GENEARATION 24
OPEN-ENROLLMENT CHARTER APPLICATION
TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY
1701 North Congress Avenue
Austin, Texas 78701
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</tbody>
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# APPLICATION OVERVIEW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME OF PROPOSED GENERATION TWENTY-FOUR CHARTER SCHOOL</th>
<th>The Gathering Place</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NAME OF SPONSERING ENTITY</td>
<td>TGP Public Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The sponsoring entity is a:</td>
<td>501(c)(3) Nonprofit Organization</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## I. CONTACT INFORMATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applicant Name:</th>
<th>Ryan York</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applicant Mailing Address:</td>
<td>512 East Quincy Street, San Antonio, TX 78215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicant Email Address:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:founders@thegatheringplacek12.org">founders@thegatheringplacek12.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicant Phone #:</td>
<td>210-444-2028</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## II. GEOBOUNDARIES/FACILITIES/OPERATIONS

| Number of Campuses Being Requested: | 1 |
| Number of Districts within Geo Boundary: | 17 |

Address of Proposed Administrative Offices (if different from above):

250 East Grayson Street, San Antonio, TX 78215

Physical Address of Each Proposed Campus (please include street address, city, state, zip, and county). If the specific address is unknown at this time, please provide the county and general location of the proposed campus:

Bexar County (78201, 78213, 78228, 78229, or 78230)

## III. GOVERNANCE/LEADERSHIP

| Number of Board Members: | 7 |
| Chairperson of the Governing Board: | Joanna Klekowicz |
| Chief Executive Officer of the Sponsoring Entity: | Ryan York |
| Superintendent of Proposed Charter School: | Ryan York |
| Board Member Who Attended Applicant Conference: | Joanna Klekowicz, Ryan York, Janet Young |
### IV. ENROLLMENT OVERVIEW

State the estimated enrollment and check all grade levels to be served for each school year. By Year 3, at least one grade in which assessments are administered must be offered.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Estimated Enrollment</th>
<th>Grade Levels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>PK 4 K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>PK 4 K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>729</td>
<td>PK 4 K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>972</td>
<td>PK 4 K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1134</td>
<td>PK 4 K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At Capacity</td>
<td>Maximum Enrollment: 1458</td>
<td>PK 4 K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I certify that I have the authority to submit this application and that all information contained herein is complete and accurate, realizing that any misrepresentation could result in disqualification from the application process or revocation after award. In accordance with TEC 12.120, I further certify that no members of the governing body of the sponsoring entity or of the proposed charter school or any officers or employees of the proposed school have been convicted of a misdemeanor involving moral turpitude or of any felony. I understand that incomplete applications will not be considered. As part of the application submission process, I certify that I have read and reviewed the Generation Twenty-Four Open-Enrollment Charter Application Subchapter D Instructions and Guidelines document.

SIGNATURE OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF SPONSORING ENTITY

Date: 1/4/2019

Printed Name: Ryan York

Attachment(s):

A 1: Applicant Information Session Documentation
# APPLICANT TEAM OVERVIEW

## I. APPLICATION TEAM MEMBERS
Include names, current employment, and position with proposed school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Full Name</th>
<th>Current Job Title/Employer</th>
<th>Position with Proposed School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joanna Klekowicz</td>
<td>School Designer, City Education Partners</td>
<td>Principal of The Gathering Place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryan York</td>
<td>School Designer, City Education Partners</td>
<td>Superintendent of The Gathering Place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janet Young</td>
<td>Chief Operating Officer, Parallon Health Services</td>
<td>Member of Governing Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jon Hinojosa</td>
<td>Executive Director, Say Sí</td>
<td>Member of Governing Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diego Capeletti</td>
<td>Coordinator of Center of Innovation, Technology, and Engineering at UTSA</td>
<td>Member of Governing Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quincy Boyd</td>
<td>Regional Director, Families Empowered</td>
<td>Member of Governing Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer Maestas</td>
<td>Education Director, Key Ideas</td>
<td>Member of Governing Board</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## II. Board of Directors
Include names of all Board members.

- Joanna Klekowicz
- Ryan York
- Janet Young
- Jon Hinojosa
- Diego Capeletti
- Quincy Boyd
- Jennifer Maestas

## III. Application Preparation/Support Services
List any individual(s), organization(s), or firm(s) that prepared, assisted, and/or provided professional advice on the contents of the application herein.

- 1) Schulman, Lopez, Hoffer, & Adelstein, LLP (paid review)
- 2) Texas Charter School Association (paid review)
- 3) Maria Sokol (paid review)
- 4) City Education Partners (unpaid review)

Were any of the above-mentioned paid?

- Yes ☑
- No ☐
The Gathering Place
Proposed Generation Twenty-Four Charter Name

TGP Public Schools
Name of Sponsoring Entity

State the proposed school's attendance boundary by providing an alphabetical list of the traditional school districts from which the proposed charter school will accept students. If the charter school will accept students from only a portion of a school district or districts, state exactly what the boundary will be. Do not list the charter schools located within the designated geographic boundary.

A primary attendance boundary is a subset of school districts within the approved attendance boundary. The proposed charter may admit students who reside outside of the primary boundary once all eligible applicants who reside within the primary attendance boundary have submitted a timely application and have been enrolled per 19 Texas Administrative Code (TAC), §100.1207(f)

If the proposed charter school will have a primary attendance boundary, list all school district(s) that will establish the boundary. Do not list the charter schools located within the designated geographic boundary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendance Boundary</th>
<th>Primary Attendance Boundary (if applicable)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alamo Heights ISD</td>
<td>78201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Central ISD</td>
<td>78213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edgewood ISD</td>
<td>78228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ft. Sam Houston ISD</td>
<td>78229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harlandale ISD</td>
<td>78230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judson ISD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lackland ISD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medina Valley ISD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North East ISD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northside ISD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Randolph ISD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Antonio ISD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schertz-Cibolo Universal City ISD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somerset ISD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South San Antonio ISD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southside ISD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwest ISD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
OVERVIEW OF ANTICIPATED NEED
GEOGRAPHIC BOUNDARIES (CONTINUED)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of charter school campuses currently operating within the occupied district:</th>
<th>17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of traditional school campuses currently operating within the occupied district:</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of traditional school districts within ten miles of the proposed location:</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Will the proposed school be located in the Attendance Zone of a school district-campus assigned an unacceptable performance rating under Section 39.054 for the two preceding school years?</th>
<th>Yes ☒ No ☐</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School Name(s):</td>
<td>Longfellow Middle School</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Narrative Response:

TGP Public Schools, the sponsoring entity, is proposing to open The Gathering Place, a kindergarten through 8th grade open enrollment charter school on the Near-Northwest side of San Antonio. Our primary attendance zone was chosen in response to community demand. It is comprised of zip codes (as allowed by TEA Generation 24 FAQ document, Question #6): 78201, 78213, 78228, 78229, and 78230, which encompass parts of Edgewood ISD, North East ISD, Northside ISD, and San Antonio ISD.

Further rationale for selecting this primary attendance zone for The Gathering Place is to create a school that brings together historically segregated parts of our community. San Antonio has been ranked the most economically segregated city in the United States, where highways act as dividers of wealth and zip codes predict 20-year differences in life expectancy. In fact, Mayor Ron Nirenberg, upon taking office stated, “Socioeconomic segregation is the single biggest problem facing San Antonio.” The Gathering Place believes that social stratifications of race and class in San Antonio need to be dismantled in order to reinvest disenfranchised members of our community. Because the attendance zones of local schools mirror racial and socioeconomic segregation at the neighborhood and community level, one of the most powerful ways to break down this historic segregation within our city is to operate intentionally desegregated, diverse schools. According to the Texas School Report Card Finder, Edgewood ISD and San Antonio ISD serve predominantly economically disadvantaged students at 93.2% and 90.7%, while Northside ISD and North East ISD serve about half that number, at 48.1% and 46.6%, respectively.

Our proposed geographic location is at the nexus of three historically divided neighborhoods, and our proposed attendance zone straddles two socioeconomic worlds, abuts a booming medical center, and encompasses a refugee resettlement site. This contiguous zip code cluster that makes up our primary attendance boundary covers an approximate 5-mile radius and ranges from a median income of $30,962 (78201) to $58,666 (78230), thereby providing a unique opportunity to create a
gathering place of diverse students with different socioeconomic and racial backgrounds (See Enrollment and Demographic Projections).

Moreover, community support for our proposed model has been and remains strong within our primary attendance boundary. We prototyped the project-based component of our model through a free summer camp in 2018. Our 24-slots filled up in the first 10 hours, and over 125 families registered. After further analysis, we discovered that the bulk of registrants reside within the five zip codes that now make up our proposed primary attendance boundary. We then went door-to-door to learn more; throughout the fall of 2018, we canvassed 915 homes, making sure to target each of the five zip codes. These surveys revealed that 97% of residents desire a school where students learn through hands-on projects, and 98% of residents want a school with a strong arts program. Despite this community demand, there are no public schools (ISD or charter) within our primary attendance zone that prioritize arts or project-based learning. Most strikingly, 98% of residents stated their support for The Gathering Place proposing to open within our target geographic location. (See Outreach and Public Meetings.)

In terms of the geographic location on the Near-Northwest side, we aim to secure a campus facility that is located in the attendance zone of Longfellow Middle School, a San Antonio ISD school that has been assigned an unacceptable performance rating for the two preceding school years under TEC §39.054. Families within this zone lack access to schools with robust art and project-based programming and are also currently zoned to a school that has failed to provide a high-quality education. In alignment with TEC §12.001, The Gathering Place is needed in this community to improve student learning, increase choice, create professional opportunities, and encourage different and innovative learning methods.

1therivardreport.com/study-citys-economic-prosperity-varies-widely-by-zip-code
2healthcollaborative.net/wp-content/uploads/reports/chna-2016.pdf
3texasobserver.org/new-san-antonio-mayor-ron-nirenberg-priorities-progressives-legislature
4txschools.org
5incomebyzipcode.com

**Evaluation Criteria-Geographic Boundaries**

A strong response will:

✓ Offer realistic attendance boundaries;
✓ Provide a compelling rationale for the geographic location selected; and
✓ Provide a specific location for the charter school campus and describe a school site that will be located in the Attendance Zone of a school district-campus assigned an unacceptable performance rating under Section 39.054 for the two preceding school years (FOR ONE PRIORITY POINT).
OVERVIEW OF ANTICIPATED NEED

ENROLLMENT AND DEMOGRAPHIC PROJECTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Projected Number of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EE3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PK 4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 1</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 9</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Provide the anticipated demographics for the proposed school as well as current demographics for the Occupied District and two Contiguous Districts.

NOTE: The term “Occupied District” refers to the traditional school district in which the campus will be located. District 2 and 3 must be contiguous to the school district in which the first campus will be located. The term “First Charter Campus” refers to projected enrollment data for the first specific campus.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>First Charter Campus</th>
<th>Occupied District</th>
<th>Contiguous District 1</th>
<th>Contiguous District 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Gathering Place</td>
<td>San Antonio ISD</td>
<td>Northside ISD</td>
<td>Edgewood ISD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>90.4%</td>
<td>67.9%</td>
<td>97.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>19.2%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Islander</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or More Races</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economically Disadvantaged</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>90.7%</td>
<td>48.1%</td>
<td>93.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELL</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At-Risk</td>
<td>74.7%</td>
<td>74.7%</td>
<td>43.6%</td>
<td>73.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gifted &amp; Talented</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
OVERVIEW OF ANTICIPATED NEED
ENROLLMENT AND DEMOGRAPHIC PROJECTIONS (CONTINUED)

1. Describe the anticipated student population(s) that will be served at the proposed campus. Explain how the proposed program of instruction will address the needs of the students and their communities. Where demographic projections deviate significantly from the surrounding districts, explain the proposed demographic assumption(s).

NOTE: Student demographic data can be found by school district on the Texas Academic Performance Report (TAPR), available by right-clicking HERE.

2. Provide the proposed teacher to student ratio for each grade level served and provide a description of the process by which this ratio was determined.

Narrative Response:

The Gathering Place seeks to serve students residing on the Near-Northwest side of San Antonio, with a primary attendance zone made up of zip codes 78201, 78213, 78228, 78229, and 78230. Our recruitment plan targets students from three distinct communities (see below) that have been historically separated with the goal of creating a racially, ethnically, and socioeconomically diverse school.

One community within our primary attendance zone covers zip codes 78201 and 78228. Together, these two zip codes are 94% Hispanic and only 64% of residents have a high school diploma. (Unless otherwise noted, all data within this section has been aggregated from www.txschools.org.) The combined population of this community is 107,708 people, which includes 17,687 public school students of which 86% are on free or reduced lunch (FRL). We plan to physically locate within the boundaries of this community given that its residents experience the highest levels of economic need (as evidenced by the FRL percentage) when compared to the other two communities. Further, this community was purposely selected given its proximity to Longfellow Middle School, a San Antonio ISD school in 78228 that has been assigned an unacceptable performance rating for the past two years under TEC §39.054.

The second community within our primary attendance zone is rapidly transforming in response to unprecedented job growth related to the medical industry. It covers zip code 78229, known as the Medical Center, and has become one of the most diverse San Antonio communities, drawing in families from a variety of socioeconomic, racial, and ethnic backgrounds for job opportunities. In 2017, San Antonio saw the creation of 6,300 new healthcare jobs, with the majority within the 78229 zip code. This zip code is 53% Hispanic, 15% white, 10% African-American, and 19% Asian, and 88% of residents have a high school diploma. The population within this zip code has grown at double the rate of San Antonio over the past eight years. Out of a population of 32,217, there are currently 2,865 public school students of which 61% are on FRL.

The third community within our primary attendance zone covers zip codes 78213 and 78230 in the Dellview and Vance Jackson neighborhoods. This area was predominately white and middle class for many decades; however, over the past 10 years, there has been a surge of immigrants from various countries as well as a growing refugee population. Census data has been unreliable because of how quickly this community has changed. One of the largest elementary schools in this area, Colonies
North, has seen a doubling in the percentage of Asian students in the past 5 years, growing from 15% of the school population in the 2015-2016 school year to over 30% in the 2017-2018 school year. Across all public schools in zip codes 78213 and 78230, 75% of students are Hispanic, 13% are white, 6% are African-American, and 4% are Asian. There are a total of 88,704 residents of which 87% hold a high school diploma, and a total of 11,411 public school students of which 72% are on FRL.

Even though these three communities represented by zip codes 78201, 78213, 78228, 78229, and 78230 are contiguous within a ~5-mile radius, they have been historically segregated. In our 300+ meetings (See Mission and Vision, and Outreach and Public Meetings), community members shared their hope for equitable schools that deconstruct historic separations and simultaneously honor the culture and histories of its people. This community input served as the impetus to create a diverse school by locating at the intersection of historically divided communities. In addition, research findings support the benefits of a diverse school. The Century Foundation, one of the country’s oldest public research institutions, aggregated and synthesized the results of over 100 studies on the effects of racially and socioeconomically diverse by design schools and concluded the following:
- Students in diverse schools are significantly less likely to drop out of school;
- All students in diverse schools benefit academically, and low-income students in diverse schools outperform their low-income peers in non-diverse schools by an average of two grade levels;
- Diverse schools reduce academic and SAT achievement gaps between subgroups by 25%;
- Diverse schools help reduce racial bias and counter stereotypes;
- Working collaboratively with diverse peers improves leadership skills; and
- Diverse schools have a 3-5x return on investment over non-diverse schools.3

It is important to note that the demographics of our surrounding districts were not used for our demographic projections (See enrollment projection table at the start of this section for all data) for three reasons. First, our proposed attendance boundary encompasses the edges of four ISDs and represents approximately 42 densely populated urban square miles. Comparatively, San Antonio ISD covers 79 square miles,4 North East ISD covers 135 square miles,5 Northside ISD covers 355 square miles,6 and Edgewood ISD covers 16 square miles,7 for a total of 585 square miles that include urban, suburban and rural areas. Second, given the rapidly diversifying demographics of the Medical Center (78229), the Dellview neighborhood (78213), and the Vance Jackson neighborhood (78230) as described earlier in this section, district-wide demographics do not paint an accurate picture of neighborhood-level demographics. Third, our proposed attendance zone represents the most diverse area of San Antonio, which has unique demographics that are not reflected in district-wide data. Instead, we used the most recent (2017-2018 school year) Texas School Report Card demographic data of schools located within a 5-mile radius of our target facility location to more accurately predict our demographics. We anticipate serving a student population where 12% of students receive special education, 24% of students are English Learners (ELs), and 89% of students receive free or reduced lunch (FRL).

MEETING THE NEEDS OF OUR ANTICIPATED STUDENT POPULATION AND OUR COMMUNITY
To best serve the communities and students in zip codes 78201, 78213, 78228, 78229, and 78230, our proposed instructional program has been tailored to meet their unique needs. A few examples are highlighted below:
(1) Our educational model immerses students in project-based learning (PBL) to encourage students to explore their passions through instruction that prioritizes real-world experiences and provides students with agency over how they approach their work. During community outreach (See Outreach
and Public Meetings), families asked for a school in which their children learned through hands-on projects that were personally meaningful. Subsequently, our model addresses all Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) standards through PBL so that students master core content, while also fulfilling our community’s expressed need for a different and innovative approach to instruction that is not found at their local public schools.

(2) Our students engage in daily arts, which include music, dance, theater, and visual art. In our door-to-door surveying in our proposed attendance zone, we heard that 98% of residents desire a school that provides daily arts. Despite this demand, no public school (ISD or charter) offers daily arts for all students anywhere in our city. The arts not only serve as an elemental method of communication, an outlet for emotion and expression, and a way to connect deeply with others, but they also provide meaningful benefits that are unique to the students we aim to serve. Students build motivation and self-confidence through active learning that embraces diverse cultures and inspires creative thinking to develop the skills needed to succeed in San Antonio’s changing economy and diverse workplaces.

(3) Our inclusive educational model is designed to meet the needs of all students. For example, our bilingual program includes a bilingual certified teacher for every English Learner (EL), a Literacy Coach, and two adults in all kindergarten through fifth grade classrooms to best serve ELs.

(4) Our social-emotional learning (SEL) program supports students in our target population who have experienced trauma, are struggling with mental health issues or have encountered multiple adverse childhood experiences. Since we anticipate serving 89% students on free or reduced lunch, which represents a high degree of poverty, we also anticipate serving students that have experienced increased trauma. The National Survey of Children’s Health found that children living below the poverty level are over twice as likely to encounter three or more adverse childhood experiences, which makes them statistically more likely to experience academic and behavioral challenges. We support SEL instructional programming through: a strong social-emotional curriculum, play infused into the daily school schedule, and by leveraging a Director of SEL who oversees programming with a team of SEL counselors, social workers, and behavior interventionists.

(5) Additionally, our team of full-time counselors, therapists, and social workers allows us to meet not only academic needs, but also the social and emotional needs of our students. Our average student to counselor ratio of 173:1 is below the American Psychologist Association recommendation of 250:1 and even further below our county average of 436:1. Our ratio allows us to customize services for students and families based on their specific needs, addressing needs that may otherwise undermine academic performance.

(6) Our family engagement plan values families as partners. We recognize that families may have barriers preventing them from being as involved as they may want to be: income, language, disability, illness, work schedules, transportation, and other factors, and therefore believe it is our responsibility as a school to create various opportunities for families to be involved. We have built-in structures for relationship building, regular communication channels with families that are flexible to the needs of each family, and opportunities to provide input and feedback on strategic priorities and initiatives (See Parent Engagement), including those to promote student academic achievement.

ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS AND TEACHER TO STUDENT RATIOS
The Gathering Place is proposing to serve 378 students in our first year of operation, and 1,458 students at full-scale. Based on our unique programming (See Curriculum and Instruction), and with 31,963 public school students across the densely populated zip codes of 78201, 78213, 78228, 78229, and 78230, we believe that we will be able to fill enrollment targets each year. (See Student Recruitment for targeted enrollment strategies.)
Lastly, our student to teacher ratio is 18:1 in our first year, and then averages to 18.3:1 across our first five years of operation. While this ratio is slightly higher than the San Antonio average of 16.1 in elementary schools, our ratio calculation only includes teachers and does not take into account our full-time teaching assistants. In structuring The Gathering Place, we chose to have a slightly higher student to teacher ratio, which allows us to financially afford a teaching assistant in every K-5 classroom. Studies show that, "...when TAs are used in a focused way - to deliver structured, high-quality support to small groups or individual children - pupils make an additional 2 to 4 months’ progress." Therefore, we believe that leveraging two adults to provide small group instruction, intervention, and enrichment is better than having a smaller class size K-5 with only one adult.


### Evaluation Criteria-Enrollment and Demographic Projections

A strong response will:

- ✅ Offer realistic enrollment projections in the first year of operation;
- ✅ Cite realistic demographic projections and accurate district data;
- ✅ Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the community/student population with unique historical, cultural, social, or academic factors that drive the school’s mission/vision;
- ✅ Identify both common and unique learning needs among the anticipated student population(s) that clearly align with the proposed instructional program; and
- ✅ Propose an allowable teacher to student ratio and describe a description of the process by which this ratio was determined and supports the description with research, theory, and/or experience.
The Executive Summary should provide a concise overview of the proposed plan for the school; the outcomes you expect to achieve; the geographic and population considerations of the school environment; the challenges particular to those considerations; and the applicant team’s capacity to successfully open and operate a high-quality school given the above considerations.

(1) Anticipated Need: Describe the anticipated student population, students anticipated educational needs, and non-academic challenges the school is likely to encounter. Describe the rationale for selecting the location and targeting this student population.

(2) Mission and Vision: State the mission and vision of the proposed school. The mission is a statement of the fundamental purpose of the school, describing why it exists. The vision statement describes how the school will operate and what success looks like for students. The mission and vision statement provide the foundation for the entire proposal, and taken together, should identify the students and community to be served and illustrate what success for students will look like.

(3) Education Plan: Provide an overview of the education program of the proposed school, including major instructional methods, assessment strategies, and non-negotiables of the school model. Describe the evidence that demonstrates the school model will be successful in improving academic achievement for the targeted student population.

TGP Public Schools, the entity, is proposing to open The Gathering Place, a K-8 campus, on the Near-Northwest side of San Antonio with a proposed primary attendance zone of 78201, 78213, 78228, 78229, and 78230. The Gathering Place was conceived by co-founders Joanna Klekowicz and Ryan York. After successful careers teaching, coaching, and leading schools, Joanna and Ryan built and scaled a project-based program that grew to serve over 10,000 students in primarily Title I schools. In this work, they partnered with dozens of district and charter schools and integrated within various educational models. Through their work, they had the unique opportunity to observe the role in which schoolwide systems and structures contributed to or hindered student success and student voice. Inspired by a vision of what could be if these systemic learnings were combined with the most cutting-edge educational research, they began to turn this spark into reality.

Rooted in a deep belief that schools should be co-created with their immediate community, Joanna and Ryan then met with over 300 community members to better understand existing resources, areas of excellence within the community, and unmet needs on the Near-Northwest side. Under the guidance of the founding board, these conversations served as the starting point of authentic community engagement, which included 2 co-design sessions with local students, 3 formal public meetings, attendance at local events, door-to-door canvassing of 915 homes in the proposed primary attendance zone, and a free summer camp that served as a prototype of the proposed model.

Our community, made up of children, families, local leaders, educators, and businesses, consistently named a need for: (1) a curriculum that cultivated passion and prioritized real-world experiences; (2) schools that created nurturing environments where children were seen as individuals and felt a deep sense of belonging, and (3) an educational model in which all graduates demonstrate the ability to work collaboratively, creatively, and critically. We also heard our community’s desire for strong arts programming and learned that there was no elementary or middle school, ISD or charter, in San Antonio that offered daily arts for all students. With our community’s voice serving as the DNA of The Gathering Place...
Place, we then wove in our founding board’s expertise, Joanna and Ryan’s experience, and peer-reviewed research to develop the mission, vision, and design principles of The Gathering Place.

MISSION
Our mission is to nurture and celebrate each child’s inner-brilliance.

VISION
Our vision is to be a diverse gathering place of people and ideas with limitless collective potential.

