot learn or grow without knowing what they are good or bad at. Feedback is the process of providing students with specific, actionable direction on how to improve and to accurately assess their own mastery of a concept. Feedback underlies all formative processes. It can tell students how to improve and teachers how to modify their instruction to better support students.

All three of these factors affect the development of students into independent, self-directed learners. As this model has been employed at RTHS, we have seen student independence flower as time has passed and have received consistent and abundant comments from students on how well-prepared they were for college learning.

***Q125. Explain how the proposed instructional plan and graduation requirements will ensure student readiness to transition from grade to grade and to the next grade span upon program completion.**

The personalized system allows for closer monitoring of student progress throughout the year, meaning that students are less able to be "surprised" with failure at the end of the year. It also allows for teachers to have a better idea of what content a student has mastered prior to the next level of the class. As a result, we believe that all students are more ready to transition between grade levels than students in a class where grades are a weighted average of a number of project and assessment categories where the goal is a passing grade, rather than content mastery. All students are expected to show mastery in the topics that are explicitly listed in the NC Essential Standards for each subject.

***Q126. Describe in a brief narrative below on how the yearly academic calendar coincides with the tenets of the proposed mission and education plan.**

The school year consists of 185 days over a 9-month schedule. These 185 days will be divided into instructional days, some in-person teacher workdays and Flex instructional days. Flex days are anticipated to be held at the end of each quarter, depending on teacher needs. There will be at least 185 instructional days and 14 teacher workdays. Of these teacher workdays, five will take place at the beginning of the school year and five will occur at the end of each school year for preparation and grading/close-out. In addition, teachers will meet weekly on Friday afternoons in their PLCs for collaborative planning and evaluation. Summer Orientation days will be in addition to the school

calendar and managed as a separate program. The final calendar will take into consideration the time necessary to administer all segments of the testing requirements set forth by the NC ABCs Accountability model and Federal guidelines. During the planning year, the Board and the school administration will have the opportunity to make minor adjustments to this calendar to assure the program integrity and intentions are thoroughly established.

For students, time during the summer can be used to extend the regular school year to complete mastery through the personalized system, or can be used to prepare students to be more successful the following year as they repeat a course. We believe that a year, rather than a semester-long course, as in a block schedule, allows for better long-term development of content and skill mastery.

***Q154. Describe the culture or ethos of the proposed school. Explain how it will promote a positive academic environment and reinforce student intellectual and social development.**

The student handbook (attached) describes elements of WTHS culture. The Raptor NEST summer orientation brief attached shows how we present school culture and practice to new students before the first day of school and through the first weeks of school. Finally, "mentoring" (as described in the student handbook) is a period daily where a small multi-grade level group meets with a teacher to talk about school culture, learn about goal-setting and techniques for being successful in school, and to meet with students who represent a cross-section of the student body and share experiences.

***Q207. Please provide the following:**

1) A thorough explanation of how the specific mission of the school, as set forth in the application, requires the utilization of the weighted or limited lottery

The school's mission statement includes "...increasing access to globally competitive STEM education..." and increasing access means that active measures must be taken to resist the shaping of the applicant pool by external forces. In our experience with public charter schools, word of mouth advertising is powerful and tends to collect dominant communities. A weighted lottery helps the school to ensure that applicants from communities with fewer resources to spend towards school choice have an opportunity to attend. WTHS seeks to serve a significant population of economically disadvantaged and historically underserved children.

***Q208. 2) A thorough description of the processes and procedures the applicant intends to use to effectuate the lottery.**

The school will use commercially available software to manage the school's lottery. Online and paper applications will be collected and uploaded. The particular type of weighting defined by the weighted lottery, or any other lottery preferences the school chooses to follow from statute, will be set in the system and automatically enforced when the lottery is run. The lottery draw will be open to the public, and the results immediately checked for accuracy. All students, whether offered admission or placed on

the waitlist, will be notified within 24 hours of the lottery draw. Parents will be able to monitor wait list progress in real time.

***Q209. 3) The underlying research, pedagogical, educational, psychometric and legal, that supports the request and the procedures the applicant is requesting.**

In North Carolina, students from low-socioeconomic backgrounds are significantly less likely to be proficient in reading and mathematics. WTHS seeks to eliminate the achievement gap that proliferates along socioeconomic lines in the Triangle through providing its students with a successful, proven STEM-focused high school experience.

***Q213. Describe in detail the transportation plan that will ensure that no child is denied access to the school due to lack of transportation. Include budgetary assumptions and the impact of transportation on the overall budget. The details of this plan should align with the mission, identified need for the charter school, targeted student population, and the budget proposal.**

If you plan to provide transportation, include the following:

Describe the plan for oversight of transportation options (e.g., whether the school will provide its own transportation, contract out for transportation, attempt to contract with a district, or a combination thereof) and who on the staff will provide this daily oversight.