Rooted in our belief that children are remarkable and capable of equally remarkable work, our design principles are built on three freedoms:
(1) The freedom to be through restorative practices and social-emotional learning,
(2) The freedom of expression through daily creative arts, and
(3) The freedom to explore your passions and curiosities through student-driven projects.

Students begin each day learning explicit social and emotional skills through a morning circle. Research demonstrates that social-emotional learning results in improved social and emotional skills, along with statistically significant increases in academic performance. Students continue to develop these skills in a restorative school culture, where accountability occurs by repairing harm. Next, to address our community’s stated need for robust arts programming, all K-8 students have daily arts. In K-1, students engage in immersion arts which combine elements of play and various art forms. In 2-5, students focus on performance arts, made up of dance, theater, visual art, and music; and, in 6-8, students enroll in two arts electives each semester that are designed in collaboration between students and teaching artists. Lastly, our specific model for academic learning is differentiated for different grades and includes the following non-negotiable themes: (1) students primarily learn through interdisciplinary student-driven projects that are aligned to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills standards, which have been shown to increase student achievement, engagement, and the ability to translate skills into the real-world; (2) students have daily access to high-quality literacy instruction through a balanced literacy approach which teaches reading and writing skills through culturally relevant texts; and, (3) students learn critical thinking and reasoning skills through cognitively guided instruction, which is a mathematics approach that develops logic and conceptual understanding.

Despite having the highest levels of racial and socioeconomic diversity in San Antonio, our proposed attendance zone continues to be segregated along lines of race and class. By locating on the Near-Northwest side, we work to intentionally break down historic separations in order to live out our vision to be a diverse gathering place of people and ideas with limitless collective potential. Door-to-door canvassing in our proposed attendance zone shows strong support: 100% of respondents desire a school that supports students in developing social-emotional skills; 97% of respondents desire a school where students learn through hands-on projects; and 98% of respondents desire a school with a robust arts program. Most strikingly, 98% of respondents support The Gathering Place opening within the proposed target geographic location.

1ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21291449
2rivier.edu/journal/ROAJ-Fall-2011/J575-Project-Based-Instruction-Holm.pdf
MISSION AND VISION

1. State the mission and vision of the proposed charter school. *NOTE: The application measures innovation across five attributes. An applicant should be able to demonstrate (i) relative advantage(s) over what is currently used; (ii) compatibility with the impacted population; (iii) ideas/innovations that will be learnable among those who will implement the components; (iv) usability among those who will implement; and (v) observable benefits for everyone involved.*

2. Describe the process by which the mission and vision was established. Identify all stakeholders, who contributed to the creation of the mission and vision.

3. Provide a succinct overview of how the school’s mission is aligned with the proposed instructional program. Provide any related research or experience that indicates why the applicant has chosen to use this approach among the anticipated student population. Include any innovative attributes to the proposed mission and vision.

Narrative Response:

**MISSION**
Our mission is to nurture and celebrate each child’s inner-brilliance.

**VISION**
Our vision is to be a diverse gathering place of people and ideas with limitless collective potential.

At The Gathering Place, we strongly believe that children are remarkable and are therefore capable of equally remarkable work. Our mission and vision emphasize the unique nature of each individual and illuminate the power of their skills, talents, and abilities. Instead of creating a narrow definition of what success looks and sounds like, we believe it is the role of school to create an environment where the radiant and varied dimensions that make up each child’s inner-brilliance flourish and shine. Together as a community, our school then becomes a diverse gathering place of people and ideas with limitless collective potential.

To achieve our mission and vision, our design principles are built on three freedoms:
(1) The freedom to be through restorative practices and social-emotional learning;
(2) The freedom of expression through daily creative arts; and,
(3) The freedom to explore your passions and curiosities through student-driven projects.

**MISSION DEVELOPMENT PROCESS**
The initial spark for the mission and vision of The Gathering Place was a result of the shared working experiences of co-founders Joanna Klekowicz (proposed Principal) and Ryan York (proposed...
Superintendent). Under the tutelage of the founding board, this spark grew and underwent a metamorphosis as a result of 300+ meetings with community members, 2 co-design sessions with local students, 3 formal public meetings, and door-to-door surveying of 915 residences in our proposed primary attendance zone. (See Outreach and Public Meetings.)

After teaching and coaching in large, urban districts, Joanna and Ryan originally began working together at one of the highest performing charter networks in Tennessee. There, they built the award-winning, project-based RePublic Computer Science program. Originally created for a small charter network, the program was first shared with six pilot schools in central Texas and grew to serve 10,000 students in primarily Title I schools. This experience resulted in a set of shared beliefs that inspired this proposal. The two leading tenets are: (1) each child is an inherently brilliant and complex human being, and (2) only when students are free to learn and truly invest in their work does the greatest amount of creativity and learning happen.

Next, these ideas were shared with the founding team of board members, who collectively and deeply believe that schools should be co-created alongside the community being served. This belief drove us as a founding board to develop a robust community engagement plan and mission and vision design process. This resulted in valuable input and feedback which is summarized below.

Throughout 2018, Joanna and Ryan met with over 300+ community members, including students, families, community leaders, elected officials, faith leaders, business owners, and nonprofits, in San Antonio (SA) to listen and learn. Three patterns emerged: (1) children wanted to work on things that interested them, (2) families wanted schools where their children were seen as individuals and appreciated for who they were, and (3) businesses and nonprofits wanted schools that resulted in graduates with passion and critical thinking skills. Community members also voiced concern about an overemphasis on math and reading at the cost of other equally important learning experiences.

This led to a draft mission and vision which we explored at our September 2018 board meeting with board members: Jon Hinojosa, Quincy Boyd, Janet Young, Ryan York and Joanna Klekowicz. Jon emphasized the importance of working in partnership with families to realize collective impact, to which Quincy added the significance of having an ongoing 2-way dialogue with students and families. Janet synthesized the role of freedom in a school by stating that “...freedom means a safe ground where your ideas won’t get shot down and a space where it is safe to be you.” We then refined the language of the draft mission and vision, before taking it (in English and Spanish) to the community for feedback. Later, when onboarding new board members Diego Capeletti and Jennifer Maestas, we continued to discuss the mission and vision.

Next, two co-design sessions were held with students, one with local high school students and one with college students from our local university, the University of Texas at San Antonio. Students reflected on what had been most impactful in their K-8 experiences, and what they wish had been different. In designing their dream K-8 schools, the four prevailing themes were: (1) recognizing the importance of mental health and creating a school community where everyone belongs, (2) students being allowed to follow their own passions, (3) increasing the arts, and (4) bringing families into schools so that they can share their talents with the student body.

Last, we turned to the adults within our community to gather feedback and finalize our mission and vision. We canvassed 915 homes within our proposed primary attendance boundary during which the mission and vision of The Gathering Place resonated strongly. In sum, their input revealed that: (a) 100% of residents desire a school that supports students in developing social-emotional skills, (b) 97% of residents desire a school where students learn through hands-on projects, and (c) 98% of residents desire a school with a strong arts program.
Additionally, 98% of residents support The Gathering Place proposing to open within the target geographic location. (See Outreach and Public Meetings.)

MISSION AND VISION IN ACTION
To animate our mission and vision, we encapsulated community input and feedback into three design principles: the freedom to be through social-emotional development and restorative practices, the freedom to express yourself through daily creative arts, and the freedom to explore your passions and curiosities through student-driven projects aligned to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) standards. These principles are described below:

FREEDOM TO BE
The Gathering Place prioritizes social-emotional development and restorative practices in order to create a school environment where children have the freedom to be.

Social-Emotional Learning. Through robust social-emotional development and a restorative school culture, we provide a school ecosystem in which children have the freedom to be. Social-emotional learning (SEL) has been shown to positively impact academic performance, behavior, social skills, and emotional well-being. A meta-analysis of 213 school-based SEL programs that cumulatively impacted 270,034 K-12th graders showed that students who received robust SEL programming had improved social and emotional skills, along with an 11-point increase on academic performance compared to students that have not received SEL instructional programming.

At The Gathering Place, SEL instructional programming is supported through: (1) a research-based SEL curriculum, (2) play infused into the daily school schedule, and (3) by leveraging a Director of SEL who oversees programming along with a team of SEL counselors, social workers, and behavior interventionists. Structurally, each day begins with circle, where students proactively learn social-emotional skills aligned to the five CASEL (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning) competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social-awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. Throughout the day, we then incorporate the research-based Ruler SEL curriculum from the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence. (See Curriculum and Instruction.)

Students also practice social-emotional skills during play. All K-5th grade students have recess twice a day, for 30 minutes each. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that, "...[unstructured] recess promotes social and emotional learning and development for children by offering them a time to engage in peer interactions in which they practice and role play essential social skills." They underline that unstructured play is critical for imagination, role-playing, and learning to navigate different social situations. Through the programmatic inclusion of play, research also shows that play "...enhances brain structure and function and promotes executive function (i.e., the process of learning, rather than the content), which allow[s students] to pursue goals and ignore distractions." Additionally, our SEL program supports students in our target population who have experienced trauma. In the US, 47.9% of all school-aged children have experienced at least one traumatic event in their lifetime and 22.6% have experienced ongoing trauma or multiple traumatic events. Exposure to trauma in childhood has significant impacts on behavior, academics, and social-emotional growth. Research shows that, "...children who have been exposed to four or more adverse experiences of trauma are 32 times more likely to have learning/behavioral problems than their peers with no adverse experiences," and are more likely to be placed in special education, retained, or
Therefore, to best serve our students, all staff are trained on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and how to provide trauma-informed support. (See Teacher Development.)

>>Restorative Practices. Most importantly, our SEL programming occurs in a restorative and inclusive culture. According to the Texas Education Agency (TEA), “Restorative Discipline is a prevention-oriented approach that fosters accountability and amends-making to resolve school conflicts such as bullying, truancy, and disruptive behavior.” We believe that behavior is an expression of met and unmet needs, and therefore focus on addressing root causes. Accountability comes from the community and takes the form of listening to each other, repairing harm, and creating shared agreements on how to avoid or navigate similar circumstances in the future.

In contrast, the governing approach to behavior in many schools are retributive practices, which rely on a system of accountability through punishments. Students are rewarded for good behavior, and punished for bad behavior through an escalating ladder of consequences, with suspension and expulsion being the most significant consequences. Restorative practices flip this paradigm:
- Restorative practices focus on restoration and accountability through repairing harm, instead of retribution and accountability through punishments;
- A restorative community is anchored in shared norms, instead of shared rules;
- Relationships and people are violated in a restorative community, instead of rules;
- Power is shared among all in a restorative community, instead of in an adult who has sole power;
- The offender has opportunities to make amends and express remorse;
- Restorative practices develop interpersonal skills and encourage growth, instead of developing avoidance habits and encouraging conformity;
- Restorative practices are rooted in a core belief that learning to understand the effects of one's behavior on others will influence future behavior, instead of the core belief that the fear or dislike of the pain of punishment will deter future offenses.

When describing the effects of restorative practices, the TEA states, “Studies reveal school suspensions correlate to academic failure, including higher school dropout rates. Students are not in position to learn if they are not in the classroom. In turn, suspensions affect minority students disproportionately.” In San Antonio specifically, African-American students are 5x more likely and Hispanic students are 2x more likely to be suspended than their white classmates. To serve our students equitably, we believe it is essential to have a discipline system that is markedly different than the historically retributive behavior systems in SA schools.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION
Our students have the freedom to express themselves through daily creative arts which serve as an outlet for emotion and expression, and provide meaningful benefits unique to our students.

We anticipate serving 89% students who are economically disadvantaged, many whom come from communities that have low high school graduation rates. (See Overview of Anticipated Need.) The transformational power of art and expression is best captured by the multitude of studies that show that, “Low-income students with high arts participation have a dropout rate of 4%, while their peers with low participation in the arts have a dropout rate of 22%, a 5x smaller dropout rate.” In addition, the leading local university, the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) has a growing honors program that works closely with San Antonio’s local industry. Sean Kelly, who is the program’s director, named in our August 2018 conversation with him that arts programs and programs that
Inspire creative thinking should be the most important priority areas for local schools in order to best develop students for the growing and changing economy of SA.

Our students contribute to an ongoing artistic portfolio of original work aligned to the TEKS art standards. In elementary school, our youngest children learn through immersion arts, which integrate multiple art forms and leverage student choice and play as a primary driver of how students are exposed to different art forms. In later elementary grades, students focus on performance art, alternating between dance, theater, music, and visual arts, and devoting their time to two different art forms every half-year. The National Endowment for the Arts found that frequent engagement with multiple forms of art at the elementary level leads to substantial gains in social skills, emotional regulation, and reduced anxiety and aggression.

By middle school, students and teachers work together to identify art electives that pique student and staff interest. Middle school electives, aligned to the TEKS art standards, focus on inspiring passion by connecting students with a wide array of modern art mediums including graphic design, filmmaking, cultural dance, and audio recording. In middle school, The Gathering Place prioritizes hiring local teaching artists who bring real artistic experience and expertise to the classroom. Each teaching artist offers four classes, and students vote to determine which two choices the teaching artist offers for that semester, giving students voice and ownership.

FREEDOM TO EXPLORE YOUR PASSIONS AND CURIOSITIES
Students at The Gathering Place are free to explore their passions and curiosities through student-driven projects that are rigorous and aligned to the TEKS standards. Learning remains contextual and interdisciplinary rather than stripped from the real-world and separated into silos.

Project-based learning (PBL) is a research-based approach to instruction that starts with presenting students with real and meaningful problems or questions, and then facilitating learning as students navigate potential solutions or answers. Overall, PBL has been shown to be an effective and rigorous instructional method of mastering state standards, and a comparatively stronger teaching approach than traditional methods of teaching. A meta-analysis of research between 2000-2011 has demonstrated that, “Project-based instruction in prekindergarten through 12th grade has yielded improved content learning, higher levels of engagement and more positive perceptions of the subject matter...including increases in level of student engagement, heightened interest in content, more robust development of problem-solving strategies, and greater depth of learning and transfer of skills to new situations.” PBL activates students to identify problems, ask questions, and solve problems that appear authentically in the world around them, bringing to learning a level of relevancy that does not exist when instruction is not reflective of the real world.

While PBL has been shown to positively impact all students, it has a transformative impact for students who are furthest behind. Traditionally, when students are behind academically, particularly in math and ELA, conventional instructional methods recommend doubling down on core skill instruction, often through procedural skill acquisition activities in hopes of closing achievement gaps. Gloria-Ladson Billings has found this level of procedural teaching to be particularly true and frequent for urban schools that teach primarily students of color. Critics name that PBL is an instructional method that can only be accessed after students are performing at a certain caliber in math and ELA. However, the opposite is true. In addition to its statistically significant positive effects on student achievement for all students, research, as stated above, demonstrates that students who are furthest
behind benefit the most from PBL, and experience a more rapid closing of gaps in comparison to peers who receive traditional instruction. The culmination of this research clearly demonstrates the relative advantages of PBL over traditional instructional strategies with observable benefits for all students involved.\(^{16}\)

**INNOVATIONS**

\textbf{Daily Creative Arts.} There is not a single public school in San Antonio, ISD or charter, that offers daily arts for all students; therefore, we offer a one-of-a-kind learning experience. This programming is a direct result of what we heard from families and from students in our co-design workshops as an unmet need and demonstrates compatibility with our target population.

\textbf{Teaching Artists.} We prioritize hiring teaching artists to lead our TEKS-aligned arts classes. As synthesized above, teaching artists hold bachelor’s degrees and bring industry experience into the classroom, allowing us to offer a wider variety of middle school electives due to their expertise. A 2011 study on the impact of having professional teaching artists in public schools demonstrates that not only did teaching artists outperform non-teaching artists on observed measures of efficacy like student engagement and growth, they also scored equally as well as their traditionally trained teaching colleagues after one year of instructional coaching on key measures of classroom management and instructional practices.\(^{17}\) (See Teacher Development.)

\textbf{Pop-up Community Learning Labs.} Twice a year, we host pop-up community learning labs. Students at the co-design workshops named that their dream was to see school bring their families in so that families could share their hobbies, talents, and culture with the student body. Additionally, our board members emphasized the importance of working in partnership with families and having 2-way dialogues. As a result, families may volunteer to lead student workshops and have the opportunity to share their talents and culture. (See Parent Engagement and Financial Workbook Assumption Tab Line 103.)

\textbf{School-wide Public Showcases.} All TEKS-aligned project cycles conclude in public showcases with authentic audiences which serve as a real-world assessment of student learning. Twice per year, these take the form of school-wide interactive showcases where the broader community is invited to see students present their work. This past summer, we prototyped our school model through a summer camp open to 24 children, which culminated in a public showcase that was attended by over 100 community members. (See Outreach and Public Meetings.) Similar to the national leaders in PBL, like High Tech High, and art, like the School for Arts and Enterprise, we expect community audiences of over 1,000 at our school-wide public showcases, which is a first in San Antonio.\(^{19}\)

\textbf{Extended Planning Time for Teachers.} By providing teachers with twice as much daily planning time as traditional school models (which is separate from their 30-minute off-duty lunch), our teachers have ample time to align all project cycles to the TEKS, provide personalized feedback on student work, and collaborate through professional-learning communities that meet three times a week during the school day and are supported by our instructional coaches. This creates the frequent support structure through which we ensure our innovative school model is both learnable and usable for all of our staff.

\(^1\)ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21291449
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16jstor.org/stable/749740?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents
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18Numbers were shared by Tricia Manzo at The School of Arts and Enterprise during our September 2018 school visit, and by teachers at High Tech High during our October 2018 residency.

Evaluation Criteria-Mission and Vision

A strong response will:

✓ Articulate the mission and vision clearly and concisely;
✓ Demonstrate five attributes of innovation;
✓ Outline a clear and robust decision-making process for the creation of the mission and vision, identifying a significant contribution and buy-in from Board members; and
✓ Rationalize the approach that has been proposed for the anticipated student population.
1. Describe the proposed educational program(s), including Special Education and Bilingual Education/English as a second language. Summarize any core elements and/or non-negotiables. Explain the specific curricular programs that the applicant proposes and the ways in which the charter staff, Board members, and others will use these programs to maintain high expectations and continuous improvement. Describe how the proposed curriculum will align with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills standards. *NOTE: As stated in TEC 28.002 (b-1) - (b-4), charter schools may not adopt the common core state standards to comply with the requirement to provide instruction in the essential knowledge and skills.*

2. Rationalize the use of the proposed curriculum to meet both the general and unique needs of the target population and community.

3. Describe any specific instructional strategies or methodologies to be utilized and rationalize the use of these strategies with the proposed curricular model.

4. Describe the plan and schedule to evaluate the proposed curriculum and instructional strategies.

5. Discuss any plans to offer special programs or extracurricular activities and provide detailed information on each service. If no programs or activities will be offered, provide the rationale for that decision. *NOTE: Open-Enrollment Charter Schools may not charge “blanket” activity fees. Additional information governing tuition and fee restrictions can be found by right clicking HERE.*

Narrative Response:

At The Gathering Place, curriculum creates the structure through which students discover their passions, develop knowledge, and build skills. We believe that deep, transferable learning and continuous improvement happen when content, aligned to the TEKS standard, is taught through context in a setting with high expectations. Therefore, our curriculum involves relevant and interdisciplinary problems, authentic assessments, and the freedom for children to explore.

The proposed educational and instructional model below has been designed in response to input from our community, peer-reviewed research, and experience. Our community expressed a desire for: (a) relevant and authentic work that is connected to the real world and is personally interesting to students, (b) strong arts programming, (c) a focus on social-emotional development, and (d) an environment that cultivates passion and critical thinking skills. In evaluating existing educational and instructional models in our geographic boundaries, we did not find any public school (ISD or charter) that incorporated these elements. We found a handful of schools that were implementing PBL, like the Advanced Learning Academy, an in-district charter school within San Antonio ISD (SAISD) and Lamar Elementary, an SAISD school. We've visited both campuses, met with their principals, and seek to build collaborative relationships so that we may share PBL best practices. Lastly, there is no public school (ISD or charter) in San Antonio that has a focus on daily arts for all students. Therefore, the proposed educational model is unique to SA's educational ecosystem.
Our curriculum, which is fully aligned to TEKS standards through backwards planning, is defined through 5 research-based components: (1) high-quality PBL, (2) explicit English Language Arts and Reading, (3) conceptual mathematics, (4) daily arts, and (5) SEL. Each of these contributes to maintaining high expectations and continuous improvement for all students, including students with Individual Education Programs (IEPs), 504 plans, and identified English Learners (ELs).

HIGH-QUALITY INSTRUCTION ALIGNED TO THE TEKS THROUGH PROJECT-BASED LEARNING

Overview. The word “project” has become an inexact noun in education, oftentimes conflating two very distinct ideas. It is conventionally used in education to describe a hands-on task that occurs after learning has concluded and has the following characteristics: (a) follows a set of directions, (b) end goals for students are identical, (c) is turned in for a grade and assessed against an exemplar, and (d) could not be used in the real world to solve real-world problems. These types of projects are not project-based learning.

Project-based learning (PBL) is characterized by: (a) a driving question that is complex, occurs in the real world, and has no simple answer, (b) open-endedness where students pursue their own passions and make choices, (c) public sharing to an authentic audience and graded against a rubric that is specific to the project and aligned to the TEKS, and (d) could and often is used in the real world to solve real problems. For example, this is the difference between students creating a PowerPoint and diorama of the local ecosystem versus a PBL cycle where students design potential solutions for the abandoned lot near their school, prototype their proposed solutions, and pitch their ideas to city officials. Multiple studies have shown that students, including those furthest behind from grade level proficiency, who learn content through PBL outperform peers who do not learn through a PBL approach. For example, a 2016 study shows that 5th graders who learned through PBL outperformed peers who learned through direct instruction by 39% on state assessments; additionally, in a study of an ISD in southern Texas, students who engaged in PBL as the primary mode of instruction outperformed their non-PBL peers in all reporting categories in math and reading on the STAAR, demonstrating that high-quality PBL leads to higher levels of student mastery of TEKS standards.

The Buck Institute of Education (BIE) is one of the leading authorities in PBL. They traversed the nation studying the most rigorous and effective PBL programs in the country, and aggregated their findings into an international PBL framework called the “High-Quality Project-Based Learning Framework”. At The Gathering Place, this PBL Framework continually informs the design of project cycles through which our students master the TEKS standards and demonstrate continuous improvement.

TEKS-aligned Curriculum Creation. The nature of high-quality PBL requires teachers to create their own TEKS-aligned project cycles that are meaningful, relevant, and customized for their students. At The Gathering Place, we have committed considerable resources to ensure that our teachers are well trained to masterfully write, execute, and reflect upon high-quality project-based units that are aligned to the TEKS. First, we have budgeted to partner with BIE to provide a comprehensive, multi-day immersion training into PBL for all teachers during their first year of service at The Gathering Place. (See Financial Workbook Assumption Tab Line 105.) In addition to a 30-year track record, BIE has deep familiarity of the TEKS standards, and supports schools like: Meridian World Schools in Round Rock, TX, rated an “A” on the Texas School Report Card, as well as Advanced Learning Academy and Lamar Elementary of SAISD, two local campuses that have begun to pilot PBL learning three hours a week. We have budgeted $1,000/teacher for project supplies and tools. (See Financial Workbook Assumptions Tab Line 93). Second, our proposed leaders, Joanna and Ryan, were selected into the...
prestigious NSCF fellowship out of High Tech High, one of the highest-performing, project-based K-12 school systems in the country. Through the fellowship, comprised of three onsite residencies, monthly expert panels, and mentorship, they have been able to learn from High Tech High’s 18 years of experience and educational programming, which include 100% high school graduation and 96% college acceptance rates.\(^6\)

Lastly, we have built a schedule that provides approximately double the amount of planning time than conventionally found in surrounding districts. While teachers in nearby districts typically receive 45 minutes of planning time per day, our teachers receive double that amount per day, as well as a 30-minute duty-free lunch. We have designed the day to support collaboration structures amongst teachers, which was named by High Tech High principals and teachers as the single most important factor to successfully writing high-quality PBL cycles that are aligned to state standards. We have also ensured time for coaching and professional development during those planning periods to support teachers with specific strategies tied to aligning projects to the TEKS standards, including backwards planning and creating assessments that measure TEKS-mastery. (See Teacher Development section.)

»Core Elements of a High-Quality Project. The BIE multi-year study concluded that a rigorous PBL framework contains a set of research-based core components that drive all instructional planning. The Gathering Place ensures that students master the TEKS standards through the implementation of these components, which include the following:
- Intellectual Challenge and Accomplishment. A high-quality project is a sustained unit of study where students engage with rigorous and complex problems aligned to TEKS standards, including English Language Arts and Reading, Math, Science, and Social Studies. For example, instead of simply learning to calculate the hypotenuse of a triangle, students may build a working ADA compliant ramp for a community organization that is safe, cost-efficient, and responsive to user needs.
- Authenticity of Work. Jean Piaget famously wrote, “Each time one prematurely teaches a child something he could have discovered himself, that child is kept from inventing it and consequently from understanding it completely.”\(^7\) Student motivation is one of the key drivers of deep learning.
- Public Product. Part of the human experience is connecting and sharing with others. TEKS-aligned projects are assessed through public showcases where students engage with an authentic audience, be it a panel of experts, their community, or consumers.
- Collaboration. A recent nationwide study asked 400 employers to identify the most important competencies they sought in their workers. Findings revealed that the ability to work in a team was the most highly prized employee asset.\(^8\) Increasingly in the modern workplace, tasks are completed by project-focused teams rather than unconnected workers, making the ability to learn from and collaborate with others a global priority.\(^9\) Learning to organically navigate disagreements, compromise, and sustain healthy relationships, is a skill set that is valuable now and into the future.
- Project Management. High-quality projects require students to develop the executive skills needed to manage the open-ended, complex, and messy nature of real-world problems. Students learn to set goals, track progress, and adapt. The more students develop project management skills, the more independent they become as learners, enabling them to bring ideas into reality.
- Reflection. Reflection is a core metacognitive strategy where students identify strengths and opportunities for growth and build perspective on the interchange between themselves and others.

»The Six Stages of a Project Cycle. Projects span the length of a trimester, and follow six stages:
(1) Explore. Students gather info, develop background knowledge and explore a question or problem.
(2) Brainstorm. Students brainstorm potential solutions, approaches, or ways to mitigate a problem.
(3) Create a project plan. Students create a project plan by setting interim and final goals, backwards planning, and outlining project actions. They then determine if they work independently or collaboratively, how project responsibilities are divided up, and identify resources to leverage.

(4) Manage project components. Students complete their plan and engage in cycles of feedback, including rough drafts, peer discussion, and prototypes, closely mirroring real project management.

(5) Public product. Students craft and publicly present a product to demonstrate their learning and illustrate their solution. As an authentic assessment, it can take various forms: papers, reports, artistic showcases, websites, apps, demonstrations, performances, 3D models, physical prototypes.

(6) Reflection. Students reflect on processes, workflow, and strengths and opportunities for growth.

- PBL in special education and bilingual programming. Our special education and bilingual programming (See Special Populations) are inclusive and built to recognize and cultivate assets. During high-quality PBL, all students have unique goals and tasks. Research shows that this personalized and differentiated approach is one of the many reasons why students with disabilities show the largest gains in project-based models. Student IEP goals are embedded into their projects, creating a seamless and purposeful experience for students with disabilities. Next, the collaborative nature of PBL also means students spend more time speaking with peers than in most traditional curricula. This approach is at the center of Stanford's groundbreaking research on “Learning English in Action”, which determined that the best and most effective environment for English Learners to develop both social and academic language is a highly collaborative learning environment where students spend the majority of their time discussing authentic work with their classmates.

- Operationalizing PBL. To best operationalize PBL, we leverage Project Foundry for organizational efficiency and streamlined communication. Project Foundry is a cloud-based learning management and student portfolio system that allows for students to work through standards at their own pace and in a non-linear fashion, and which is used by leading PBL schools, like Avalon Schools in Minnesota, which serves 49% students in special education and annually outperforms their district and state. Students see and track their own progress, and teachers provide direct feedback aligned to the TEKS standards through the platform as well. It also serves as a storage vehicle for project portfolios, allowing students and staff to deeply analyze work. Importantly, it works with early elementary students where teachers drive the portfolio process and grows with children until the process is mainly driven by students in upper middle school.

**EXPLICIT ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND READING ALIGNED TO THE TEKS STANDARDS**

Our high-quality PBL curriculum is interdisciplinary and aligned to TEKS standards for all content areas including English Language Arts and Reading (ELA/R). At The Gathering Place, we believe that ELA/R encompasses a set of skills that are universally critical for all children and require explicit instruction. Therefore, we have also built in an hour of explicit ELA/R instruction each day and utilize balanced literacy. As a result of numerous and replicable studies, The National Reading Panel, International Reading Association, and National Council of Teachers of English all recommend a balanced literacy approach to teaching ELA/R. Our balanced literacy program leverages several research-based, rigorous literacy curricula that are aligned to the TEKS standards. Program components include:

1. Scaffolded Reading. Through scaffolded reading, students learn the mechanics of reading and develop comprehension of complex, diverse, and culturally responsive texts that have been differentiated for each student's reading level. Scaffolded reading is comprised of:
   a. Read Aloud and Phonics Instruction. Teacher-driven read alouds and group discussions of shared text enable students to learn new reading and decoding strategies through teacher and peer
modeling. We use Reading A-Z as our primary reading program for read alouds. (See Financial Workbook Assumption Tab Line 93 for budgeted costs for supplies and tools.)
b. Guided reading. Students work in small groups with a teacher to read shared texts that have been differentiated based on their reading level. We use Fountas and Pinnell (F&P) for guided reading. (See Financial Workbook Assumptions Tab Line 95 for F&P books and Line 100 for assessment licenses.)
c. Independent Reading. A meta-analysis of over 50 reading research studies, found that "...the single greatest factor in reading achievement (even above socio-economics) was reading volume." Students engage in daily independent reading through fiction and nonfiction books that are culturally relevant. We have budgeted $25/student/year to purchase additional books, for a total of $9,450 in our first year. (See Financial Workbook Assumptions Tab Line 95.)
d. Explicit Vocabulary Instruction. This is essential for all students, including EL students. We leverage Vocabulary A-Z’s word study program for explicit vocabulary development. All certified bilingual teachers, as well as all teachers and teaching assistants, are trained in SDAIE teaching strategies for EL students. (See Teacher Development and Special Populations.)

(2) Scaffolded Writing. Through scaffolded writing, students engage in multiple writing opportunities that are coupled with high-quality feedback aligned to the TEKS standards. This includes:
a. Modeled Writing. We leverage the Handwriting without Tears program to teach our K-1 students foundational handwriting skills. As students master letter writing and paper organization, they transition to Learning A-Z’s modeled writing program which incorporates both paper and digital learning environments. (See Financial Workbook Assumptions Tab Line 93 and 95.)
b. Shared Writing. This is a powerful tool for all students, and especially impactful for ELs. Teachers use the Learning A-Z program to work 1:1 with students as they navigate core writing structures.
c. Guided and Independent Writing. We leverage the Lucy Calkins’ Writer’s Workshop approach to engage students in increasingly complex writing tasks connected to authentic projects and issues, receiving multiple rounds of iterative feedback from peers and teachers.

(3) Scaffolded Discussion. We incorporate ELA/R TEKS standards into scaffolded class discussions.
a. Close Reading. In this pedagogical strategy, students examine a piece of text deeply, reading it multiple times for evidence and discuss it with peers to make further connections. Close reading is introduced as 3rd graders transition from learning to read to reading to learn.
b. Socratic Discussion. This is a protocol for scaffolding increasingly student-driven conversations around a driving question, where students use texts and evidence to support opinions and claim.

CONCEPTUAL MATHEMATICS
It is critical for students to conceptually understand mathematics, yet much of modern-day math has overemphasized calculation at the expense of comprehension. At The Gathering Place, we align projects directly to math TEKS standards, which are supplemented with a daily block dedicated to developing conceptual understanding of math and logic. (See School Calendar.) This includes:

(1) Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI). CGI is an approach to math that focuses on problem-solving and conceptual understanding of foundational number sense. Peer-reviewed studies over the past 30 years have consistently shown that students who learn math through a CGI approach perform better on state assessments, retain their understanding of math for longer, and are much more equipped to transfer what they’ve learned to new and increasingly complex problems. Instead of giving students a procedure, and then asking students to practice on similar problems, CGI introduces a problem that students approach independently using multiple strategies that ends with a whole class discussion. Students draw on informal knowledge, and increasingly construct more sophisticated understanding through the use of manipulatives, peer collaboration, and teacher modeling and facilitation.
(2) Data-Driven Instruction and Intervention. Based on TEKS-aligned data collected throughout the project cycle, and in conjunction with data collected during CGI, students have targeted and regular small group instruction, intervention, or remediation by their lead teacher. (See Assessment and Academic Progress Monitoring.) Additionally, when needed, teachers leverage Khan Academy, a free online resource, to provide additional adaptive learning goals for students.

SCIENCE AND SOCIAL STUDIES
All science and social studies TEKS standards are covered and mastered through high-quality, interdisciplinary projects during two daily project blocks. As discussed earlier in this section, this allows students to engage in science and social studies TEKS standards in a way that is relevant and applicable to the real world, strengthening their acquisition of knowledge and skills. (See A Day in the Life which exemplifies mastery of science and social studies TEKS standards through projects.)

SPECIAL EDUCATION, AND ENGLISH LEARNERS (ELs)
Our model is uniquely designed to best serve our anticipated population of students with disabilities (12%) and English Learners (24%). In each K-5 classroom, there is a lead teacher and a teaching assistant which allows for daily data-driven, small group instruction aligned to the TEKS standards. Additionally, our special education teachers push in to support students with disabilities, unless pull-out interventions are stipulated in an IEP. (See Special Populations.) We have also budgeted for contracted services for speech, psychologist services, and occupational/physical therapy to support a continuum of services. (See Contracted Services and Financial Workbook Assumptions Tab Line 84.) Next, each student who has been identified as an EL has a bilingual certified teacher who leverages best practices that support making connections between a student’s home language and English. Lastly, our teaching staff is supported by a Literacy Coach who provides targeted literacy coaching and professional development for staff.

THE ARTS
San Antonio is a community rich in the arts. In its 10-year strategic plan called SA2020, San Antonio demonstrated the importance of art to the community when it identified arts and culture as one of its eleven cause areas. A walk through most neighborhoods includes beautiful murals, eclectic and artistic houses, and numerous local art studios and galleries. While arts and culture are highly revered in the community, there is not a single public arts elementary or middle school (ISD or charter) in SA and few free public arts programs for students in the city. To best honor the richness of the arts and culture in SA, our art curriculum is teacher-generated and aligned to the TEKS fine arts standards.

Throughout elementary school, students have access to dance, theater, music, and visual art each year. Each arts class emphasizes creativity, the creation of art pieces, weaves in the local culture of our students and our city, and culminate in art showcases. By middle school, arts classes become choice-based. Per our Financial Workbook and Job Descriptions (See Attachment E3), we have budgeted for six teaching artists in middle school. Each teaching artist is trained on the arts TEKS and offers two separate TEKS-aligned electives each semester. We hire for a range of artistic skills including classic and modern arts. For example, a typical semester may contain culinary arts, audio recording, mariachi, film making, graphic design, or other artistic classes. We have budgeted $1,500/teacher for art supplies and tools. (See Financial Workbook Assumptions Tab Line 93.) Lastly, we work with our local arts community to bring in professionals and college students to provide our students with the opportunity to learn from working artists. We have established a relationship with the Southwest School of the Arts, the DoSeum, and Say Si. (See Attachment FOG3.)
SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL)

As Aristotle summarized, "Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all."\textsuperscript{16} Strong character, empathy, and a healthy understanding of emotions and conflict resolution are prioritized in our SEL programming, which is uniquely important to serving our target community. At The Gathering Place, for SEL, we use the Ruler curriculum from the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence to support all students' character development. (See Financial Workbook Assumptions Tab Line 105.) This curriculum is supported by CASEL, the largest SEL organization in the nation, and is based in research showing that as a result of Ruler implementation, students have better academic performance, less depression and anxiety, and are less likely to bully.\textsuperscript{18} Within our restorative justice approach to school culture (See Mission and Vision, and School Culture), the Ruler curriculum scaffolds social-emotional skill development so that our classroom communities thrive.

EVALUATION OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

The purpose of evaluating curriculum and instructional strategies is to identify its strengths, weaknesses, and to determine if adjustments are necessary to better meet students' needs. Teachers work with the Principal and Director of Curriculum and Instruction (DCI) to informally evaluate the curriculum throughout the academic year by reviewing student work samples, resources, and assessment data to ensure curriculum and instructional strategies are effectively leading to growth and achievement. Annually upon receiving STAAR results, the curriculum and instructional strategies are reviewed formally by the Superintendent, Principal, as well as specialists beginning in the year they join our staff, including the DCI, Literacy Coach, PBL Coach, Director of SEL, and Director of Special Education. All review findings are shared with the Academic Committee of the Board to evaluate the curriculum against academic performance indicators. Their evaluation determines success or necessary realignment of the curriculum for the subsequent year.

Metrics to evaluate the curriculum and instructional strategies include but are not limited to:
- Student grade level proficiency of TEKS standards and growth on the STAAR overall and disaggregated by subgroups including race, disability, gender, and socioeconomic status;
- Student grade level proficiency and growth on the STAAR on comparison to peer districts;
- Student performance on social and emotional skills development surveys (See School Culture);
- Annual suspension and expulsion rates (to help evaluate SEL curriculum);
- Quality of student project portfolios measured by BIE’s High-Quality PBL rubric; and,
- Reading growth and mastery as measured by Fountas and Pinnell.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMMING

We have two primary strategies for offering extracurricular activities and programming: (1) Excel Beyond the Bell is a collective impact program serving the San Antonio community through out-of-school-time (OST) programs, and is dedicated to ensuring that every child has access to quality out of school time programs that help them thrive.\textsuperscript{19} It currently has 43 separate organizations that offer after-school and summer programming for students in nearby schools. Programs include athletics, homework help, mentoring programs, a youth orchestra, cultural institution explorations, technology workshops and more. Programming is offered at no-cost to families, and sometimes includes free transportation. We work to connect families who are interested in afterschool programming with Excel Beyond the Bell so that they are aware of their options, and choose the programs that best fit their family's specific needs; and (2) We offer after-school programming (based on survey findings and student interest) at The Gathering Place, staffed by our teachers at no cost to families. Teachers
earn a $4,000 stipend to lead after-school programming throughout the academic year. (See Financial Workbook Assumptions Tab Line 113.)

1 bie.org/?ACT=160&file_id=2166&filename=PBL_Evidence_Matters_.pdf
2 definedlearning.com/research-report
3 files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1105713.pdf
4 bie.org/blog/hqpbl_update_less_than_one_year_to_go
5 txschools.org/schools/246801001/overview
6 hightechhigh.org/lcap/goal/ensure-college-access-persistence/
10 jstor.org/stable/749740?origin=JSTOR-pdf
12 avalonschool.org/about-us/accountability
14 bookwhisperer.com/2015/02/08/ive-got-research-yes-i-do-ive-got-research-how-about-you
15 ncsiwa.wceruw.org/publications/reports/RR00-3.PDF
16 www.sa2020.org/progress/
17 goodreads.com/quotes/95080-educating-the-mind-without-educating-the-heart-is-no-education
18 ei.yale.edu/evidence/
19 beyondthebellsa.org/

Evaluation Criteria-Curriculum and Instruction

A strong response will:
✓ Distinguish itself from educational/ instructional models currently implemented within the geographic boundaries;
✓ Describe a foundation curriculum which clearly demonstrates alignment to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) standards;
✓ Align the proposed curriculum with the general and unique needs of the target population and community using supportive research, theory and/or experience;
✓ Describes specific instructional strategies and rationalizes their use with the proposed curricular model, supported by research, theory, an/or experience;
✓ Describe a consistent and robust plan to evaluate the proposed curriculum and instructional strategies; including but not limited to, time lines, stakeholders, staff positions, and identifiable metrics that will determine success and/or necessary realignment;
✓ Account for specific supplies, technology, and tools that will be needed to facilitate successful implementation of the program, with associated budget cost(s); and
✓ Present well designed extracurricular activities and programs.
1. Discuss plans to implement all required screenings, accommodations, instruction, and placements for students requiring special education. **NOTE: Federal IDEA law requires that all children with disabilities residing in the state, who need special education and related services, must be identified, located, and evaluated (Child Find) and that charter schools provide a continuum of alternative placements to students with identified disabilities. Additional information about IDEA requirements is available by right-clicking HERE.**

2. Discuss plans to ensure that English Language Learners will be taught the academic English they will need for school purposes and will be assessed to measure progress in learning the English language. Include specific reference to budget amounts that will facilitate compliance with English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) and the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS).

3. Discuss plans to provide any screenings, accommodations, instruction, and/or placements for Gifted and Talented students. Include specific reference to budget amounts that will facilitate the proposed activities. If the proposal will not be providing specific services for Gifted and Talented students, provide a clear rationale for the exclusion of such services.

4. Identify the person(s), position(s), and/or entities that will be responsible for implementing services for Special Education students, English Language Learners, and Gifted and Talented students with fidelity and describe education and experience requirements for these roles.

**Narrative Response:**

The Gathering Place is committed to ensuring all students have access to equal educational opportunities pursuant to state and federal law, receive a free and appropriate education (FAPE) and that students learn in the least restrictive environment (LRE) in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Title II of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) - as amended, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (section 504), and Subchapters A and B of Texas Education Code (TEC) Chapter 29, and TEA Rules for special populations found in 19 TAC Chapter 89, which collectively support our mission to nurture and celebrate each child's inner-brilliance.

**SERVING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

We anticipate that 12% of our student population will receive special education services. (See Enrollment and Demographic Projections.) We take Child Find obligations seriously, are aware of increased TEA emphasis on identifying and serving students with disabilities, and recognize that all admission decisions are made without knowledge of any specific student disability. It is possible, and we are prepared to serve a greater or lower percentage of students with disabilities. We stand ready to meet legal obligations and educational needs of all students enrolling in The Gathering Place. To that end, after students accept an offer of admission to enroll at The Gathering Place, we request information on whether the student currently has an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 plan. When possible, this happens during the summer before the school year. We follow state and federal law on transferring schools, new enrollments and IEP implementation, and are aware of TEA guidance that transfer protocols and deadlines do not apply to students enrolling in a charter school from an ISD at the beginning of the school year. We do, however, work to form positive information sharing arrangements with local school districts to facilitate the transfer of student files.
We invite families of children already on an IEP or 504 plan prior to the start of the school year for a voluntary meeting to learn more about their child and their experience at previous schools, so that we may best serve each child and ensure that ARD/504 meetings are effective and positive for all involved parties. For families who are not able to meet over the summer, or who transfer into us throughout the school year, we contact previous schools (if applicable) and continue family outreach so that we may best serve each child according to their IEP or 504 plan.

During summer professional development (PD), the Principal, Director of Special Education, and certified special education teacher(s) meet with all teachers to review IEPs, 504 plans and related accommodations and modifications for students in their cohort. Training is provided for specific student disabilities to ensure all students with an IEP or 504 plan receive services from day one. We anticipate contracting with a special education service provider, such as Assessment Intervention Management (A.I.M.), or another experienced and reputable statewide special education service organization to support a full continuum of specialized services, including occupational therapy, physical therapy, school psychology, speech and other supports. We adopt procurement policies and procedures in compliance with EDGAR (federal regulations) and TEA rule and guidelines for any such contracts paid for with federal funds. (See Contracted Services.)

We fully comply with Child Find, and seek out teacher/administration recommendations, family requests, and monitoring conducted by certified special education teachers to identify students who may have a qualifying disability and who may need or otherwise benefit from an IEP in order to receive FAPE. If a student is suspected of having a disability and who may qualify under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, we, without delay, seek parental consent for conducting a Full Individual Evaluation (FIE) and conduct the evaluation as required by law. The Gathering Place pays for and contracts or conducts the needed evaluation related to suspected or reported disability and needs. Once testing is complete, the Admissions, Review, and Dismissal Committee (ARD), which is composed of a member of the school leadership team, a certified special education teacher and/or the Director of Special Education, the child’s lead classroom teacher, and a parent or guardian, meets to determine qualification and develop the student’s IEP, which is reviewed annually or otherwise as needed to ensure the IEP is appropriate and effective. In addition to complying with all IDEA requirements associated with identifying students in need of special education services and establishing their IEPs, we also comply with Section 504 which requires schools to identify all students who, “...(i) have a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; or (ii) have a record of such an impairment; or (iii) be regarded as having such an impairment.” Our Director of Social Emotional Learning oversees all 504 plans.

Inclusion. The Gathering Place believes fully in an inclusive school culture, which means complying fully with IDEA regulations that students be placed in their least restrictive environment (LRE). Whenever possible, students receive required accommodations, modifications, and services in the classroom with their peers. While inclusion is our model, we are aware that we must provide a full continuum of placements and services to students based on their individualized needs for FAPE. For example, students are pulled out of the mainstream classroom for specific interventions and/or services that they cannot get full access to within the general education setting and that are required by their IEP, which may include services like speech, counseling, occupational therapy, physical therapy and/or intensive academic, executive functioning, and life skills interventions.
Certified and/or Licensed Staff. Our Director of Special Education, as well as our special education teachers and paraprofessionals/aids, hold appropriate special education certifications where required by state law. Additionally, our Director of SEL is a licensed clinician.

Progress Monitoring. There are four stages of progress monitoring that take place for each student with an IEP in addition to regular formative and summative progress monitoring that take place for all students in the classroom. (See Assessment and Progress Monitoring.)
1. Regular communication between the guardian, lead teacher, special education team, and other members of the student’s support team (if applicable).
2. Formal data collection and review of progress towards IEP benchmark goals three times per year by the student’s certified special education teacher. Data is shared with all teachers that work with that specific student, and with families during parent-teacher conferences.
3. Annual IEP meeting to review and update IEP goals which involve the Admissions, Review, and Dismissal Committee (ARD) and follow all laws laid out in the IDEA Act and related Texas laws.
4. A triennial reevaluation where the entire IEP is reevaluated to determine if the student’s needs have changed. Additionally, a guardian may request a formal reevaluation at any time.

Process for Disputes. A guardian can dispute the school’s successful implementation of their child’s IEP, the school’s adherence to ensuring their child is receiving FAPE in their LRE, or a decision made by their child’s ARD committee at any time. After attempting to resolve the issue with The Gathering Place, the parent and/or school can ask for mediation. The Gathering Place always works with families to urgently and responsibly resolve any issues; however, families have the right to skip mediation or if unhappy with the mediation, seek a due process hearing before a Special Education Hearing Officer assigned by the TEA. All parents of students in special education are provided copies of TEA’s procedural safeguards. We also train staff on these safeguards and due process rights.

Budget Allowances. Based on our anticipated student enrollment, estimates from service providers and/or nearby schools, we have budgeted for the following in Year 1: a special education teacher ($51,500 plus benefits), occupational and physical therapy ($5,551.88), speech services ($9,450), psychological services ($5,551.88), compliance audits ($4,885.65), transportation for students whose IEPs require it ($12,000), and supplies to provide accommodations and modifications ($11,104). As The Gathering Place grows, these allocations scale accordingly. (See Financial Workbook Assumptions Tab Lines 84 and 94.) We also recognize that these are purely estimates and that actual expenditures to meet student needs and provide FAPE may be significantly more or less.

SERVING ENGLISH LEARNERS (ELs)
The Gathering Place provides an inclusive learning environment. The primary components of our model have been informed by research-based structural systems that best support ELs. Our model includes an hour of dedicated literacy instruction every day with data-driven small group reading and writing interventions, phonics instruction through our balanced literacy approach, and certified bilingual teachers. (See Curriculum and Instruction.)