Describe how the school will transport students with special transportation needs and how that will impact your budget.

Describe how the school will ensure compliance with state and federal laws and regulations related to transportation services

WTHS is committed to enrolling a broad representation of the population from across the surrounding four counties - Orange, Durham, Alamance, Wake, and Chatham. To that end, the school has budgeted \$100,000 in its first year to ensure that it can ensure access to the school across these communities. We will run up to five buses to targeted satellite stops in each area. We expect the costs of school to increase over time and have reflected those costs in our budget. We anticipate that 50% of our students will utilize transportation. The school will purchase or rent the buses and contract with a local business to hire drivers.

***Q214. Describe in detail the school lunch plan that will ensure that no child is lacking a daily meal. The details of this plan should align with the targeted student population and school budget proposal.**

If the school intends to participate in the National School Lunch Program, include the following components in the response:

- 1. How the school will comply with applicable local, state, and federal guidelines and regulations;**
- 2. Any plans to meet the needs of low-income students; and**

3. Include how the school intends to collect free- and reduced-price lunch information from qualified families. If a school intends to participate in the Community Eligibility Provision, describe the methodology the school will use to determine eligibility.

WTHS will provide free lunch in compliance with the National School Lunch Program. The school will participate in the NSLP and work directly with a authorized caterer to execute the lunch program. We have budgeted \$30,000 in year one and to account for the difference in cost associated with the Fund 5 revenue and school based expenses incurred to offer the program.

***Q218. Provide a detailed start-up plan for the proposed school, specifying tasks, timelines, and responsible individuals (including compensation for those individuals, if applicable).**

The school is requesting a 2-year planning timeline. We believe that the current charter school timeline is too condensed to ensure a high likelihood of success. This conclusion is supported by the evidence of many schools requesting delays in order to open their school. We believe that if there is an "Accelerated Timeline" for opening we should also be allowed to open on an "Extended Timeline" which essentially allows a two-year planning period. By having two years before opening with an approved charter, we will be able to strategically hire and incubate the right leader as well as identify both short and long term facility options, and if necessary secure financing and build a facility.

August 2024 - Doors Open

| Date/Timeline | Action |
|---------------------------|--|
| March 2021 | RTHS board gives approval to begin the application process |
| April - June 2021 | Draft and prepare application |
| July 2021 | Final review of application RTHS Board approves application submission to OCS |
| October 2021-January 2022 | CSAB Interviews and Approval Process |

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| March - April 2022 | SBE Approval Process |
| May - June 2022 | NC ACCESS Grant Application and Approval |
| July 2022 - June 2023 | Launch search process for Principal Resident |

***Q219. Describe what the board anticipates will be the challenges of starting a new school and how it expects to address these challenges. Submit a Start-up (Year 0) Budget as Appendix O, if applicable.**

We anticipate that this process will be significantly challenging, with the most challenging factor being acquiring a facility. As a replication, we will greatly benefit from having the resources of an established school in place from which to engage in the planning process. We recognize that student recruitment can be a challenge, but because we are replicating a successful, proven model, we expect to attract a high number of applicants. These resources include leadership and teachers from RTHS as well as financial support. All that said, because members of our board have been through the school startup process, we understand how challenging that process can be. For that reason, we are requesting a two-year planning timeline as outlined in question 218.

***Q220. What is your plan to obtain a building? Identify specific steps the board will take to acquire a facility and obtain the Educational Certificate of Occupancy. Present a timeline with reasonable assumptions for facility selection, requisition, state fire marshal and health inspections, and occupation.**

The WTHS advisory committee and RTHS board are engaging with real estate contacts to begin looking for suitable properties in areas best capable of serving potential students. We know from experience that securing a facility is the biggest challenge to opening a new school. We would seek to have any facility ready for occupancy at least three months prior to opening. Should the school be able to secure funds through the ACCESS grant, this could in part be used for seeding a new facility or upfit on an existing property.

The founding staff of RTHS have secured, financed, and upfit multiple buildings in multiple locations. We feel more than prepared to scout locations and secure an adequate property for WTHS, even if this requires a transitional facility for the first few years until a larger facility can be built or located.

***Q231. Provide an explanation as to why you believe there is a demand for the school that will meet this enrollment projection.**

RTHS has a proven track record and boasts a wait list of over 400 students every year. With Orange County only having one non-traditional public high school option that has a wait list of 800 students and WTHS being a replication of RTHS, we believe that parents in Orange County and surrounding counties will want to give their children an outstanding and transformative high school charter option.