We anticipate that 24% of our student population will be ELs, and therefore project having more than 20 students who are classified ELs in each grade level. As a result, in compliance with TEC §29.053(c), students identified as ELs are in a classroom with a bilingual-certified teacher with the bilingual program implemented per state law and TEA guidelines. While all teachers at The Gathering Place are trained on specially designed academic instruction in English (SDAIE) best practices which support ELs.
in mastering academic English (See Teacher Development), our bilingual certified teachers ensure that ELs’ current level of mastery in their home language is not only honored and celebrated, but used to develop mastery of both social and academic English.

»Enrollment. Our enrollment process is inclusive, making it clear to all that all students are welcome, including ELs. All marketing, family communication, and essential forms are provided in English, Spanish, and other languages depending on community need. We also communicate to families and prospective families that ELs have a bilingual certified teacher.

»Language Proficiency Assessment Committee. The Gathering Place, in compliance with TAC §89.1220, establishes and operates a Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC). The committee includes a certified bilingual educator, a transitional language educator, at least one parent of an EL, and a campus administrator in accordance with TEC §29.063. (Please note per our Job Descriptions in Attachment E3, the Literacy Coach is required to have a bilingual certification which enables them to serve as the transitional language educator on the LPAC.) The campus administrator assigned to the school LPAC is also the campus administrator responsible for overseeing The Gathering Place’s bilingual program. Once formed, the LPAC committee goes through the state approved training provided on TEA’s website. The LPAC’s primary responsibilities adhere to those in TEC §29.063. (Due to limited space, the responsibilities are not listed here.)

»Identification. After enrollment, the LPAC ensures that a home language survey (HLS) is provided in both English and the family’s home language. The HLS and its administration are compliant with TAC §89.1215. A bilingual certified staff member reviews each HLS and identifies students who should take the state approved assessment for EL identification. The LPAC uses the results from the Language Assessment System (LAS) to determine whether the student has been classified as a student with limited English Proficiency and their appropriate placement. If a student has or potentially has a disability, other sources of data may also be used to determine the appropriate placement, including recommendations from that student’s ARD Committee. If a student is classified an EL, the LPAC gives a written notice of the student’s classification to their parent/guardian. The written notice is provided in both English and in the parent/guardian’s home language. Parents have the option to opt out of The Gathering Place’s bilingual services.

»EL Services. EL students are placed in a classroom with a heterogeneous group of EL and non-EL students, and with a bilingual certified teacher. In our PBL model, most of the teacher to student instructional communication is either 1:1 or comes through small group facilitation. Our bilingual teachers determine the ratio of home language to academic English based on students’ specific needs. They also plan and execute specialized small group lessons for EL students during the daily literacy block that focus on the students’ English language development aligned to both the TEKS standards and the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS), leveraging SDAIE best practices. Additional 1:1 and small group support are provided, as needed, throughout the day.

»Assessment. The Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) annually measures listening, speaking, reading, and writing to determine whether ELs continue to need and benefit from our bilingual program. The assessments used and the subsequent determination regarding EL placement are made by the LPAC. After a student has exited the bilingual program, we monitor their language progress and performance for two years and report data regarding their
performance to TEA. In accordance with TEC §28.002(a)(1), if a student fails any course during the first two years after exiting the bilingual program, they are reassessed by the LPAC committee.

Program Evaluation. The LPAC is responsible for the annual evaluation of the EL program. The evaluation consists of family and student surveys, classroom observations, Fountas & Pinnell reading data, formative assessments used to determine placement, and TELPAS results. Based on that data, the LPAC hears any recommendations to changes in the bilingual program and makes the necessary decisions to implement changes they feel will best help the program continuously improve.

SERVING TO DEVELOP THE GIFTS AND TALENTS OF ALL CHILDREN
Our mission is to nurture and celebrate each child’s inner-brilliance. We are committed to ensuring that all students receive a high-quality education that is tailored to their needs, including students that perform the highest on various academic assessments. Due to our unique educational programming, a separate gifted and talented program is not offered.

Over the last few decades, breakthroughs in neuroscience, neurobiology, and genetics have illustrated the malleability of intelligence, illuminating the fact that all children have unique gifts and talents. Through 30-years of research brain plasticity, Dr. Carol Dweck has demonstrated that previously assumed beliefs about IQ and fixed intelligence are inaccurate and scientifically unfounded, and that such labels and tracked designations do not serve students better than classrooms where children of different abilities and backgrounds interact and learn from each other. Additional research supports this decision, showing that (1) heterogeneous classrooms and programming best support all students, including those who are academically performing the highest, and (2) academically, racially, and socioeconomically diverse classrooms have a significant and positive impact on all students' social development when compared to non-diverse classrooms or where students have been tracked according to a perceived ability.

Most strikingly, gifted and talented classifications have historically mirrored and perpetuated systems of inequality. Based on TEA’s “Enrollment in Texas Public Schools, 2017-2018” document, we examined the number of students classified gifted and talented as compared to the total number of enrolled students when disaggregated by race. We found the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Total Enrollment</th>
<th>Enrollment in G/T</th>
<th>Percent Enrolled in G/T</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>680,777</td>
<td>27,433</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>20,586</td>
<td>1,187</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>235,491</td>
<td>45,440</td>
<td>19.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>2,827,847</td>
<td>177,779</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Islander</td>
<td>8,026</td>
<td>470</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>1,504,515</td>
<td>162,710</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multicultural</td>
<td>122,440</td>
<td>122,440</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Upon analyzing this data, one must either conclude that certain races, specifically African American, American Indian, Hispanic, or Pacific Islander, have exponentially lower percentages of gifted and talented children when compared to their White and Asian classmates, or that the system of classifying students as gifted or talented perpetuates the racial inequity that is prevalent and deeply entrenched throughout our public education system. At The Gathering Place, we reject the first conclusion as patently prejudiced.
At The Gathering Place, students are not segregated by perceived ability nor are enrichment opportunities limited to a select few. Per the TEA, the purpose of gifted and talented programs is to offer students the opportunity to, "...develop innovative products and sophisticated performances that reflect individuality and creativity and are targeted to an audience outside the classroom." This is the very nature of PBL. All students pursue solutions to complex, real-world problems, and project cycles are student-driven, rigorous, and culminate in assessment through the form of public showcases to authentic audiences outside the classroom. Students do not reproduce one-size-fits-all exemplars, and instead creatively design and build their own prototypes and solutions. Additionally, our students are immersed in daily creative arts, and participate in artistic showcases twice a year. Our model, beginning with our mission and vision and weaving through all design decisions, is focused on nurturing and developing the gifts, talents, and inner-brilliance of all children.

1 ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/hq5269.html
3 nepc.colorado.edu/sites/default/files/Chapter05-Glass-Final.pdf
4 tcf.org/content/report/how-racially-diverse-schools-and-classrooms-can-benefit-all-students/
5 tea.texas.gov/Reports_and_Data/School_Performance/Accountability_Research/Enrollment_Trends/?LangType=1033
6 tea.texas.gov/Academics/Special_Student_Populations/Gifted_and_Talented_Education/Gifted_Talented_Education/

Evaluation Criteria-Special Populations

A strong response will:

✓ Present detailed plan to implement all required screenings, accommodations, instruction, and placements for students requiring special education and provides clear evidence to support the proposed plan;
✓ Demonstrate thorough understanding of state and federal requirements for the identification, instruction, and placements for students requiring special education;
✓ Present detailed plan to ensure that English Language Learners will be taught the academic English that they will need for school purposes, and assessed to measure progress in learning the English Language and provides clear evidence to support the proposed plan;
✓ Demonstrate thorough understanding of the English Language Proficiency Standards [ELPS] and Texas Essential Language Proficiency Assessment System [TELPAS];
✓ Present detailed plans to provide screenings, accommodations, instruction, and/or placements for gifted and talented students or provides a clear rationale for the exclusion of such services; and
✓ Describe sufficient staffing to oversee supports for Special Education students, English Language Learners, and Gifted and Talented students with fidelity.
EDUCATION PLAN

ASSESSMENT AND ACADEMIC PROGRESS MONITORING

1. Detail all plans to track the academic performance of individual students and student cohorts. **NOTE:** Charter holders must enroll and serve students in at least one state-tested grade level by the beginning of the third (3) year of operation, so that the charter school receives an accountability rating at the end of its third year. Also, the charter school must enroll and serve at least fifty (50) percent of its students into a state-tested grade level by the beginning of the fifth (5) year of operation.
   a. Specifically outline how growth will be assessed and instruction will be modified as necessary to achieve individual educational goals.
   b. Describe roles and responsibilities for anyone involved in planning, implementation, data collection, analysis, and reporting of data.

2. What common assessments (formative and/or summative) will be used to measure student progress and achievement, including for students in early education grades and those in grades 3 and above? **NOTE:** As of June 19, 2017, specific Early Childhood Education progress monitoring tools have been approved for the period from 2017-2021. Additional information about the Commissioner's List of Approved Prekindergarten Progress Monitoring Instruments is available by right clicking HERE.

3. Provide a rationale for the use and applicability of the proposed assessment model(s).

4. List the person(s), position(s), and/or entities that will be responsible for collecting and analyzing assessment/evaluation data and describe educational or experience requirements for these roles.

Narrative Response:

ASSESSMENT MODELS
Measuring and disseminating academic progress is critical to student success. Our student assessment model is used to improve teaching and student learning. Capturing meaningful data allows teachers, coaches, and the school to measure progress, gauge growth, respond to needs and ensure that every student is successfully on track to meet academic performance indicators. (See Academic Performance Indicators.) We have three data cycles that align to our trimesters: Cycle 1 (August through mid-November); Cycle 2 (mid-November through mid-February); Cycle 3 (mid-February through June). We monitor progress of academic and non-academic skills via formative and summative assessments.

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT PLAN AND TIMELINE
We leverage formative assessments to enable data-drive instruction. This best practice is embedded within learning activities and may vary based on teachers’ needs for specific data regarding a student or group of students at any point in time. Black and William concluded that, “...while formative assessment can help all pupils, [they] yield particularly good results with low achievers by concentrating on specific problems with their work and giving [students] a clear understanding of what is wrong and how to put it right.”\(^1\) Their research underlines four key components of formative assessments: setting specific and measurable learning goals, monitoring progress through aligned formative assessments, analyzing data and modifying subsequent instruction by the teacher, and sharing progress monitoring data with students so that they may also self-monitor and track growth.\(^2\)
Most importantly, “An assessment functions formatively to the extent that evidence about student achievement is elicited, interpreted, and used by teachers, learners, or their peers to make decisions about the next steps in instruction that are likely to be better, or better founded, than the decisions they would have made in the absence of that evidence.”

Our formative assessment plan is as follows:

(1) Formative Assessments in ELA/R. We utilize the Fountas & Pinnell (F&P) assessment system to monitor student reading levels, starting in kindergarten, and continue to utilize it until each student reaches Level Z, which means they are fully fluent readers (frequently at 5th grade). This literacy assessment is administered three times per year, at the beginning of the school year and at the end of the first two data cycles. F&P assessments provide teachers with tools to quantify observable reading comprehension and skills to determine each student’s reading level. F&P also provides leveled books, so that teachers provide targeted resources and interventions for students at their reading levels, continually working and tracking towards differentiated goals. Our balanced literacy approach includes a writer’s workshop structure for teaching and formatively assessing student writing. Graham and Perin conducted a meta-analysis of the most effective writing strategies and found that a combination of, “...self-assessment by the child and face-to-face assessment with the teacher,” as having the most significant effect on student writing growth. All students complete multiple writing assignments during each data cycle; we harness the power of two adults in each K-5 classroom to include writing teacher-student conferences to provide formative feedback to students and outline plans for improvement.

(2) Formative Assessments in Math. We leverage a research-based approach to teaching math TEKS standards known as cognitively guided instruction (CGI). (See Curriculum and Instruction.) Students K-8 work on daily formative problems that are TEKS-aligned and support conceptual understanding of math developed using Heinemann’s collection of research-backed CGI assessments. They apply various problem-solving strategies, including algorithms, modeling, and logic. During this time, lead teachers and teaching assistants gather formative data in real-time (through assessing student work and listening to student dialogue) to uncover and address misconceptions, assess progress in math fluency, and plan future problems. This formative data supports student groupings for small group intervention and enrichment, allowing teachers to be responsive each day and each week, instead of waiting for the next benchmark assessment.

(3) Formative Assessments in Science and Social Studies. Science and social studies are taught and assessed during the two daily project blocks. Teachers design projects by embedding learning objectives that are aligned to ELA/R, Math, Science, and Social Studies TEKS standards. Using a PBL assessment platform called Project Foundry (See Financial Workbook Assumptions Tab Line 93), teachers build authentic assessments to assess those embedded TEKS standards to guide future instruction, intervention, and enrichment. For example, during a project where students work collaboratively to create new forms of transportation, the teacher may embed TEKS Grade 3 Science Standard 4 - Scientific Investigation and Reasoning: “Students are expected to collect, record and analyze information using tools including timing devices.” As part of the project, the teacher may then incorporate a component where students measure the speed at which their prototypes travel at by using timing devices and tools to measure distance. Teachers observe and provide feedback on student work through Project Foundry to formatively assess their mastery of that specific standard.

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT PLAN AND TIMELINE
At The Gathering Place, the purpose of summative assessments is to provide evidence of student mastery of TEKS standards and individual student goals, as well as to compare performance with grade level cohorts across the district and state. Research states, “Instead of being used to guide improvements, summative assessments provide teachers with culminating evidence that helps them
decide if students have mastered certain content and skills, achieved specific standards, and/or are ready to move on to the next level of learning. We use the following summative assessments:

1. STAAR. Each spring all 3-8th graders take the STAAR math and reading assessment; 4th and 7th graders take the STAAR writing exam; 5th and 8th graders take the STAAR science exam; and 8th graders take the STAAR social studies exam. STAAR data is shared with teachers and families to discuss academic achievement, growth, and to plan interventions/accelerated instruction, if needed; and used during annual curriculum evaluations (See Curriculum and Instruction) by the school leadership team, Superintendent, and Board in determining whether our educational programming is effectively and equitably serving all students and if changes are needed for the subsequent year.

2. Measures of Academic Progress (MAP). The MAP assessment is a nationally-normed assessment, which is used as a secondary point of student achievement to provide evidence of how our students are doing compared to students across the nation. This exam is administered at the end of the third data cycle each year, and data informs educational programming to ensure our students are competitive across Texas (determined through STAAR) and nationally (determined through MAP).

3. Interim Benchmark Assessments. Interim benchmarks are internally created by the Director of Curriculum and Instruction (DCI) and overseen by the Principal in alignment to the TEKS standards and the STAAR. They are summative math, reading, science and social studies assessments and are administered at the end of the first and second data cycles to provide evidence for teachers and families of how students are performing on grade-level standards. Interim benchmark assessments are the foundational data used to plan the following trimester’s instruction. Results drive academic interventions and enrichment, including student grouping, accelerated instructional plans, and any software used to target specific standards that require remediation and additional support.

4. High-Quality Project-Based Learning. The summative PBL assessment is the final public showcase of students’ products which often takes the form of a presenting their final product or prototype to an authentic audience (e.g. peers, expert panels, local politicians, or the community). The public nature of showcases provides a tangible and meaningful real-world assessment of work. These summative work products are captured in students’ PBL portfolios in Project Foundry so that teachers and students track progress year-over-year. Showcases occur at the end of first and second data cycles.

5. English Learners (ELs) - At The Gathering Place, we use the ELPS to guide our instruction of English language acquisition for ELs. ELs take the TELPAS annually in the spring, which is a summative assessment in listening, reading, speaking, and writing to assess English language proficiency. We also leverage the Woodcock Muñoz assessment for determining EL placement. The data from both assessments is used by our certified bilingual teachers when planning projects and lessons and when determining the best bilingual strategies to use with each EL.

6. Early Childhood Formative Assessments. The Gathering Place is working collaboratively with Pre-K 4 SA, a San Antonio citywide program, to design our early childhood program for grades K - 1 (See Attachment FOG3 for letter of support). Pre-K 4 SA is a local pioneer in creating a model that is aligned to the most cutting-edge research in childhood brain development and educational best practices. They leverage the early childhood assessment program GOLD by an organization titled Teaching Strategies (See Financial Workbook Assumptions Tab Line 93). The GOLD assessment is aligned to TEKS standards and enables teachers to formatively assess early elementary students through observation. We use this assessment model to ensure teachers and families have access to data indicating student performance and growth on early childhood indicators and all K-1 TEKS standards. Data is collected twice per year, once at the beginning of the school year and once at the end of our second data cycle. Teachers use this data to plan small group instruction, centers, and 1:1 interventions, customizing support for students to grow and master the TEKS standards.
APPLICABILITY, STRENGTHS, AND WEAKNESSES
Our assessment models are uniquely aligned to our academic model and applicable to our target student population. They guide teacher interventions while simultaneously leveraging authentic and qualitative feedback to ensure data is personalized and actionable for students and families. We've illustrated two specific examples below to demonstrate how we approach alignment, applicability, strengths, and weaknesses of our assessments:

(1) Our innovative approach to using Project Foundry as the assessment tool to measure student progress and mastery of the TEKS standards through PBL recognizes the needs that families in our proposed attendance zone expressed. As previously outlined, families indicated a need for a school that enables students to have the freedom to explore their curiosities and passions; our assessment model honors this by collecting formative and summative data through student-driven projects which give students ample agency. However, while our assessment model’s strength is its responsiveness to our community’s stated needs, its weakness is that it requires additional time and training to ensure all teachers implement it with fidelity. We address this weakness by leveraging summer institute and five PD days (See Teacher Development), including two adults in every K-5 classroom, and providing teachers with 90 minutes of daily planning, significantly more than nearby public schools.

(2) Our assessment model is uniquely applicable to our student population because it is designed to meet the diverse needs of Els. Our balanced literacy approach supports the development of phonics, decoding, fluency, vocabulary acquisition, reading comprehension, and writing; and utilizes the F&P assessment to measure reading growth, enabling teachers to determine each student’s needs. As we anticipate 24% of our student population to be Els, having an assessment model that can provide such detailed data on student language acquisition is essential. The two weaknesses of this assessment model are: (a) students are assessed 1:1 which is time-intensive for teachers, and (b) F&P books and assessments are costly. However, the research supporting the efficacy of F&P is clear. (See Curriculum and Instruction.) We believe the benefits of the assessment model are worth the cost in time and resources, and have budgeted accordingly. (See Financial Workbook Assumptions Tab Line 95.) We leverage trained teaching assistants (TAs) to pull students 1:1 for assessments. (See Teacher Development.)

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES AND TIMELINES
The following positions will be involved in planning, implementing, analyzing and/or reporting data:
- TAs are responsible for administering F&P testing three times per year, and collecting GOLD data through our early childhood development assessment program twice per year.
- Lead teachers are responsible for providing meaningful formative feedback to students and ensuring the integrity of summative data collected throughout the year. They are also responsible for using the data collected to tailor instructional planning to catalyze student growth and to inform enrichment and intervention opportunities in order to master all TEKS standards. They communicate data with families and share assessment results with students. All lead teachers hold a bachelor’s degree and all special education and bilingual teachers are required to be certified.
- Literacy and PBL coaches are responsible for teacher training on how to effectively implement the formative and summative assessments described above. They support teachers on how to use data to drive instructional planning and in the creation of rigorous TEKS aligned projects. They are required to hold a bachelor’s degree and have ≥3 years of teaching or school leadership experience.
- DCI designs interim benchmark assessments and curates assessment tools for math, ELA/R, writing, science and social studies that are aligned to TEKS standards. They digitally aggregate and analyze assessment data to provide meaningful insights for all stakeholders to guide school-wide professional development, small group instruction, and technology-based interventions (See Financial Workbook.
Assistant principals (APs) are responsible for test coordination including test security, test integrity, room assignments, and communicating with the state about policies and procedures related to testing, as well as ensuring testing services for ELs meet all legal requirements. APs are required to hold a bachelor’s degree and to have at least 3 years of teaching or school leadership experience.

-The Principal (with the support of the Superintendent), is ultimately accountable for ensuring assessment models are TEKS-aligned, effective, and result in high student achievement and growth. The Principal and Superintendent oversee scheduling, training, and PD that enable the school staff to leverage assessments to drive student learning. Both the Principal and Superintendent are required to have a master’s degree in education and at least 5 years of teaching or school leadership experience.

-Board members of the Academic Committee meet monthly to review assessment data, make suggestions and provide feedback to the Superintendent based on that data. They also use academic data to drive the organization’s annual strategic goals. The Board then tracks progress against academic progress indicators at each meeting to ensure that the organization is effectively and equitably serving all students (See Academic Progress Indicators), and makes data-driven adjustments as needed.

- Board members of the Academic Committee meet monthly to review assessment data, make suggestions and provide feedback to the Superintendent based on that data. They also use academic data to drive the organization’s annual strategic goals. The Board then tracks progress against academic progress indicators at each meeting to ensure that the organization is effectively and equitably serving all students (See Academic Progress Indicators), and makes data-driven adjustments as needed.

3 Carnegie.org/media/filer_public/3c/f5/3cf58727-34f4-4140-a014-723a00ac56f7/ccny_report_2007_writing.pdf

**Evaluation Criteria-Assessment and Academic Progress Monitoring**

A strong response will:

- Propose specific and comprehensive assessment models to promote student achievement; and demonstrate a clear understanding of the proposed assessment model(s);
- Rationalize the use and applicability of the proposed assessment model(s) and discuss foreseeable strengths and/or weaknesses where applied to the anticipated student population;
- Identify specific roles and responsibilities of person(s), position(s), or entities that will be involved in planning, implementation, analysis, and reporting of data and supports roles with sufficient educational and/or experience requirements;
- Detail specific assessment schedules, all necessary sources of data, and discuss any associated data collections; and
- Outline a robust plan to use assessment data for the improvement of campus teaching and learning.
EDUCATION PLAN

SCHOOL CULTURE

1. 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.

2. Explain how you will create and implement this culture for students, teachers, administrators, and parents starting from the first day of school. Describe the plan for enculturating students who enter the school mid-year.

3. Describe how you will measure school culture and evaluate implementation of your culture plan. Include how parent and student feedback will be incorporated in measuring your school’s success in creating a positive culture.

Narrative Response:

The foundation of The Gathering Place is our culture. Shared school norms, relational trust, and underlying beliefs about behavior are key elements that have significant impact on student and staff success. The Gathering Place’s culture has been designed with feedback collected by Joanna and Ryan, the co-founders, from over 50 visits with innovative schools across the country. It has also been informed by their participation in two leadership fellowships, the Innovative Schools Fellowship through City Education Partners, a local San Antonio nonprofit, and the New School Creation Fellowship through High Tech High, the leading project-based school system in the country. Through executive coaching/mentoring, both fellowships are continuing to strengthen Joanna and Ryan’s skills to create and maintain a strong organizational culture. Additionally, the co-founders’ past experience has informed design. For example, prior to Ryan’s tenure as a principal, his predecessor began each morning meeting by publicly calling out teachers for what she considered were the previous day’s failures. Upon becoming principal, Ryan replaced deficit-based routines, which were belittling and isolating for teachers, with grade level teams; thereby creating the space for teachers to work in professional learning communities (PLCs) where they set team-based goals and tracked their progress; and hired two coaches to help develop teachers’ skills. By focusing on transforming the adult and student culture, these improvements increased the percentage of students on grade level from 25% to 60% in one year and led to the highest staff retention rate in the network. Cumulatively, Joanna and Ryan’s experiences, coupled with research, have resulted in five core elements that collectively define our school culture.

FIVE CORE ELEMENTS OF SCHOOL CULTURE AT THE GATHERING PLACE
(1) Developing Trust and Psychological Safety. We create a positive academic environment that amplifies psychological safety and relational trust by modeling vulnerability and acceptance, incorporating professional learning communities (PLCs), and prioritizing relationship building. Project Aristotle combined 50 years of research on organizational behavior with close observation of hundreds of teams at Google. “Google’s data indicated that psychological safety, more than anything else, was critical to making a team work.” Psychological safety is defined as an environment where all individuals can take risks, speak up, and make mistakes without fear of rejection, judgement, or punishment. Once people feel psychologically safe, they build trust which is necessary for a truly exceptional culture, both across a school and in a classroom. Further, in “The Five Dysfunctions of Team”, Patrick Lencioni aggregated years of research and determined that trust, which requires psychological safety, is the single most influential factor on how successful a team is: “Not finance. Not strategy. Not technology. It is teamwork that remains the ultimate competitive advantage, both
because it is so powerful and so rare... which, begins by building trust and overcoming our need for invulnerability.\textsuperscript{2} Lastly, when children and adults are trusted, they can truly be free to learn. Daniel Pink, who studies motivation and human achievement, states in his book Drive, “Human beings have an innate inner drive to be autonomous, self-determined, and connected to one another. And when that drive is liberated, people can then achieve their full potential.”\textsuperscript{3} This philosophy aligns with our mission and three design principles connected to freedoms while reinforcing student intellectual and social development; and, allowing for fulfillment of educational goals.

(2) Celebrating and Nurturing What Makes Us Unique. Inclusivity and a sense of belonging are hallmarks of a healthy school culture. In our two school co-design workshops (See Outreach and Public Meetings), students named that a school where everyone belonged was an unmet need, and one of their greatest desires to see in a new school. To meet this need, we affirm each person’s identity and celebrate our differences instead of requiring conformity. We approach our school-wide community with an asset-based mindset as opposed to a deficit-based mindset in order to nurture each person’s strengths to accomplish goals. We also value each child’s culture, heritage, language, and identity, and create the space for each one to be shared widely with the school community. For example, within PBL and the arts, there is extensive opportunity for students to express personal styles as they select delivery of projects and create works of art.

(3) Implementing Social-Emotional Learning. What is commonly referred to as school culture is in actuality the sum of individual behaviors within a school. Behavior is a manifestation of met and unmet needs; through SEL, children develop empathy, decision-making, and self/social awareness. Research shared by CASEL, the leading expert in the implementation of SEL, shows a “…significant correlation between explicit social and emotional instruction in kindergarten and key outcomes for young adults years later in education, employment, criminal activity, substance use, and mental health.”\textsuperscript{4} This correlation leads to social-emotional instruction having a measured 11:1 return on investment, meaning that for every $1 spent on SEL programming, $11 are saved in areas including public housing, public assistance, and imprisonment.\textsuperscript{5}

(4) Trauma-Informed Practices. One of the greatest medical breakthroughs of the past two decades is our understanding of how trauma impacts the brain. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s groundbreaking conclusion following their Adverse Childhood Experiences Study found that children with “…four or more adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) were twice as likely to be obese and 32.6 times more likely to be labeled at schools as having academic and behavioral problems.”\textsuperscript{6} The study demonstrates that ACEs cause long-term, detrimental physiological and psychological impacts on children. The study specifically focused on 10 experiences classified as ACEs: physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, physical neglect, emotional neglect, exposure to domestic violence, household substance abuse, household mental illness, divorce, and incarceration of a household member. These findings are particularly important to us given our target population (89% FRL) and research showing that children living below the poverty level are over twice as likely to experience academic and behavioral challenges.\textsuperscript{7} Thus, to effectively support all students and create a culture of empathy and love, our teachers are trained on trauma-informed practices (See Teacher Development) and supported by our Director of SEL and SEL counselors.

(5) Restorative Practices. As expounded in our Mission and Vision section and defined by the TEA, restorative practices are, “…a relational approach to building school climate and addressing student behavior. The approach fosters belonging over exclusion, social engagement over control, and meaningful accountability over punishment.”\textsuperscript{8} As strong as a school culture is, there are inevitably moments in which community norms or relationships are violated. Our approach to accountability is through a full commitment to restorative practices. Traditional approaches to discipline that are built on a system of punishments and rewards corrode psychological safety and trust, fail to teach skills or
address root causes, and do not hold anyone accountable for repairing harm. For example, in the event that two students engage in a verbal altercation, in a punitive system, a teacher may refer the student to a dean or principal. That child may then experience enforced isolation through detention, in-school or out-of-school suspension. The child has been alienated from the community, the root cause of their behavior has not been identified, and the relationship between the two children is never repaired, allowing anger, fear, and hurt to fester in both kids. Responding to that same situation using restorative accountability, the two students would be pulled to the side (either separately or together, depending on the situation) by a lead teacher or TA. If needed, a member of the SEL team or a school leader would provide support to de-escalate the situation. Restorative practices involve listening to both children’s explanation of what happened, pushing both students to see the other person’s perspective to get to the root of the problem, and creating a plan to repair the harm. The student who yelled insults might then take an additional moment with the class to apologize, explain why that type of language is hurtful and how it harmed community norms, and explain a social-emotional tool they will use in the future to avoid that type of hurtful language. In this example, no one has been ostracized from their community, the students have learned problem-solving and empathy skills that can be used in the future, and the yelling student has been held accountable by choosing to publicly apologize, owning their behavior, and communicating to their peers what SEL tools they will use to avoid that type of interaction in the future.

STRUCTURES TO SUPPORT SCHOOL CULTURE

Structures Supporting Students. Students begin each day with a morning circle where they practice skills related to identifying and regulating emotions, and work through real or hypothetical situations to develop perspective taking and empathy. Circle is a time for students to share about themselves, their background, and the things that make them unique, building trust and strong relationships between students. Outside of circle, teachers are trained on classroom management strategies aligned with our core elements of a healthy school culture. (See Teacher Development.) We provide teachers with specific strategies for navigating restorative conversations between students, many of which are inspired by the local work of Philip Carney, the restorative discipline coordinator at North East ISD in San Antonio. He is overseeing the piloting of restorative practices at a couple of campuses, and in our October 2018 meeting, offered to share teacher training resources. Additionally, our 173:1 ratio of students to SEL counselors allows us to better serve complex social and emotional student needs.

Furthermore, the first two weeks of each school year focus on establishing a healthy school culture. School norms and expectations are explicitly taught, classes have time to establish trust, and students have ample time to practice the expectations that will serve as the bedrock of our school culture. In addition, the co-founders’ firsthand school leadership experience with building and maintaining school culture has prompted more frequent norming opportunities; each cohort also norms upon the return from fall, winter, and spring break to maximize the seamless continuation of learning. Students entering midyear are encultured by: (1) being assigned a peer buddy who has been coached by an SEL counselor on how to help new students learn about the school culture, a practice that is based off of seminal research that demonstrated that students, as young as kindergarten, have the profound ability to influence their peers’ behavior positively; and, (2) having regular check-ins for the first two weeks from our SEL counselors, or longer if desired, to make sure they are well-supported through their transition into a new school.
Structures Supporting Teachers and School Leaders. To facilitate trusting relationships among students, adults must have trusting relationships among each other. All staff come together once a week for announcements, whole-school training (if needed), and an adult circle that mirrors structures used in student circles. We leverage best practices developed by Valor Collegiate Academies, national leaders in developing strong school culture, who, per our spring 2018 conversation, identified adult circles as the most important element to their success. The adult circle resources are available on their website for free. Adult circles are led by the Principal, APs and/or Superintendent. As teachers develop capacity in facilitating circles, all teachers are invited to volunteer to lead adult circles. Separate from a weekly staff circle, teachers engage in weekly PLCs during their extended planning time. PLCs are led by teachers, instead of the traditional top-down approach to PD. The collaborative nature of PLCs builds trust amongst teachers and places shared decision-making power with teachers, enabling them to reach their full creative potential.

Families. Given the unique nature of our school culture, especially related to our social-emotional curriculum and restorative discipline, we offer regular and ongoing information sessions and trainings for families on topics such as: restorative discipline, social-emotional skill development, and how trauma impacts the brain. We also send home weekly communication to families to keep them informed of our school norms and share our Family Handbook annually, including upon mid-year enrollment for transfer students. All communication is available in English and Spanish. Lastly, our teachers regularly communicate with families about their child’s behavior through a log.

Collecting and Sharing Data. Assessing the implementation and impact of SEL curriculum is critical to evaluating its effectiveness. We leverage the Panorama survey, a research-based tool utilized by over 1,000 schools to measure and improve SEL, in order to evaluate our SEL programming. Students take the Panorama SEL survey twice per year and data is shared with teachers, school leaders, and families. (See Financial Workbook Assumptions Tab Line 100.)

GOALS AND PROGRESS MONITORING
Our annual goals that are tied to school culture include the following:
- 90%+ of staff report the school culture is inclusive and embraces diversity, administered twice per year to gauge progress.
- 90%+ of students report the school culture is inclusive and embraces diversity, administered twice per year to gauge progress.
- 90%+ of families report the school culture is inclusive and embraces diversity, administered in the early spring to gauge progress.
- 90%+ of staff measure proficient or higher on our restorative mindsets and beliefs survey.
- 90%+ of students measure proficient or higher on our restorative mindsets and beliefs survey.
- Score in the top quintile on Transforming Ed’s teacher-student relationships survey.
- Score in the top quintile on Panorama’s social and emotional skills development survey.
- 100% of leadership have 360 feedback reviews conducted each year.
- Our annual suspension rate is less than 3% and our annual expulsion rate is less than 1%, reviewed each quarter as a leadership team and with the Board.

SCHOOL SAFETY
Although school safety includes measures that extend beyond the scope of school culture, we believe that the core of school safety is rooted in school culture. We annually evaluate and implement recommendations from the TEA, United States Secret Service, Governor’s School Safety Initiative, and ESC Region 20 to ensure our campus is secure and safe including double door entrances with electronic visitor management systems, training for reporting protocols, and rehearsing emergency
operation plans. One of TEA’s key recommendations involves having qualified mental health staff available to provide interventions for students and screen for possible threats to themselves or others.\textsuperscript{11} Our Director of SEL, SEL counselors, and social workers are trained on how to screen for potential concerns and provide/connect students with services to support students struggling with mental health-related issues.

\textsuperscript{1}nytimes.com/2016/02/28/magazine/what-google-learned-from-its-quest-to-build-the-perfect-team.html
\textsuperscript{4}blogs.edweek.org/edweek/rulesforengagement/SEL-Revised.pdf
\textsuperscript{5}casel.org/impact/
\textsuperscript{7}childtrends.org/publications/prevalence-adverse-childhood-experiences-nationally-state-race-ethnicity
\textsuperscript{8}tea.texas.gov/Restorative_Discipline/
\textsuperscript{9}experts.illinois.edu/en/publications/positive-peer-pressure-the-effects-of-peer-monitoring-on-children
\textsuperscript{11}tea.texas.gov/About_TEA/School_Safety_Resource

### Evaluation Criteria-School Culture

A strong response will:

- \textbullet{} Contain appropriate and effective strategies to support a school climate that will allow for fulfillment of educational goals and supports the approach with research, theory, and/or experience;
- \textbullet{} Offer a concrete plan for norming social/cultural expectations at the start of each semester as well as for students who enter mid-semester and supports the plan with research, theory, and/or experience; and
- \textbullet{} Establish well-defined goals around school culture and plans to monitor progress.
EDUCATION PLAN

PROMOTION AND GRADUATION

1. Discuss promotion and retention requirements for all proposed grades.
2. Identify and discuss additional features of the educational model and/or course offerings, outside of the required curriculum, that will create a viable and adequate process for helping students promote to the next grade and/or graduate.
   a. Cite and discuss any external resources, partnerships that will also facilitate promotion and/or graduation.
   b. Describe strategies (with defined metrics of success) that will be used to support student transitions into grade levels that are not served by the proposed charter school, where applicable.
3. Define and discuss metrics that will be used to assess successful transition between grade level, school type (e.g., elementary to middle to high school), and/or post-graduation. If applicable, indicate whether GPA class ranks will be listed on all student transcripts in grades 11 and 12.
4. Describe the proposed matriculation rate in each year of operation and provide a justification for all assumptions.

Narrative Response:

PHILOSOPHY ON PROMOTION AND RETENTION

Retention has been studied in depth throughout the research community. Studies have consistently shown that retention has either no net benefit or has a negative effect on retained students. One study of 3rd, 6th and 8th graders found that retained students struggled in their second year as compared to peers who had been promoted, had higher rates of being placed in special education, and even two years later were, "... associated with lower academic achievement." In addition to neutral or negative short-term consequences, retention often leads to negative long-term consequences. In a recent study, researchers examined the effects of 8th grade retention on high school graduation rates, and found that, "Students retained in 8th grade were more likely to drop out." Although it can be argued that these neutral or negative effects are a result of multiple factors, not just retention, further research has specifically assessed the effect of retention and promotion of students with similar test results, grades, and attendance. This large, 10-year meta-analysis of twenty studies compared both academic and social emotional differences between promoted and retained students with similar academic proficiency, and found that, "...95% of studies showed retention either worsens outcomes or makes no difference academically and 86% of studies showed retention either worsens outcomes or makes no difference socially or emotionally."

GRADE PLACEMENT COMMITTEE

While research demonstrates that retention is a largely ineffective tool that rarely provides benefit for the student, we believe it is critical for such an important decision to be made together between the student’s family, teacher, and school. At The Gathering Place, at the end of each school year, a parent/guardian or teacher is able to recommend a child be considered for retention. In compliance with TEC §28.0211, we then assemble a Grade Placement Committee (GPC) comprised of a parent or guardian, the student’s lead teacher, a school administrator, and the child’s special education teacher, if applicable. The committee then reviews the following key pieces of data: (1) the parent/guardian
and/or teacher's recommendation for retention; (2) recommendations from the Admissions, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) committee and/or Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC), if applicable; (3) the child's academic performance in classes, on the F&P, STAAR, and/or TELPAS for English Learners; (4) attendance; and (5) qualitative SEL development data from the parent/guardian and staff. Where the school administration, on consultation with the GPC, determines that it is in the child's best interest for them to be retained, or if it is required by TEC §28.0211 (explained below), the child may be retained to repeat their current grade level.

TRANSITION BETWEEN ELEMENTARY, MIDDLE, AND HIGH SCHOOL

Students transitioning from 5th to 6th grade and matriculating from 8th to 9th grade are required to demonstrate satisfactory academic performance on the STAAR in math and reading to be promoted in accordance with TEC §28.0211, the guidelines in §TAC 101, as well as the Student Success Initiative. Students that do not demonstrate satisfactory performance in 5th and 8th grade math and reading on the STAAR after two tries are placed on an accelerated instruction plan. If, after a third try they have failed to perform satisfactorily, they may be retained in accordance with TEC §28.0211.

ACCELERATED INSTRUCTION

Per TEC §28.0211, "After a student fails to perform satisfactorily on an assessment instrument a second time, a GPC shall be established to prescribe the accelerated instruction the district shall provide to the student before the student is administered the assessment instrument the third time." Accelerated instruction plans are customized to the child's individual needs and may include strategies and tools like: (1) high-frequency, guided reading groups that deliver targeted small group reading instruction that is differentiated based on the student's current reading level, and is provided at least twice a week; (2) data-driven, small group instruction based on the specific TEKS standards for which the student has not demonstrated mastery; (3) after-school tutoring (offered at no cost to families); (4) adapted technology intervention programs designed to provide targeted support towards specific lagging skills. (See Financial Workbook Assumptions Tab Line 111.)

PARENTAL APPEAL

If retention has been triggered in accordance with TEC §28.0211, a parent/guardian has the right to appeal. If a parent/guardian appeals the retention, a GPC is assembled to review the data described above in our GPC overview. Following the required procedures in the Student Success Initiative manual and TAC § 101.2001, the committee reviews the following student data points: (1) recommendation from the student's teacher; (2) grades; (3) state assessment scores; (4) any other relevant academic information; and (5) social and emotional development. After reviewing these data points, if the GPC unanimously approves promoting the student, the GPC's decision overrides the retention and the student is then promoted to the next grade level.

SPECIAL POPULATIONS

Students receiving special education services through an IEP who are being considered for retention either through a parent or teacher recommendation, or through automatic retention in accordance with state law, have an ARD committee formed to evaluate the accelerated instruction program and to determine whether or not retention is appropriate given the child's unique circumstances. The ARD submits their recommendation to the GPC (which may immediately follow an ARD), and their recommendation carries substantial weight. For ELs, the LPAC reviews the impact of the student's language acquisition on their academic and social-emotional proficiency to make a recommendation to the GPC regarding the proposed retention.
PARENT COMMUNICATION

The specific policies, committees, and expectations regarding promotion and retention are stated in our Family Handbook, communicated to families during school registration events, and discussed as needed during parent-teacher conferences. Families of students who are flagged as being potentially at-risk of not performing satisfactorily on the STAAR based on interim testing are notified individually of the current circumstances, student proficiency to-date, and the intervention plans to be put in place to support their child(ren). No child is retained without parent/guardian involvement and consent, which requires regular and high-quality communication to ensure the family is an active stakeholder in the child's education.

FACILITATING PROMOTION AND GRADUATION

Additional features of our educational model, outside of the required curriculum and accelerated instruction, that create a viable and adequate process for helping students promote to the next grade are the following:

(1) Leveled Literacy Intervention. “A student not reading on grade level by the end of 3rd grade is 4 times as likely to drop out of high school, 6 times as likely if they are low-income, and 8 times as likely if they are low-income and a student of color.” If data shows that additional interventions are needed to help students promote to the next grade level, we utilize the Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) program. (See Financial Workbook Assumptions Tab Line 93.) LLI is a research-based intervention that involves targeted guided reading sessions with texts based on the reading level of the students in the group. Research demonstrates that LLI results in an average of twice the reading gains of traditional reading intervention programs. A recent study in Abilene ISD in Texas demonstrated the same doubling of reading ability, along with substantial gains on the STAAR, with especially significant improvements for students in Special Education and for students from low-income households.

(2) After-school Tutoring. Students on accelerated instruction plans have the option to attend after-school tutoring for targeted instruction at no cost to the student. (See Financial Workbook Assumption Tab Line 113.)

(3) Adaptive Technology. Technology is often incorrectly used as a silver bullet for complex problems in education. Its promise has been overstated and in many ways its impact has been underwhelming; however, adaptive technology used as a tool for students who need specific skill development that has been identified through data from formative assessments can play a powerful role. Adaptive intervention programs like Khan Academy (free) and Reading A-Z (See Financial Workbook Assumptions Tab Line 111) have measurable gains for students that need extra time to understand and master specific skills.

(4) Internet Access. With Spectrum, the primary internet service provider in San Antonio, we have confirmed that they offer a Wi-Fi program for low-income families that provides high-speed Wi-Fi for $14.99 per month where eligibility is determined by whether families have at least one child who is eligible for free or reduced lunch. For any student on an accelerated instruction plan who qualifies for Spectrum’s Wi-Fi program for low-income families, we have budgeted to pay for the family’s Wi-Fi service so that the child may continue to access adaptive technology programs at home. If awarded a charter, the Board creates and approves a policy that governs specifics of program eligibility, including procedures for when a family’s income changes or if a child withdraws from The Gathering Place. To be conservative, we have budgeted to provide this service for 10% of our student population in any given year. (See Financial Workbook Assumptions Tab Line 112.)
MATRICULATING TO HIGH SCHOOL
In time, the decision to apply for an additional campus so that we may serve all rising 9th graders and on through a high school will be driven by internal and external academic and financial metrics of success. Should we choose not to open a high school, decide to delay opening a high school, or are not granted an amendment, we will leverage our Community Engagement Coordinator to work closely with local district, charter, and private high schools to identify the best options available for 8th grade students and families. We will also host multiple meetings with families to make sure they are aware of their options, what they need to do to apply and enroll, and work 1:1 with families to make sure they are able to fully complete any applications.

ANTICIPATED MATRICULATION RATES
Our first cohort of 8th graders will graduate in Year 7 of operation, and we anticipate our matriculation rate to be at least 98%. Per our research-based philosophy on promotion and retention described at the opening of this section, and our mission to celebrate and nurture each child’s inner-brilliance, the matriculation rate takes into account any small percentage of families, who alongside the GPC, may decide to retain their child, or the instances in which a student, after three tries fails to perform satisfactorily on the STAAR assessment, may be retained in accordance with TEC §28.0211.

4 gradelevelreading.net/uncategorized/study-links-3rd-grade-reading-poverty-and-hs-graduation
5 fountasandpinnell.com/shared/resources/LLl%203-5%202015 16-AISD_FULL_REPORT-web.pdf

Evaluation Criteria-Promotion and Graduation
A strong response will:
✓ Present promotion and retention requirements that are congruent with the proposed mission and vision;
✓ Discuss additional features of the educational model and/or courses, outside of the required curriculum, that will help students promote to the next grade level and support features with research, theory, and/or experience;
✓ Identify specific external (and confirmed) resources, partnerships, endorsements, or other opportunities that will facilitate promotion and graduation;
✓ Provide specific strategies (and metrics of success) that will assist students to transition between elementary, middle, high school, and/or post-graduation; and
✓ Describes and provides justification for the proposed matriculation rate in each year of operation.
1. Describe the process to be used to identify, recruit, and hire instructional staff with the expertise necessary to facilitate the school’s mission and educational goals. **NOTE: All teachers must be degreed. Special Education teachers, Bilingual teachers, and teachers of English as a second language must also be certified in the fields in which they are assigned to teach, as required in state and/or federal law. Paraprofessionals must be certified as required to meet state and/or federal law.**

2. Provide information on the person(s), position(s), and/or entities that will plan, implement, and evaluate recruitment activities, including educational or experience requirements.

3. Discuss strategies that will be utilized in the event of unforeseen staff shortages of instructional staff.

**Narrative Response:**

Instructional staff, including teachers, spend the most time with students, and therefore have the greatest impact on their success. The Gathering Place hires teachers who are aligned with our mission, vision, and design principles. As a principal and Chief Information Officer in Nashville, Ryan York, proposed Superintendent, interviewed and hired over 60 employees, including 44 teachers. During this experience, he learned that the most important component to a successful talent recruitment and hiring process is the involvement of a diverse and experienced team who provide unique perspectives when evaluating candidates. His experiences informed our decision to create a teacher hiring committee that is used throughout our teacher recruitment process. The teacher hiring committee described below includes, at minimum: the Principal, one lead teacher, and one member of our SEL team. The hiring committee includes at least 51% people of color and 51% women and will also prioritize diversity in instructional staff to support mission and vision achievement.

At The Gathering Place, we hire teachers with special education or bilingual certification to serve students with disabilities and ELs, respectively. All teachers are required to hold a bachelor's degree at minimum, and we prioritize, but not require, teaching certificates. As one of the innovations outlined in the Mission and Vision section, we hire teaching artists so that our arts program can be taught by professional artists. We anticipate that most teaching artists may not have teaching certificates; however, all teaching artists are required to hold a bachelor's degree.

**IDENTIFYING AND RECRUITING QUALIFIED TEACHER CANDIDATES**

Our top priority is to identify, recruit and hire local, high-quality talent. We believe teacher-student relationships are the bedrock of a great school, and that teachers who come from within our community are often best equipped to connect with and understand our local students. Once our facility is secured, we will set diversity goals for teaching staff that mirror our anticipated student demographics. We recruit recent graduates from our local universities, including the University of Texas at San Antonio, Texas A&M, and Trinity University, and have already begun to establish relationships with each of their respective education programs. We also recruit education majors as TAs, creating job opportunities for local college students and a strong pipeline of future teachers for our school. Additionally, we attend job fairs and post job openings on our website, our social media, Glassdoor, LinkedIn and the Texas Charter School Association job board. Furthermore, we host free
PD workshops for teachers across San Antonio related to key aspects of our model including: PBL, SEL, and restorative practices. These workshops fill a city-wide void of progressive PD opportunities for teachers and enable teachers who align with our model to learn more about career opportunities at The Gathering Place.

We also recruit nationally for teachers and instructional leaders who are experts with proven track records in innovative practices aligned to our model, while prioritizing local, high-quality candidates. We believe a national recruitment strategy will be successful because of our competitive salaries, San Antonio’s low cost of living, and existing local teacher recruitment programs like Educate 210 who focus on developing SA as a leading hub of expert teacher talent. They provide moving stipends and support finding affordable housing for new-to-San Antonio teachers at no cost to local schools.¹

HIRING PROCESS
Greenhouse, an all-in-one talent management software platform (see Financial Workbook Assumptions Tab Line 106) to manage our 5-step hiring process:

(1) Application Screening. Teaching candidates apply on our website and applications are automatically accessible to our hiring committee. Our Talent Recruiter screens for education and experience qualifications, alignment with mission and vision, professional track record, and awareness of/experience with unique community needs and diverse student populations.

(2) Phone Interview. During the phone interview, the Talent Recruiter probes to examine mission vision alignment; presents scenarios to check for values alignment, and looks for model-aligned characteristics: a track record of collaboration, a growth mindset, and a deep love of children and belief in their inner-brilliance.

(3) In-Person Interview. This step includes an in-person interview, a sample lesson with students, participation in a collaborative project-planning session, and an interview with a student panel. The hiring committee scores candidates using a rubric; scores with notes are shared with committee members before a vote on whether to recommend the candidate is made.

(4) Final Interview with Principal and Superintendent. If the hiring committee recommends the candidate for hire, they have a final in-person interview with the Principal and Superintendent.

(5) Reference Checks and Offer. If the Principal and Superintendent unanimously confirm the recommendation, the Talent Recruiter completes reference checks. If clear, the candidate is sent a formal offer letter by the Principal (contingent on passing a criminal background review).

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
>>Talent Recruiter, who is required to have prior experience in talent recruitment, holds responsibility for sourcing high-quality candidates and moving them through the first two stages of the process. They are trained by the Superintendent (in Years 1-3) or by the Director of Human Resources and Talent (Year 4 and on) on how to assess education and experience qualifications.

>>Director of HR and Talent holds responsibility for the overall talent strategy including identifying, recruiting, and hiring staff. They manage the Talent Recruiter and Greenhouse; annually assess hiring structures and systems and share findings with the Superintendent. The Director of HR and Talent has a bachelor’s degree and prior experience in a human resources related field.

>>Hiring Committee holds responsibility for organizing and running in-person interviews, and making a recommendation of hire to the Principal and Superintendent through a vote.

>>Principal and Superintendent: given that bringing the right adults onto a team is arguably the most important decision an organization can make to achieve its mission and vision, the Principal and Superintendent collectively and collaboratively make all final decisions regarding teacher hiring.
Decisions need to be unanimous in order to make an offer. During the start-up year, all stages of the interview process are conducted by the Superintendent and Principal. Additionally, until the Director of HR and Talent is hired in year 4, the Superintendent is responsible for their roles and responsibilities. The Board is not involved in the hiring or firing of organizational staff (other than the Superintendent role). Both the Principal and Superintendent have master’s in education and 5 years or more of teaching or school leadership experience.

Office Manager holds responsibility for coordinating logistics for interviews and travel, including scheduling, trip reimbursements, and meals involved during in-person interviews. (See Financial Workbook Assumptions Tab Line 106.)

**TIMELINE**

If awarded a charter, our hiring process begins immediately. The Gathering Place prioritizes filling the superintendent and principal roles, for which the founding team is proposing Ryan York and Joanna Klekowicz, respectively (See Superintendent/CEO). Should the appointments not come to fruition, the hiring process is followed to fill these positions. Next, we hire a Director of Finance and Operations for a mid-year start date (See Staff Recruitment) and a PEIMS Coordinator for a spring start date during our planning year (See PEIMS). Third, we prioritize hiring a Director of SEL, Literacy Coach, and PBL coach, followed by all teachers and teaching assistants. Contingent on charter award, our teacher application is launched on our website in November of 2019 and the formal interview process begins in December of 2019 with a goal of completing hiring by June 2020 (with status checked in February 2020 and again in April 2020 to ensure we are on track to attain this goal).

**EVALUATING RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES**

Greenhouse software allows us to track and evaluate pre-identified Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) which determine the return on investment of recruiting strategies as measured by total cost of each strategy compared to (1) the number of high-quality candidates recruited, (2) the number of candidates that were ultimately hired, and (3) how candidates hired through that recruitment pipeline perform within our organization on their annual evaluations. Given our hiring timeline explained above, recruitment strategies are evaluated for effectiveness and adjusted based on data by the Superintendent in February and April in Years 1-3 until the DHRT is hired in Year 4.

**FORESEEABLE OBSTACLES IN RECRUITING HIGH-QUALITY INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF**

We have identified three foreseeable obstacles to successfully recruit quality staff along with our strategies to address them which include the following:

1. Our model is unique and likely requires teachers to unlearn many habits and practices while simultaneously learning new ones. We work to minimize this obstacle by clearly communicating to candidates our extensive teacher PD as well as our 90 minutes of planning time that have been built into daily teacher schedules. If we are struggling to recruit candidates due to our innovative instructional model, we increase our community PD workshops to provide space for teachers to become more familiar with our model components prior to applying.

2. While we prioritize local talent, we anticipate attracting new-to-San Antonio teacher talent. If a candidate from a different city cannot come to SA for an in-person interview, we replace the in-person interview with video interviews, a submitted video sample lesson, and a video-conference co-planning session to assess skills.

3. Our bilingual program requires an estimated 25% of our lead teachers to be bilingual certified. Finding bilingual certified teachers is challenging, and as a result, we have budgeted a $2,000 stipend for all bilingual certified teachers (See Financial Workbook Assumptions Tab Line 113).
If, at the beginning of the school year we are not fully hired, we will make necessary cuts from other variable (non-essential) portions of our budget like field trips, project supplies, and contingencies to increase recruitment efforts to fill roles. If the vacancies are within instructional leadership, the Superintendent, Principal, or APs will fill the gap and take over responsibilities until the vacancy is filled.

\[1\text{ educate210.org}\]

Attachment(s):
- E 1: Organizational Chart
- E 2: Staffing Chart
- E 3: Supplemental Human Resources Information Form

**Evaluation Criteria-Teacher Recruitment**

A strong response will:

- Present a clear process for using the proposed methods to identify, recruit, and hire qualified teachers;
- Include a rationale for the proposed recruitment strategies/methods and establish its applicability to successful recruitment of staff with desired areas of expertise;
- Identify specific roles and responsibilities of the person(s), position(s), and/or entities that will be involved in planning, implementation, and evaluation and clearly describes educational and/or experience requirements;
- Present specific strategies, activities, and schedules that will gauge recruitment effectiveness and identifies sufficient metrics that will determine success;
- Address any foreseeable obstacles to successfully recruiting quality staff and provide clear strategies to overcome those obstacles; and
- Present specific strategies to support unforeseen staff shortages of instructional staff.
EDUCATION PLAN

TEACHER DEVELOPMENT

1. Discuss all core components of the professional development plan, including embedded coaching and support, and how these components will support effective implementation of the educational program.

2. Describe the roles and responsibilities for anyone involved in planning, implementation, analysis, reporting, and evaluation of professional development activities. Include a description of any educational or experience requirements for these roles.

3. Explain how the school calendar, daily schedule, and staffing structure will help facilitate sufficient time to conduct observations and promote the professional growth of teachers. Describe any professional development that will be required prior to the start of the school year.

4. Describe the process for evaluating teachers, including the frequency of evaluation activities and any instruments or protocols that will be used.

Narrative Response:

Toyota famously transformed the car industry by putting the greatest amount of power in the hands of those closest to the core work of the company, and we believe the same should be true in schools. Research shows that when teachers, who are closest to students, are afforded the autonomy to make decisions and are well-supported, student outcomes in terms of proficiency and growth substantially increase. Therefore, at The Gathering Place, we believe that the role of great leadership is to empower teachers, remove obstacles, and lead from a position of service to the people closest to our children. We view professional development (PD) as identifying and building on each staff member’s assets which are made up of their strengths, interests, and talents, while providing support and resources in areas of development. Through dedicated PD days, professional learning experiences with ample planning time, and coaching and support provided by the instructional leadership team, our teachers are well-supported in delivering effective implementation of the education program to garner the greatest student achievement in mastering the TEKS standards.

To develop our proposed PD, we have combined the experiences of the co-founders with research. As a result of being selected into the prestigious NSCF fellowship out of High Tech High, one of the highest-performing project-based school systems in the country, Joanna and Ryan have worked with High Tech High leaders to identify which of the teacher development strategies they have found over their 18 years of operation to have the greatest impact on student outcomes. The strategies identified include: (a) immersive summer PD, (b) daily opportunities for collaboration with fellow teachers and instructional leaders, and (c) opportunities for teacher-led PD. Our proposed PD includes the following:

(1) Dedicated PD days. Staff, including teachers, teaching artists, and TAs, have 20 PD days without students, 15 during summer institute and 5 throughout the school year. Our summer institute focuses on PD aligned to our core model components: PBL, SEL supported by restorative practices, the arts, culturally responsive teaching, and effective inclusion and/or interventions for all students. We contract with the Buck Institute of Education (BIE), one of the leading authorities on PBL, to provide 3 days of immersive PD for all teachers and TAs in their first year of employment. We have budgeted $12,000 in our founding year for this, and scaled this accordingly to growth. (See Financial Workbook
Assumptions Tab Line 105.) In this training, teachers learn how to: create driving questions, backwards plan and align projects to TEKS standards, and utilize Project Foundry to collect data and provide feedback to students. There are also 3 days dedicated to restorative practices and SEL. This training is led by our Director of SEL who is a licensed clinician. This time is used to build restorative mindsets, develop an understanding of trauma-informed practices, and practice morning circles. Next, 1 day is dedicated to trainings led by the Director of Special Education (who is certified in special education) and the Literacy Coach (who is bilingual certified) on modifications and accommodations for students with IEPs and on SDAIE best practices used to support English Learners, respectively. The remaining 8 days are dedicated to team building, setting up classrooms and co-planning projects and art cycles. Sessions are planned, executed and differentiated for returning staff by members of the school leadership team, which include the Director of Special Education, Literacy and PBL coaches (who have ≥3 years of teaching or school leadership experience and a bachelor’s degree), the Director of Curriculum and Instruction (who has ≥5 years of teaching or school leadership experience and a bachelor’s degree), APs (who have ≥3 years of teaching or school leadership experience and a bachelor’s), and/or the Principal (who has ≥5 years of teaching or school leadership experience and a master’s degree in education). During this time, the Literacy coach also runs dedicated sessions for TAs on how to implement F&P assessments with fidelity. (See Assessment and Academic Progress Monitoring.) Additionally, the Principal and Superintendent evaluate all PD activities informally throughout the year and formally once a year by collecting and analyzing the following data: teacher surveys, student assessment data on formative and summative assessments, and quality of work during project showcases.

Next, PD days that occur during the school year are first and foremost designed around responding to formative data and teacher feedback regarding needed support. There is a formal structure using Google Forms (free) where staff request and vote on needed trainings and PD opportunities. Based on Joanna and Ryan’s experiences and learnings from High Tech High, staff are encouraged to lead sessions and workshops based on their own interests and expertise. In addition to our budget allocation for BIE’s PBL training, $500 is allocated per teacher, totaling $16,000 in Year 1 for additional PD opportunities like contracting with additional expert trainers, purchasing books, or attending workshops and $6,000 is allocated for school leaders to be trained on the Yale SEL curriculum. Another $5,000 is allocated for general PD of non-instructional staff including members of leadership, our SEL team, our PEIMS Coordinator and front office staff. We believe high-quality PD supports retention of top caliber staff and improves student outcomes.

(2) Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) with Ample Planning Time. The heart of PD is building collaborative capacity. Richard and Rebecca DuFour have done considerable research on the impact and successful implementation of PLCs defined as “...an ongoing process in which educators work collaboratively in recurring cycles of collective inquiry and action research to achieve better results for the students they serve.” Additionally, research shows that, “Teaching in PLCs leads to more student-centered classrooms and results in increased teacher collaboration, empowerment, and continuous learning.” Teachers have 90 minutes of planning time each day in addition to a 30-minute duty-free lunch. They meet in collaborative PLCs three times per week during their daily planning time where they co-plan, provide feedback on projects, analyze student work, co-observe other teachers and informally evaluate the curriculum. PLCs are supported by the Director of Curriculum and Instruction (DCI), as well as the PBL Coach, through embedded PD activities which include backwards planning, norming sessions; and, modeling explicit skills related to collaboration and facilitating tuning protocols, which are tools used to collect peer feedback and input on project and art cycles.

(3) Coaching and Support. Teachers, teaching artists, and TAs are coached and supported by our
school leadership team. Research shows teacher coaching to be one of the most effective practices to improving student learning. Specifically, studies have found instructional coaching to be a highly effective approach to improving instruction, especially when the coach has specialized skill sets that align to the needs of the teacher and the vision of the school. \(^4\) Beginning in Year 1, we have a PBL coach and Literacy Coach, and add a Restorative Practices Coach in Year 3. Coaches conduct informal observations, and work primarily with teachers during their planning time and PLCs to provide embedded PD activities via co-planning, providing feedback, or co-analyzing student data. These coaches also provide 1:1 support in the classroom using a practice known as co-teaching, where the teacher and coach plan a segment of a day together and then execute the lesson together, thereby giving the teacher an opportunity to learn best practices by observing the coach in the context of their own classroom. In his work titled “Visible learning: A synthesis of over 800 meta-analyses relating to achievement”, John Hattie demonstrated that co-teaching is one of the most effective forms of coaching. \(^5\) The literacy coach, PBL coach, and restorative practices coach are required to have ≥3 years of teaching or school leadership experience and a bachelor’s degree.

(4) Professional development for school leaders. All school leadership is supported and coached by the Principal, who is coached by the Superintendent. Our budget includes $4,200 in Year 1 for staff travel, which is primarily designated for leadership teams to observe other top-performing schools within Texas and/or around the country to see best practices in action and attend workshops and/or conferences to further their professional expertise and inform practices at The Gathering Place.

EVALUATION PROCESS

Teacher evaluations are conducted twice a year using a standardized, research-based rubric created by BIE. \(^6\) The rubric is aligned to our six core elements of PBL. (See Curriculum and Instruction.) Evaluations result in feedback that is aligned to the rubric to determine if teachers have met, not met, or exceeded expectations, and outline actionable areas for growth. All evaluations are conducted by the Principal or AP.

The first evaluation occurs in October and is based on classroom observation. Its purpose is to provide diagnostic data to the school leadership team on how to best support each teacher and serves as the basis for teachers to develop Personal Growth Plans (PGPs). Any teacher who is determined to have not met expectations is placed on an action plan that is created and overseen by the Principal. Action plans outline growth goals and set required goals that must be met in the second evaluation. Teachers on action plans who do not meet expectations during their April evaluation may not receive an offer of employment for the next academic year.

The second evaluation occurs in April and is based on the same rubric and scored by the same evaluator as the October evaluation. The evaluation is based on classroom observations and a portfolio of teacher and student work that each teacher submits to the Principal. Teachers on action plans who do not meet expectations during their April evaluation may not receive an offer of employment for the next academic year.

\(^1\)scholarworks.iu.edu/journals/index.php/josotl/article/view/13928
Evaluation Criteria-Teacher Development

A strong response will:

✓ Describe the proposed professional development plan and discusses how these components align with the mission, vision, and proposed educational program;

✓ Support the proposed professional development activities with research, theory, and/or experience;

✓ Provide specific examples of embedded professional development activities (e.g., modeling, co-teaching);

✓ Identify specific roles and responsibilities of the person(s), position(s), and/or entities that will be involved in planning, implementation, analysis, reporting, and evaluation of professional development activities and provide a description of desired educational and/or experience requirements;

✓ Explain how the school calendar, daily schedule, and staffing structure will help facilitate the professional development plan;

✓ Outline evaluation processes, including instruments and protocols and substantiates their use with supportive research, theory and/or experience; and

✓ Reference budget amounts that are congruent with the financial workbook.
EDUCATION PLAN  

PARENT ENGAGEMENT

1. Describe how you will engage parents from the time that the application is approved through the opening of the school. What specific strategies will be implemented to establish buy-in and to learn parent priorities and concerns during the transition process and post opening?

2. Outline specific strategies to be employed to engage parents as partners in promoting student academic achievement.

3. Describe any additional work to involve parents in the life of the school (in addition to any proposed governance roles). Explain the plan for building family-school partnerships that strengthen support for learning and encourage parental involvement. Describe any commitments or volunteer activities the school will seek from, offer to, or require of parents.

4. Discuss any community resources that will be available to students and parents. Describe any partnerships the school will have with community organizations, businesses, or other educational institutions. Specify the nature, purposes, terms, and scope of services of any such partnerships, including any fee-based or in-kind commitments from community organizations or individuals that will enrich student-learning opportunities.

Narrative Response:

The Gathering Place believes that families create an orbit of support for children as they grow and develop into their best selves. As our board members Quincy Boyd and Jon Hinojosa stressed in our mission and vision process (See Mission and Vision), it is essential for schools and families to have an open, collaborative relationship built on trust and a shared vision for their child’s success. As a school, we know each family is unique. We have therefore extended our parent engagement plan to be a family engagement plan in order to be respectful of and inclusive of the various individuals who may be guardians, parents, or champions of our future students. Additionally, we recognize that many families may have barriers preventing them from being as involved as they may want to be. Income, language, disability, illness, work schedules, transportation, and many other factors may play a role in how families can work alongside schools to support their child. We, therefore, believe it is our responsibility as a school to do everything possible to find ways for families and schools to overcome barriers together. Our family engagement strategy includes family voice in our school vision and model, regular communication structures with families that are flexible to the needs of each family, and makes our school space accessible to families and community organizations. The research and experiences that have shaped this strategy are outlined within the paragraphs below.

FAMILY VOICE AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Design of The Gathering Place began with 300 meetings with community members in order to listen to families express their experiences, needs, and views on education. After hearing the expressed need for a strong arts programs, learning experiences rooted in the real-world, and schools that support students’ social and emotional development, co-founders Joanna Klekowicz (proposed Principal) and Ryan York (proposed Superintendent) prototyped The Gathering Place model through the form of a free summer camp. (See Outreach and Public Meetings.) One of the key reasons for hosting this free camp was to collect feedback from families on our model design and to gauge family interest in this type of unique model. Survey data collected from campers’ families demonstrated 100% support for The Gathering Place opening and their feedback directly impacted multiple aspects of our model. For example, in talking with families and reading over family survey results, an
unexpected pattern came up - families kept referencing how much confidence their child gained at
our camp, and how impactful it was that they presented their work to people from all over the
community. This inspired us to invest more in our showcases and specifically in how we promote
showcases throughout the community to ensure a wide range of San Antonians know about and
come see the remarkable work our kids do. We have budgeted $6,048 for showcases in Year 1 and
scaled accordingly in each year of enrollment growth. (See Financial Workbook Assumptions Tab 96.)
If awarded a charter, a second free summer camp will be offered that is twice the size and length in
order to continue collecting feedback from families (funding for this camp is provided through our
current Innovative Schools Fellowship through City Education Partners). (See Attachment FOG 14.)

Our family engagement plan is designed to incorporate a feedback loop that includes the following:
» Family representation on the Board. At least one parent or guardian of a child enrolled in our
school will serve on our Board to ensure that voices (priorities and concerns) of our families are heard
at the highest levels of leadership within the organization.
» Annual family and community meetings. As part of our Board’s annual strategic planning process,
we hold a series of annual in-person meetings to solicit input and feedback from families that drive
the organization’s annual goals. If awarded a charter, this begins the month after award.
» Monthly coffee with the co-founders/school leaders. We host monthly coffee with the Principal and
Superintendent where all families are invited to surface priorities, share concerns, and provide
feedback. This serves as a space for the Principal and Superintendent to report back on how feedback
has been implemented over the past month. These begin with enrolled families once the admission
window (and lottery, if applicable) is completed.
» Annual family survey. The Principal provides an annual family survey that is available electronically
and on paper in all primary home languages to ensure all families have the opportunity to provide
feedback to school leadership regarding metrics and indicators. (See School Culture.)

PARTNERING WITH FAMILIES TO PROMOTE STUDENT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT
We engage families in the learning process with their children. Studies show that, “Parent
involvement in education is crucial. No matter their income or background, students with involved
parents are more likely to have higher grades and test scores, attend school regularly, have better
social skills, show improved behavior, and adapt well to school.” While family involvement is
voluntary, we create multiple and varied opportunities explained below.
» Literacy. We prioritize literacy at the elementary level with families in order to promote student
academic achievement. We send home information and hold free workshops led by our Literacy
Coach for families on best practices for reading at home and host a free literacy night each trimester
where families and teachers come together after-school to read together. We have budgeted $25 per
student per year in library books that students are allowed to take home. (See Financial Workbook
Assumptions Tab Line 95.)
» Pop-up Community Learning Labs. Twice a year, we host pop-up community learning labs. Students
at the co-design workshops named that their dream was to see school bring their families in so that
families could share hobbies, talents, and their cultures with the student body. (See Outreach and
Public Meetings.) As a result, families may volunteer to lead student workshops or activities.
» Family as Experts. Parents and family members may volunteer to serve as experts during student-
driven projects.
» Information and Training Sessions. We hold regular information sessions and trainings regarding
aspects of our school model that likely differ the most from other schools, like PBL and restorative
practices. Families have the opportunity to experience learning through projects and to evaluate
complex behavioral situations to understand the role of accountability in restorative practices. In the co-founders’ experiences gleaned from school visits with High Tech High (the leading project-based school system in the nation) and Los Feliz Charter School for the Arts (which is dedicated to restorative practices), we heard that this is one of the most effective steps to family engagement.  

**PBL and Art Showcases.** We invite families to two art performances and two project showcases, creating space to witness and celebrate student achievement as a family.

**REGULAR COMMUNICATION**

We make it clear we value families as partners and rely on their engagement to promote student academic achievement by implementing multiple structures of communication which reflect a combination of digital, print, and verbal opportunities for feedback, including the following:

- **Weekly newsletter.** We send home a weekly newsletter to families to inform them of upcoming events and to celebrate school and student academic accomplishments.
- **Electronic communication in real-time.** We use the free communication app, Remind, which enables families to communicate instantly through text or call with lead teachers, and simultaneously allows teachers to send direct or group messages to families (if they have opted in), all while protecting the privacy of personal telephone numbers.
- **Google Classroom.** To promote student academic achievement, we leverage Google Classroom, enabling students and families to see assignments, goals, agendas, and student work from home.
- **Voluntary teacher-family conferences.** We host family-teacher conferences twice a year. During this time, families are invited to a 1:1 meeting with their child’s teacher to review student work, hear from the child about what they have accomplished, and share questions or concerns.

**THE GATHERING PLACE AS A COMMUNITY CENTER**

The success of a school, families, and a community are all interconnected. The power to prosper lives within the people of a given community. As community cornerstones, schools can and should serve as community centers in order to provide a gathering place for diverse people and ideas. The opportunities below are managed by our Superintendent, until a Community Engagement Coordinator is hired in Year 4:

1. We dedicate a roughly 600 sq ft space in our building to serve as a family resource room where parents can connect with one another, hold meetings, or work from a computer. (See Campus Facility Not Identified for associated facility costs as well as safety plans.)
2. We host workshops and trainings from other families and/or nonprofits for families on a range of topics including personal finance, language acquisition, entrepreneurship, and other topics based on community demand.
3. We ensure our facility is welcoming and accommodating for individuals by being fully ADA compliant and easy to navigate for non-English speaking family members.
4. Beginning in Year 2, we have a full-time social worker on staff that works closely with families to support across a wide range of needs including, medical needs, housing, health and nutrition, and transportation. Connecting families with the most need with these fundamental services is transformational for children. A study from the School Social Work Journal sought to measure the impact of social workers and community centers on student outcomes and found that, "...there were net positive changes in all measured variables, and especially high net changes in school satisfaction from students and families, home academic environment, student self-esteem, and overall academic performance." Therefore, our community center also promotes student academic achievement.

ncpie.org/WhatsHappening/researchJanuary2006.cfm
Evaluation Criteria-Parent Engagement

A strong response will:

✓ Outline plan to effectively engage parents, community members, and other neighborhood partners from the time that the operator is approved and supports the plan with research, theory, and/or experience;
✓ Incorporates a feedback loop to surface the priorities and concerns of parents and the broader school community; and
✓ Include a plan to incorporate parents into the life of the school, once open, including to promote student academic achievement.
1. Provide a description of an average school day for Madison, a student enrolled in the proposed school in its first year of operation. Provide *allotted time, time of day, name, and description of each program/activity* that guide Madison’s school day and describe how this experience sets itself apart from the average school day at another school in the surrounding area. Additionally, provide a description of how the school day might look different for each of the following students:

   a. Steven, a student with an identified learning disability; and
   b. Maria, a newly arrived English language learner.

Narrative Response:

**MADISON, A THIRD GRADER AT THE GATHERING PLACE**

7:30 am: Madison qualifies for free lunch and arrives at school for free breakfast and morning play with peers.

8:00 am: The instructional day begins with morning circle, which focuses on the school’s SEL curriculum led by her lead teacher and TA. One of the SEL counselors, Mr. Banks, is visiting to participate in today’s morning circle where students continue to learn about zones of regulation for emotions. Her classmates are discussing the difference between yellow (irritated or frustrated) and red (very angry or irate). They are participating in an activity where they roleplay with peers in different scenarios facilitated by the teacher to develop the ability to self-identify yellow and red feelings. The circle closes with a mindfulness activity and a reflection on which SEL tools to use when feeling yellow or red this week.

8:30 am: Once circle is over, Madison moves into the first of four content blocks. This trimester, her class, led by lead teacher Ms. Adebayo, is focused on the theme of bees. During the explore phase of her project cycle, the Alamo Area Beekeepers Association came dressed in full gear and spoke to her class about the role bees play in San Antonio and in the broader ecosystem. Madison’s class then took a field trip to Fowler’s farm in La Verna, Texas, right outside of SA to see what a bee farm looks like. Last week, one of the beekeepers returned and presented a problem: local bee colonies on the far west side of SA are experiencing a sudden population decline. She asked for Madison’s class to help identify the root cause and to raise awareness of how to best address that problem. Madison’s cohort formed teams and during the brainstorm stage of their project cycle, each team developed possible solutions for the decline of the bee population in SA. This included studying the history of SA which addresses TEKS social studies standard 3(b)(1)(A): “How individuals, events, and ideas have influenced the history of various communities.” Her group discovered that the far West side of SA has been rapidly developing over the past 30 years, and the fields that used to sustain bees have been cleared for new housing. Madison’s team decides to create an informational video for developers, imploring them to incorporate natural fields of wildflowers in their development plans. Their finished product is showcased at the school-wide, end-of-trimester showcase and presented to local developers who respond to each group’s idea. Her group also divided roles and responsibilities. Madison chose the task of recording the infomercial and uploading it to her group’s YouTube channel (whose privacy settings have been set to share only with her class).

   Today, Madison’s group is working on a scene showing what grocery shopping looks like in a world where all bees have been wiped out. Two students in her group are researching online which
foods would no longer exist, one student in her group is working with cardboard and paint to design the set for the scene, and Madison is recording the construction of the set design on her laptop to practice how to capture and upload video footage to the group’s YouTube channel for tomorrow’s filming.

While Madison is deeply immersed in practice, the TA, Mr. Mendez, is working with a small group of students who need additional support with their writing. Even though each group is working on a different project, most teams have integrated some form of writing into their project. Concurrently, the lead teacher is checking in with each team individually and collecting formative data.

Towards the end of the first content block, Madison’s two teammates begin joking about different vegetables they’ve never seen before. Her other teammate, who has been creating the set, gets frustrated that other members in his group are not working. Madison remembers what she learned during circle and helps him think about how he’s feeling and the most productive way to respond. He then walks over to share his feelings with his other two teammates and talks about how the project can only be successful if everyone completes their responsibilities. Madison is proud that she was able to help her team resolve a conflict that could’ve turned into an argument.

9:30 am: Madison heads to her first, 30-minute recess of the day which is supervised by her lead teacher and TA. Madison has been working with friends to build an outdoor fort.

10:00 am: It's time for her second block which is her literacy block. Today, the TA is leading 8 students through a guided reading lesson aligned to TEKS-standards while Ms. Adebayo moves between two groups of students, one reading independently and the other working together to read and discuss a current event article that’s been provided through NewsELA.

11:00 am: Madison has 45 minutes of physical education every day with her PE teacher, Ms. Gonzalez. Today is a game of kickball. She loves team games because she gets a lot of energy out.

11:45 am: Lunch is fun for Madison because she gets to see and talk with friends who are not in her core cohort.

12:15 pm: She heads to her creative arts class. She’s currently in dance learning to salsa dance for the winter art showcase. Her teacher, Ms. Fray, used to be a professional salsa dancer in San Antonio.

1:00 pm: Madison then heads to her Inquiry-based CGI Math block. During this block, Madison is working on inquiry-based problems aligned to TEKS-standards by modeling her thinking with manipulatives, and discussing her approach with peers as Ms. Adebayo and Mr. Mendez facilitate.

2:00 pm: Madison heads to her second 30-minute recess where she and her friends hurry to see if their outside structure is still intact. It is. Madison and her friends spend the rest of recess painting the front of their newly constructed fort.

2:30 pm: The final block of the day is her second project block where she continues to build on the project from this morning. She and her peers are building custom flower gardens to test which flowers attract the most bees, learning the TEKS 3rd grade science standard 3(b)(2)(C): “Scientific investigation and reasoning. The student uses scientific practices during laboratory and outdoor investigations. The student is expected to: observe and measure data.” Each group is responsible for building one garden bed frame and her class spends the block learning how to make a rectangle with right angles, using protractors, wood, hammers, and nails.

3:30-3:45 pm: Madison then packs up and gets ready for home. This wraps up her school day which is unlike any others in the surrounding area given that mastery of the TEKS standards occurs through project-based learning; daily arts; SEL; and two daily recesses.

STEVEN, A STUDENT WITH AN IDENTIFIED LEARNING DISABILITY

As The Gathering Place is committed to an inclusive learning environment for all students, Steven's day looks a lot like Madison's; however, there are a few key differences that ensure he is
Steven is very good at understanding qualitatively what the goal of a given problem is, but struggles understanding and communicating how different quantitative values compare to one another. When asked which difference is greater, the difference between 22 and 27 or the difference between 21 and 28, Steven counts up from the lower number on his hand or uses a manipulative to assess the difference of each pair before being able to correctly identify the answer. In Steven’s IEP, a general accommodation is to have a 1:1 partner, either a peer or adult that he can talk through math problems with. When Steven verbalizes the problem and translates his thinking into words, it is much easier for him to understand the problem. He also receives extra time on mathematical questions or assignments. He is allowed to use a calculator at all times (except for specific tests assessing mental math and/or basic calculations) and manipulatives including PopCubes.

Steven has two IEP goals this year, the first is focused on being able to model mathematical problems with manipulatives. The goal is for Steven to accurately model addition and subtraction problems under 100 using manipulatives with 80% accuracy. His classmates are starting to work on computations with values between 100 and 1,000. As a result, Mr. Torres modifies Steven’s assignments to have problems with less than 100, and works with Ms. Adebayo to track accuracy. Secondly, Steven is working on being able to read other people’s work and explain how they solved the answer. Discussing other people’s work helps Steven understand math operations as patterns instead of calculations, which is easier for him to understand and learn from. To support meeting that goal, Steven and Mr. Torres have two 30-minute sessions each week 1:1 during Steven’s inquiry CGI block where they move to an area inside his classroom and work on looking at completed problems and discussing them, identifying patterns based on the types of problems they are analyzing.

Lastly, Steven has a weekly goal tracker that Mr. Torres creates for him, including problems that are good for him to practice during the inquiry block and at home. Mr. Torres regularly communicates with Steven’s parent about his progress and Steven’s dad has agreed to spend two 15-minute sessions with Steven at home working on the problems in his goal tracker. Steven has named that getting to work on some of the same school tasks at home helps him a lot because he feels really comfortable explaining his work to his dad which helps him better understand the problems.

M aria, A Newly Arrived English Language Learner

Maria, 8 years old, started school at The Gathering Place three months ago in the middle of the school year. She recently moved to the United States and has been learning English for over a year. She is currently Speech Emergent, meaning she can identify common objects and ideas in English and put together multi-word sentences in a way that is understandable to other English speaking peers; however, she still takes time to formulate her ideas in English and relies heavily on context clues.

Maria’s bilingual certified lead teacher (Ms. Adebayo) has been working carefully with Maria as she participates in project groups to make sure her language barrier is not preventing her from contributing and sharing her ideas with her classmates. Ms. Adebayo has also been working on ensuring that Maria’s home language, Spanish, and home culture is honored and respected at school, giving Maria opportunities to engage in activities in Spanish and making time during morning circle for Maria and many of her EL peers to share in Spanish. Ms. Adebayo will translate Maria’s story to the class in English after Maria has shared, giving Maria a chance to hear her ideas back in English while being able to share important stories and feelings in her home language.
During Maria’s first project block, her group is working on their project to create an infomercial about bees. One of her partners also speaks Spanish, so Maria and her partner transition to Spanish when Maria or her partner are unsure of a specific word or sentence structure. They often help each other if one knows specific vocabulary that the other may not. Maria and her partner also make sure that foods that their family uses are included in the infomercial. Maria is excited when one of her classmates asks what nopales are, and pulls up a picture on her computer for her classmates to see.

Maria prefers to speak Spanish more than English during recess; however, she has a few new friends that don’t speak Spanish, so she is starting to use her English more as her social circle expands.

During her literacy block, Maria starts her day in a small guided reading group with Mr. Mendez. The other students in her group are currently at similar reading abilities. Today, the guided reading book is “Uncle Nacho’s Hat”. The book is written in English and Spanish, which enables Mr. Mendez to focus on language acquisition and content comprehension simultaneously. After her guided reading block, Ms. Adebayo has prepared vocabulary cards for Maria.

Maria is excited to go to dance, it’s her favorite class, and right now they’re learning salsa dancing. She can’t wait to dress up for the big showcase coming up next month and she loves the music. All the lyrics are in Spanish and remind her of music that her abuela listens to at home.

Throughout Maria’s remaining classes, she continues to work closely with peers who also speak Spanish to help each other if they run into words they do not know or ideas they’re unsure how to address. The collaborative nature of her classes combined with having a teacher that speaks Spanish helps her as she learns English. Maria feels comfortable at her new school.

EDUCATIONAL AND EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS OF STAFF

They are as follows: (1) Ms. Adebayo, bilingual certified lead teacher, required to have a bachelor’s degree as well as valid Texas bilingual certification, advanced degree preferred; (2) Mr. Torres, special education teacher, required to have a bachelor’s degree as well as valid Texas certification in special education, advanced degree preferred; (3) Ms. Fray, teaching artist, required to have a bachelor’s degree and experience as a professional dancer; (4) Ms. Gonzalez, physical education teacher, required to have a bachelor’s degree, advanced degree preferred; (5) Mr. Mendez, teaching assistant, required to have a high school diploma, associate’s degree preferred; (6) Mr. Banks, SEL counselor, required to have a bachelor’s degree, advanced degree preferred, as well as ≥3 years of experience working in a school or educational setting with children. (See full job descriptions in Attachment E3.)

Evaluation Criteria-A Day in the Life

A strong response will:

✓ Provide a clear sequence of events throughout each student’s school day;
✓ Establish clear and reasonable support for each students’ experience, instruction, and/or accommodations;
✓ Provide an evidence base for the proposed approach with research, theory, and/or experience; and
✓ Cite specific individual(s) and/or position(s) that will facilitate each proposed school day activity.
FINANCE/OPERATIONS/GOVERNANCE PLANS

OUTREACH AND PUBLIC MEETINGS

1. Provide a synopsis of any outreach held to discuss the proposed charter school plan. NOTE: Applicants must prepare a Meeting Question Protocol for all public meetings. A question protocol is a document, script, or outline of topics, questions, and/or solicited community input that will be explored in each meeting. An applicant should carefully consider specific area(s) of stakeholder input that will help guide the final proposal.

2. Discuss specific outreach strategies that were or will be taken. Include:
   a. Board Member input as to the specifics of outreach planning, protocols for the meeting(s), and any community engagement;
   b. Selection process/rationale for all strategies used for community outreach/ADVERTISEMENT; and
   c. Considerations for any barriers to engagement for parents and families.

3. List and describe all public meetings held to date. NOTE: Open-Enrollment Charter Schools that are subsequently approved for multiple campuses after Year 1 must hold at least one public meeting within the geographic boundaries at least one year prior to opening any campus. See Letter of Special Assurances (available to download on the Subchapter D Charter Applicant page which can be accessed HERE) if proposing to open more than one campus. Include:
   a. Date and location of each meeting;
   b. The number of attendees at each meeting, including a count of those residing within five, ten, and twenty or more miles of the meeting location;
   c. Outreach efforts to promote each meeting; and
   d. Board Member(s) in attendance at each meeting.

4. Explain any strategies that increased attendance at the meeting(s) or factors that contributed to lower attendance rates.

5. Describe any communications with Texas State Board of Education Representatives and/or elected officials to date.

Narrative Response:

The Board has worked through every stage of the school design process to collect feedback and input from the community in order to co-design The Gathering Place. In addition, founding board members have been involved in the planning and implementation of outreach activities.

MEETINGS WITH DIVERSE STAKEHOLDERS

Beginning in January 2018, co-founders Joanna and Ryan held empathy interviews with over 300 different members of San Antonio’s community who live in or serve the Near-Northwest side including children, families, educators, school and district leaders, business leaders, religious leaders, nonprofit directors, elected politicians, city government employees, district school board members, college professors, and other individuals invested in public education. Three patterns emerged: (1) children wanted to work on things that interested them, (2) parents and families wanted schools where their children were seen as individuals and appreciated for who they were, and (3) businesses
and nonprofits wanted schools that resulted in graduates with passion and critical thinking skills. Community members also voiced concern about an overemphasis on math and reading at the cost of other equally important learning experiences, and a desire to see more arts programming. Our community stressed this unmet need and underlined that there are no public schools in all of San Antonio (ISD or charter) that offer daily arts for all K-8 students. These conversations resulted in a draft mission and vision. (See Mission and Vision.)

PROTOTYPING THE GATHERING PLACE
After creating a draft mission and vision, Joanna and Ryan prototyped the resulting school model through a free summer camp called The Great Food Truck Summer Camp which combined key elements of social-emotional learning (SEL), project-based learning (PBL), and arts into a week-long learning program. Campers ages 9-12 learned how to cook (they made and served over 600 tacos including homemade tortillas), build websites, film and publish commercials, prototype 3D food truck designs, and screen print self-created logos. As forms of authentic assessment, campers pitched their businesses to three local food truck owners for feedback in preparation for the culminating public showcase, where each group showcased their work to 100+ community guests. Guests voted on the food truck that they were most likely to revisit and the winning team spent a day learning about entrepreneurism at Rackspace, an international technology company based in San Antonio. (See letter of support in Attachment FOG 3.)

Our first objective of the summer camp was to test model demand. The 24 slots filled up in the first 10 hours with a waitlist of 125 families. Upon mapping home addresses, we learned that the majority of registrants resided in the area that has become our proposed primary attendance zone. All enrolled families learned about the camp through word-of-mouth marketing from community members with whom Joanna and Ryan had met. Board member Quincy Boyd provided support on its design and word-of-mouth marketing, and was in attendance at the culminating public showcase. Our second objective was to prototype The Gathering Place's educational model. The summer camp covered over 30 TEKS standards, many of which were above the average grade level of our campers; 76% of campers said they learned more during the week of camp than during a typical school week.

Campers and families were also surveyed. Results showed that 96% of campers said they would enroll at The Gathering Place; 100% of parents said they were impressed with how much their children learned and shared qualitative feedback like, “The Gathering Place will provide an amazing place for my daughter to explore her interests and ambitions,” and, “Your summer camp brought such confidence to my son. He took what he learned and brought it back home very eager to show off his learning. I've never seen him like this.”

STUDENT CO-DESIGN WORKSHOPS
Next, two co-design sessions were held with local students to better understand and capture student voice. Board member Jon Hinojosa supported the development of these co-design workshops, and hosted the first event at Say Si, while board member Janet Young shared the event with her network. Fifteen high school students attended. The second workshop was hosted at the UTSA, where board member Diego Capeletti manages the Center for Innovation, Technology, and Entrepreneurship. The co-founders worked with Taylor Waits who was named Ms. UTSA for the 2017-2018 year. As a campus leader, she shared the event and 18 students attended.

At the workshops, students designed their dream school, reflected on what had been most impactful
in their K-8 experiences, and identified what they wish had been different. All students named that the two most transformative things had been relationships they had with an adult mentor and the rare occasions when they had worked on content that personally interested them and was connected to the real world. The four prevailing themes were: (1) recognizing the importance of mental health and creating a school community where everyone belongs, (2) students being allowed to follow their own passions, (3) increasing the arts, and (4) bringing families into schools so that they can share their cultures and talents with the student body. Snippets of conversations and written survey results included, “We spend all our time learning about other people, but we never learn about ourselves;” and, “I don’t know how what I’m learning is preparing me for college or work. My teachers just keep telling me that ‘I’ll use it one day,’” and “I feel that the arts should play a big part in one’s education due to the fact that culture is being slowly lost because of the stress of learning everything on the test. Teachers no longer teach real things.” Additionally, college students expressed that their K12 experiences had not prepared them well for college, except for one student who stated that her favorite teacher, “…exposed me and my friends to different projects in the field, like we went out and actually did what environmental scientists do.” Their parting advice was, “You’re teaching a new generation of kids, unlike anything the world has seen. Remember that. Build a school where kids want to go and listen to them.” Under the guidance of our Board, these co-design learnings helped us to refine our draft mission and vision, led to our full commitment to teaching through PBL so that students explore content in the real-world, and resulted in the inclusion of innovations like our pop-up community learning labs.

DOOR-TO-DOOR CANVASSING
We canvassed 915 homes in our proposed primary attendance boundary to gather feedback from adult community members. Survey results showed that:
(a) 100% of residents desire a school that supports students in developing social-emotional skills,
(b) 97% of residents desire a school where students learn through hands-on projects, and
(c) 98% of residents desire a school with a strong arts program.
And, most strikingly, 98% of residents support The Gathering Place opening within our proposed target geographic location.

FORMAL PUBLIC MEETINGS
TGP Public Schools, the sponsoring entity of The Gathering Place, also hosted three formal public meetings where they presented the mission and vision, and gathered feedback. They were as follows:
(1) Monday, October 22, 2018 at the recreation center at Grace First Baptist Church, at 2514 Observation Drive from 5:30 to 6:30 pm. Board members in attendance were Janet Young, Diego Capeletti, Joanna Klekowicz, and Ryan York. The number of attendees was 26.
(2) Sunday, December 2, 2018 at Bethany Congregational UCC, at 500 Pilgrim Drive from 11:45 am to 12:45 pm. Board members in attendance were Jon Hinojosa, Janet Young, Diego Capeletti, Joanna Klekowicz, and Ryan York. The number of attendees was 62.
(3) Saturday, December 8, 2018 at the Koffee Kup at 1025 Donaldson Avenue from 11:00 am to 12:00 pm. Board members in attendance were Jen Maestas, Quincy Boyd, Joanna Klekowicz, and Ryan York. The number of attendees was 25.

In total, there were 113 attendees. Of these, the majority, 60 attendees (53.1%) resided within five miles, 47 attendees (41.6%) resided within ten miles, and 6 attendees (5.3%) resided within twenty miles of their respective public meeting location.
We used the marketing and advertising strategies for public meetings described below. Additionally, we surveyed attendees at each event, which included data on how they had learned about the event, which we then used to adjust advertising for following events.

>>Public Notices. Per the charter application requirements, we published public notices in the San Antonio Express News, which is the newspaper with the largest circulation in SA (See Attachment FOG1). Effect: 0% of attendees came as a result of public notices, however, we continued this strategy per application requirements.

>>Published advertisement in the newspaper. We also utilized a print ad (Attachment FOG3) in the San Antonio Express News to advertise meeting 1. Effect: 0% of attendees came as a result of the published advertisement, and as a result, we discontinued this strategy for meeting 2 and 3.

>>Facebook advertisements. We used FB ads (Attachment FOG3) to specifically target families with school-aged children residing in our proposed attendance zone. We also posted the event on our FB page (@thegatheringplacek12). Organizations such as San Antonio Charter Moms, The Brackenridge Foundation, and Choose to Succeed re-shared the event. Effect: 62% of attendees came as a result. Therefore, we re-allocated funding from ineffective print ads to increase FB ads.

>>Word of mouth. We completed door-to-door canvassing prior to each event, and either spoke with residents or left bilingual door knockers in English and Spanish (Attachment FOG3). Word of mouth attendees heard about us from family, friends, neighbors. Effect: 31% of attendees came as a result.

>>Events. We attended the Families Empowered School Connection Fair in November 2018, where we marketed upcoming meeting 2 and 3. Effect: 7% of attendees came as a result.

>>Live segment on radio station. Prior to meeting 3, board member Diego Capeletti was interviewed in Spanish on La Nuestra, a local Spanish radio station. Effect: 0% of attendees.

Consideration for barriers to engagement included: (1) including printed door knockers that were in English and Spanish and a radio segment on a Spanish radio station to reach our Spanish-speaking community, (2) including digital ads as a result of the decreased prominence of print newspapers, and (3) incorporating canvassing to include families who may not have access or use social media.

ELECTED OFFICIALS
The co-founders made it a goal to meet with multiple elected officials throughout San Antonio. They met with Councilwoman Ana Sandoval in May 2018 (Councilwoman in our proposed district). She encouraged them to collaborate with district schools, especially on issues related to school funding and to attend events about school finance reform in TX. She recommended they speak with TX House of Representatives, Rep. Diego Bernal of District 123 which overlaps with much of Councilwoman Sandoval’s district. Taking her advice, Ryan met with Diego Bernal in July 2018, after attending a public event designed to share some of Rep. Bernal’s insights on public education. Next, continuing to follow the advice of Councilwoman Sandoval, they met with Steve Lecholop, a San Antonio Independent School District (SAISD) elected Board Trustee in July 2018. They also attended a local luncheon in August 2018 focused on school finance reform where Diego Bernal, SBOE Representative Marisa Perez-Diaz, and the Superintendent of SAISD, Pedro Martinez, spoke.

Also in May 2018, the co-founders met with State Board of Education (SBOE) member Marisa Perez-Diaz to hear her hopes for education in San Antonio. Mrs. Perez-Diaz focused on the importance of hiring and supporting local talent, which encouraged the founding Board to prioritize hiring local talent and to develop our TA program. (See Teacher Recruitment.) At least one email was also sent to each SBOE member throughout 2018, including all newly elected representatives after the November 2018 elections to make introductions and offer to meet. SBOE members Marty Rowley and Barbara Cargill responded. Mr. Rowley spoke about the importance of operating in an underserved area and
making sure the charter school had elements that are unique beyond a traditional school model. He also encouraged The Gathering Place to go beyond just the required public meeting, and to look for ways to develop community support throughout the city. Mrs. Cargill encouraged sourcing an academic and financial expert for the Board and to incorporate character education.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT
Throughout 2018, relationships were developed with a variety of community leaders, nonprofits, and businesses. Letters of support include: Dr. Maria Ferrier, President Emerita of Texas A&M University San Antonio who was appointed by the Bush Administration to lead the Office of English Language Acquisition at the US Department of Education (USDOE); Lionel Sosa who founded the largest Hispanic ad agency in the US and was named as one of Time Magazine’s 25 Most Influential Hispanics in America; Dan Menelly, CEO of the DoSeum, the interactive children’s museum of San Antonio, as well as many others. (See Attachment FOG 3.)

Attachment(s):
- FOG 1: Published Notice(s) of Public Meetings
- FOG 2: Certified Mail Receipt Cards
- FOG 3: Community Efforts and Support

**Evaluation Criteria-Outreach and Public Meetings**

A strong response will:
- ✓ Discuss method(s) of outreach used to engage potential students, parents, and families implementing robust and/or innovative strategies;
- ✓ Present a clear rationale for all strategies used for community outreach and/or advertising;
- ✓ Demonstrate significant Board involvement with the planning and implementation of outreach activities;
- ✓ Present evidence that the majority of attendees at public meetings reside within five miles of the public meetings; and
- ✓ Describe outreach to both Texas State Board of Education Representatives and elected officials.
FINANCE/OPERATIONS/GOVERNANCE PLANS

CAMPUS REQUEST AND GROWTH PLAN

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<tr>
<th>Applicant proposes to open ONE campus by Year 5?</th>
<th>Yes □</th>
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<tr>
<td>Applicant proposes to open MULTIPLE campus by Year 5?</td>
<td>Yes □</td>
<td>No □</td>
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1. If requesting more than one campus, describe the step-by-step process(es) involved in determining the number of campuses requested. If proposing only one campus, include discussion about the factors that contributed to limiting the number of proposed campuses.

2. Discuss the strategic choice areas that will be used to facilitate initial and primary campus development.

Narrative Response:

The Gathering Place seeks approval to open one K-8 campus, launching with kindergarten through second grade and adding one additional grade level each year. Our process for determining the number of campuses requested stems from our core beliefs about the role of charter schools within an educational ecosystem, and their role in filling current unmet needs within the community. The process is outlined in the following steps:

(1) We analyzed the systems and structures that enhance innovation, and compared this analysis to the original intent of charter schools as described in the TEC. We found that while larger school organizations are ideal for sustaining systems and structures, organizations need to be small and nimble to create and share disruptive innovations. Clayton Christensen, author of The Innovator’s Dilemma best illustrates this by stating, “Being large constitutes a real disability in innovation [...] The only instances in which [large] mainstream firms have successfully established a timely position in a disruptive technology were those in which the firms’ managers set up an autonomous organization charged with building a new and independent innovation.”

This connects to the original intent of TX charter schools and their role within the broad public education system, which per TEC §12.001 is to “...encourage different and innovative learning methods.” Through this step, we committed to remaining a small and nimble organization in order to encourage innovative learning strategies and are therefore requesting only one campus.

(2) We assessed measurable need and demand for innovative charter schools in San Antonio (SA). We synthesized the following research and experiences: (a) according to Families Empowered, a nonprofit TX organization that aggregates student application and enrollment data, there were over 39,000 applications submitted to charter schools in SA for the 2017-2018 school year. The resulting ~18,000 student waitlist indicates the unmet needs of families who desire an education ecosystem that is built on choice; and, (b) in our 300+ meetings with local community members (See Outreach and Public Meetings), we heard a desire for a public school that offered robust daily arts programming in K-8. Upon further investigation, we learned that there is no public school, ISD or charter, that offers daily arts programming in any of San Antonio’s 17 independent school districts. Through this step, we committed to a K-8 campus to meet our community’s unmet need.

(3) Upon establishing need and demand for innovative charter schools in SA, we deeply engaged in school co-design work with our local community. (See Outreach and Public Meetings.) We prototyped our school model through a free summer camp in 2018. The 24-slots filled up in the first 10 hours, and over 125 families registered. After further analysis, we discovered that the bulk of registrants resided within the five zip codes that now make up our proposed primary attendance boundary: zip codes
78201, 78213, 78228, 78229, and 78230. Going door-to-door, we canvassed 915 residences in these five zip codes and 98% of respondents stated their support for The Gathering Place opening as a K-8 school within our target geographic boundary. Through this step, we identified our proposed community and geographic area, and continued to develop our understanding of local need.

(4) In determining whether to apply for one campus (K-8) or two campuses (K-5 and 6-8), we analyzed research and found overwhelming support for having a single K-8 campus. Abella best captures this by stating, “The results of several studies indicated that middle level grades 6, 7, and 8 obtained higher achievement in K-8 schools than in schools with middle school configurations.” Therefore, a K-8 campus allows us to maximize student outcomes for middle school students. Currently, none of the four ISDs in our primary attendance zone offer a K-8 pathway; thereby, our proposed K-8 campus provides a unique choice for families in our proposed geographic area.

While working with our local community in our proposed attendance zone, we closely identified and analyzed specific strategic choice areas that are used to facilitate initial/primary campus development. In terms of our specific location on the Near-Northwest side, we are focused on securing a campus facility within a 2-mile radius of Longfellow Middle School, a San Antonio ISD school that has been assigned an unacceptable performance rating for the past two years under TEC §39.054. Families within the Longfellow Middle School attendance zone not only lack access to schools with robust art and project-based programming, but are also currently zoned to a school that has failed to provide a high-quality education. We worked with local real estate agents at JLL Realty to understand the facilities market in our proposed attendance zone (within two miles of Longfellow Middle School) to assess the viability of our proposed campus development. There are multiple facilities that fit within our budget and meet our growth needs, which further supported our decision to apply for one K-8 campus. (See Campus Facility Not Identified.)

2statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/ED/htm/ED.12.htm
3familiesempowered.org/what-is-school-choice/about-the-waitlist
4eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ752847

Evaluation Criteria-Campus Request and Growth Plan

A strong response will:

✓ Establish measurable need(s) for the number of campuses requested with supportive research, theory and/or experience;
✓ Illustrate clear processes for determining the number of campuses requested with supportive research, theory and/or experience;
✓ Demonstrate a thorough understanding of the proposed geographic area(s) and/or community(s) in relation to the number of requested campuses; and
✓ Identify specific strategic choice areas that will be used to facilitate initial and primary campus development citing supportive research, theory and/or experience.
Has the applicant identified a specific location for at least one campus in Year 1? Yes □ No □

FINANCE/OPERATIONS/GOVERNANCE PLANS

CAMPUS FACILITY IDENTIFIED

THIS SECTION IS ONLY TO BE COMPLETED if you indicated “yes” above to indicate that you have already identified a specific facility. This means that you know the physical address for at least one of the proposed campus(es) in Year 1. If you indicated “no” above, do not complete and proceed to the next section.

1. Describe the process used to identify and select the proposed facility. Identify individuals/organizations that had a significant role in the selection and/or procurement process.

2. Describe the facility and community and how they will be ideal for the proposed charter school’s mission, vision, educational model, and scope of operation. If any, detail all construction and/or renovations that must take place before serving students. Include all plans to ensure that the school facility will be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). NOTE: Prior to opening and serving students, all charter holders must provide the TEA with the Certificate of Occupancy with an “E” or Education rating for the facility. The certificate must be issued by the appropriate local authority.

3. Detail the proposed acquisition process to account for any lease or purchase agreements. Include projected acquisition timeline(s) and associate cost(s) and fee(s). If leasing, provide evidence that the applicant will be within the 2nd or 3rd degree of consanguinity or affinity to the lessor.

Narrative Response:

Not Applicable. A campus facility has not yet been identified.
Evaluation Criteria-Campus Facility Identified

A strong response will:
✓ Provide a clear description of the facility and explain how it will be an ideal setting to serve the needs of the target population;
✓ Describe how the facility aligns to the mission, vision, educational model, and enrollment growth and rollout;
✓ Describes a clear process that was used to identify and select the proposed facility, including market research, factors/considerations, timelines, relevant individuals/organizations that had a significant role in the process;
✓ Provide a specific description of the purchase or leasing arrangements, including timeline(s), cost(s), and fee(s);
✓ Provide a clear plan for any construction or renovations that must occur to ensure adequate facilities, including timeline(s), costs(s), and fee(s); and
✓ Present budget costs and financing arrangements that are congruent with the financial workbook.
FINANCE/OPERATIONS/GOVERNANCE PLANS

CAMPUS FACILITY NOT IDENTIFIED

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<th>Does the applicant intend to lease or purchase a property?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Lease ☑ Purchase ☐</td>
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1. Describe the desired facility and community and how the facility will be suitable for the proposed charter school’s mission, vision, educational model, and scope of operation.

2. Describe the process for identifying and securing a facility. Include:
   a. Results from market research and analysis;
   b. Plans for modification, building, and/or renovation including any work with a Charter Support/Development Company for facility build-out, modification, renovation, etc.;
   c. Time lines;
   d. Financing; and
   e. Relevant individuals/organizations that will have a significant role in the selection and/or procurement process.

3. If any, detail all anticipated construction and/or renovations that must take place before serving students. Include all plans to ensure that the school facility will be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). NOTE: Prior to opening and serving students, all charter holders must provide the TEA with the Certificate of Occupancy with an “E” or Education rating for the facility. The certificate must be issued by the appropriate local authority.

Narrative Response:
Evaluation Criteria-Campus Facility Not Identified

A strong response will:
✓ Provides a clear description of the desired facility and community and how it will be the ideal setting to serve the needs of the target population;
✓ Describes how a potential facility would align with the mission, vision, educational model, and enrollment growth and rollout;
✓ Provide a clear process for identifying and securing a facility with support from market research and analysis;
✓ Identify relevant individuals that will have significant roles in the facility selection and procurement process, including clear qualifications and/or experience;
✓ Provide a clear description of the anticipated purchase or leasing arrangements and/or construction or renovations that might occur to ensure adequate facilities; and
✓ Present budget figures that are congruent with the financial workbook.
FINANCE/OPERATIONS/GOVERNANCE PLANS

TRANSPORTATION

1. Provide an overview of how students will be transported to and from the proposed school. If the proposed school will be a “neighborhood campus”, outline the factors, experience, and/or community outreach efforts that substantiate that designation. NOTE: A “neighborhood campus” is one in which it is foreseeable that at least 50% of the enrolled student body resides will reside within five miles of the campus.

2. If student transportation will be provided, detail any student transportation plans, including:
   a. Whether daily bus transportation will be offered to all students;
   b. Whether the school will provide public transportation vouchers (e.g., bus passes);
   c. What year bus services will begin; and
   d. The dollar amount budgeted for transportation services.

   NOTE: All references to “daily bus transportation” should reflect any transportation services (provided by the school) that will facilitate student pick-up and drop-off. More information on transportation funding can be found by right-clicking HERE.

3. If student transportation will not be offered, articulate the reasoning that contributed to this decision.

4. Outline transportation plans for students with Individualized Education Plans (IEP) that designate required transportation. NOTE: Charter schools must provide transportation services to individual students, if included in their Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Narrative Response:

The project-based nature of The Gathering Place’s educational model includes opportunities for students to regularly participate in experiential learning through field trips and engagement in off-campus learning. Preliminary estimates for day field trip transportation range from $100-$400 per trip depending on the distance. Using a conservative estimate for the number of off-campus trips needed in the first year, and a goal to travel at least two times per class per month, The Gathering Place would spend at minimum $63,000 in Year 1 on transportation for these field trips.

Given this unique aspect of our educational model and programming, we believe it is more cost efficient to purchase a used bus and hire a full-time bus driver, which costs $60,028 per year including fuel, purchasing a used bus (based on quotes from local used school bus dealers), insurance, repair and maintenance, and a bus driver with benefits. To maximize the benefits and put our ownership and maintenance of a bus (and a driver) to its highest and best use, we implement a transportation program that provides transportation for families before and after school, while also serving to transport students on project-based learning trips during the school day.

Buses are phased in due to budgetary constraints. In Year 1, we have one bus and one bus driver which accommodates 72 students (the max capacity of a standard school bus) during before-school and after-school transportation. Given that we have more students than seats available, we prioritize students that live more than two miles but less than 5 miles away from our campus and who are in our primary attendance zone. (See Geographic Boundaries.) Within that range, if there are more students interested than seats available in a given year, we hold a random lottery or other mechanism to ensure equitable opportunity for transportation. If The Gathering Place is awarded a charter, our
Board oversees the drafting and approves a transportation policy to place in our Family Handbook. By Year 5, we have 4 buses and 4 bus drivers for a total of 288 seats. We have also allocated money for VIA public transportation passes for up to 10% of our student population so that families can apply if they encounter transportation problems like a car breaking down. (See Financial Workbook Assumptions Tab Line 102.) This helps ensure enrolled families do not miss school or feel the need to un-enroll for short-term transportation challenges. We also believe that the efficient use of buses mitigates against traffic concerns often raised by neighbors of the school and City government.

We plan to operate as a neighborhood school, meaning at least 50% of enrolled students come from within a 5-mile radius as the five zip codes that make up our proposed attendance boundary encompass a 5-mile radius. We plan to locate our facility within our proposed primary attendance zone and within 2-miles of Longfellow Middle School, an SAISD school that has been assigned an unacceptable performance rating for the past two years under TEC §39.054. We believe it is possible to hit our enrollment goals as a neighborhood school based on the high degree of interest demonstrated through our summer camp and community events. (See Outreach and Public Meetings.) As our proposed primary attendance zone is crisscrossed by Interstate 10 and Interstate 410, we expect the primary transportation method for families to be via car and/or walking depending on the accessibility of the school to nearby neighborhoods. We also plan to work with families via Remind, a free parent communication app, to set up carpool opportunities for families that live near each other.

Separate from our plan and costs outlined above, we have also budgeted to provide transportation for students with IEP transportation requirements. Based on enrollment patterns of ISDs and charters in San Antonio, we do not expect more than 5% of our special education population to require transportation. We have confirmed that we can provide transportation that has the mechanical adaptations to accommodate students with various disabilities at the rate of $12,000 per bus, which holds 12 students. We have budgeted a paraprofessional for every 300 students which can be utilized if a student’s IEP requires transportation services to include a paraprofessional. Even in our 5th year of operation, 5% of our total special education population would be 7 students which means that one bus meets transportation needs that may arise for students with IEP transportation requirements. This $12,000 is reflected in our special education services line item in our budget under contracted services (please see Budget Narrative and Financial Workbook), and the paraprofessional is included under personnel in our Financial Workbook.

Evaluation Criteria—Transportation

A strong response will:

✓ Present a detailed transportation plan, or travel voucher program, and robust reasons to believe the charter school will establish neighborhood campus(es) or articulate compelling reasons why transportation will not be provided;
✓ Present a clear transportation plan for students with IEPs; and
✓ Present budget costs and financing arrangement(s) that align with the financial workbook.
FINANCE/OPERATIONS/GOVERNANCE PLANS

STUDENT RECRUITMENT

1. Identify any groups targeted for student recruitment (e.g., charter school wait lists, low-income families, Gifted and Talented students, students with special needs, students at-risk, students in need of drop-out recovery, etc.).

2. Discuss recruitment strategies (with associated timelines) that will effectively reach the anticipated community. If the applicant has identified "charter school wait lists" as a targeted need, provide specific reasoning to validate the belief that prospective parents will choose the proposed program over other existing school options.

3. Describe the roles and responsibilities for anyone involved in planning, implementing, or evaluating recruitment activities as well the experience and expertise of any person(s) doing this work, if known.

4. Provide metric(s) that will determine effectiveness of recruitment strategies in Year 0 (Start-Up Period) and Year 1. Explain how the Board will adjust recruitment strategies if enrollment numbers are lower than expected.

Narrative Response:

As an open enrollment public charter school, The Gathering Place encourages diversity to dismantle historic segregation within this zip code cluster and is fully committed to serving all children. We believe that our unique school model attracts students of all backgrounds. (See Mission and Vision for description of why targeted groups are best served by the proposed mission, vision, and ed program.)

Recruitment efforts:
(1) Prioritize recruiting children who live in the attendance zone of Longfellow Middle School, a SAISD school assigned an unacceptable performance rating for the past two years under TEC §39.054;  
(2) Recruit within our proposed attendance zone (See Geographic Boundaries);  
(3) Market to students who are involved in community-based arts. Our 2 co-design workshops and our 300+ meetings with community members revealed our community's unmet need for a school with daily arts programming for all students K-8.

Our projected school demographics include 89% students on free or reduced lunch, 24% English Learners, and 12% students receiving special education services. (See Enrollment and Demographic Projections.) We have allocated additional funding within our student recruitment budget to ensure that families that may be harder to reach or might be disenfranchised have opportunities to learn about our school. Based on our current student recruitment strategy, we have budgeted $31,340 in Year 0 for student recruitment, which includes $30 per new student, plus $20,000 for hourly, bilingual enrollment ambassadors to reach historically hard-to-reach families through door-to-door canvassing. After Year 0, we have budgeted an additional $30 per new student plus $10,000 for hourly, bilingual enrollment ambassadors to reach historically hard-to-reach families.

STRATEGIES
We have combined best practices gleaned from research, collected from conversations with other charters and districts, and our professional experience to develop the student recruitment strategy. During the 2017-2018 school year, Joanna Klekowicz (proposed Principal) joined the team at Digital Pioneers Academy, a new-start charter school in Washington DC, as the Entrepreneur-in-Residence.
Here, she stepped in to lead student recruitment; devised the strategy to source, hire, and deploy a team of grassroots enrollment ambassadors; led hands-on experience sessions for potential students; and, doubled enrollment from 40 students to 80+ students in three weeks. Digital Pioneers Academy ultimately opened fully enrolled and with a multi-student waitlist. Her successful experience has helped shape and customize our recruitment strategy for SA that include six categories: (1) Awareness - people know about us; (2) Interest - people who have visited our website or responded to an ad; (3) Inquiries - people who have indicated they want to enroll, have completed an inquiry form, or started an application; (4) Applicants - people who have completed an application, (5) Enrolled - people who have completed the enrollment process; and, (6) Attended - children who attend on day 1 of school. We have collected data from multiple existing charter schools, including networks in San Antonio like Great Hearts and IDEA who shared the following average conversion rates at new campuses: the Awareness to Attend conversation rate is 1% - 5%, the Inquiries to Attend conversion rate is 50%, the Applicants to Attend conversion rate is 75%, and the Enrolled to Attend conversion rate is 95%.

Recruitment includes the following eight strategies:

»Strategy 1: Communicate Our Mission and Vision Clearly. All English and Spanish outreach materials cite our mission and vision. Based on community outreach data (See Outreach and Public Meetings), which includes a 98% support rate for The Gathering Place within our proposed attendance zone and a 100% support rate from our 113 attendees at our public information sessions, we believe that our mission and vision deeply resonate with our community.

»Strategy 2: Host and Attend Community Events. We host and attend community events, including art events. We market these community events through our social media, website, and newsletter (See Strategy 6). Throughout Year 0, we plan to host multiple community events including information sessions, neighborhood block parties and cookouts, and workshops designed to inform families of our model. We also attend community events and fairs, including the annual Families Empowered Back-to-School Fair in September and Enrollment Fair in November, the Boys and Girls Club annual STEM fair in October, the San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce’s Core 4 STEM community event, and ongoing events hosted by Big Brother Big Sister, the YMCA and other nonprofits. At all events, we have intent to apply forms or applications depending on the time of year.

»Strategy 3: Leverage Community Partnerships. We leverage partnerships to communicate directly with prospective families. We’ve built relationships with Pre-K 4 SA, Head Start, Say Si, Big Brothers Big Sisters, The San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the Children’s Museum, the DoSeum, and Youth Code Jam, all organizations with whom we plan to advertise enrollment opportunities.

»Strategy 4: Offer a Free Summer Camp. During our application year, we hosted a free summer camp called The Great Food Truck Summer Camp to prototype aspects of our PBL approach and SEL curriculum. Through word of mouth, our camp filled up in the first 10 hours and had a waitlist of 125 families. We have plans and funding to double the size of the camp in 2019.

»Strategy 5: Utilize Direct Mailers & Flyers. We know that some families may not have time to attend in-person events; therefore, we send bilingual direct mailers, in English and Spanish, to families with children ages 4-7 in our proposed attendance zone with enrollment process and contact information. The Direct Marketing Association conducted a research study on the effectiveness of direct mailers and found an average 4.4% response rate, far better than standard email response rates which average 0.12%. Direct mailers ensures that families without internet access are able to learn about The Gathering Place. (See Financial Workbook Assumptions Tab Line 107.)

»Strategy 6: Digital Presence and Marketing. As of January 1, 2018, we have built an initial base of 632 followers on Facebook, 288 subscribers to our newsletter, and have had 1,909 unique website visitors with 78% of visitors residing in San Antonio. If awarded a charter, our online presence and marketing will expand. We continually increase our use of social media ad targeting to prioritize...
families with children in the age range we serve residing in our proposed attendance boundary. We also will leverage search engine advertising and optimization to ensure families searching for keywords related to education and school enrollment are able to learn about The Gathering Place.

Strategy 7: Grassroots outreach. This primary tool involves canvassing within the primary attendance zone, as well as phone banking families who had completed interest forms and given permission for continued outreach via phone. In addition to the $30 budgeted per enrolled student for recruitment and marketing, we have also budgeted $20,000 in Year 0 to contract enrollment ambassadors, all of whom will be fluent in English and Spanish (See Budget Narrative). We invest heavily in grassroots outreach as it allows us to speak directly with families in locations that are convenient to them; hear their stories, needs, and hopes; and build rapport.

Strategy 8: Referrals. From conversations with local charters and districts, we have learned that one of the strongest forms of student recruitment are referrals. We anticipate referrals playing a prominent role from Year 1 and on.

TIMELINE

Year 1 student recruitment cycle is divided into 5 phases; we anticipate a similar cycle in future years:
(1) Pre-Application (July - October 2019) During our pre-application stage, we create an easy and streamlined application that is accessible in English, Spanish, and any other languages requested by our community. Applications are made available digitally and in print. We identify and plan community events and begin marketing each event. We also source and interview our contracted enrollment ambassadors, and purchase canvassing software (which is included in our $31,340 recruitment budget in the Financial Workbook) so that we can track the efficacy of all grassroots outreach. Lastly, we continue to build out our interest list.
(2) Open Enrollment (November 2019 - March 2020) During this period, we focus on converting inquiries into applications. This is the peak of our our physical presence at community events, door-to-door canvassing, and phone banking. Given our projected application conversion rate of 75%, our goal is to obtain at least 512 applications by the end of March to be fully enrolled by fall of 2020.
(3) Enrollment & Lottery (April 2020) If applications exceed open seats, a lottery is held. Our admission and enrollment follows our Admission and Enrollment Policy (See Attachment FOG4).
(4) Continued Efforts, if Under Enrolled (May 2020 - July 2020) Recruitment efforts continue until we are fully enrolled and are adjusted based on which ones our data shows have been most successful.
(5) Backfilling (All School Year) All open seats are filled from the waitlist. If seats are available and no waitlist exists, families enroll on a first-come first-serve basis who live in our geographic boundaries.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

(1) Enrollment Ambassadors, fluent in English and Spanish, are hired at a rate of $20/hour to execute the above grassroots recruitment strategy, create initial contact with families, build interest lists, collect contact info and permission for follow-up, attend community events, and share applications.
(2) Office Manager serves as an additional point of contact for families seeking to learn more about the school or who want to complete and submit an application.
(3) Principal devises and manages the successful execution of the student recruitment strategy. They also oversee the enrollment ambassadors and office manager, and evaluate the effectiveness of the grassroots strategy. In Year 0, they take part in all grassroots efforts as student recruitment efforts require an all-hands-on-deck approach.
(4) Superintendent supports the Principal in successfully executing the student recruitment strategy and evaluate overall success. Additionally, they oversee (with the support of the Board) the admission and enrollment process, including a lottery, follows all applicable TX laws and the Admission and
Enrollment Policy (Attachment FOG4). They communicate enrollment projections and results to the finance committee of the Board monthly, and to the full Board quarterly.

(5) Board tracks enrollment projections and evaluate results, and their impact on academic programming and financial strength of the organization. In the event of under enrollment, they determine which key strategies of the contingency plan (outlined below) are called into action so that the organization is fiscally solvent at all times. Additionally, they are ultimately responsible for overseeing that the admission and enrollment policy follows all applicable Texas laws.

CONTINGENCY PLANNING
During our open enrollment period outlined above, if fewer applications than expected are received from within our primary attendance boundary and are therefore tracking to be under enrolled, our recruitment efforts are expanded to include our full geographic boundaries. For example, this includes widening social media recruitment and advertising efforts to include families from our full attendance boundary and attending community events throughout our full attendance boundary. We also have a contingency plan in place to ensure that as we approach the start of Year 1, we are able to make quick adjustments to maintain a financially sustainable model. Three key strategies are outlined below:

1. We have budgeted $70,000 in Year 0 and $52,142 in Year 1 for contingencies. (See Financial Workbook Assumptions Tab Line 128.) If needed, this money can be used to increase student recruitment efforts or to offset the financial ramifications of being under enrolled.

2. If awarded a charter, our Board will set strategic break points for enrollment. These breakpoints trigger when we collapse the total number of cohorts of students planned for the following year, which also reduces the total number of teachers and staff needed in order to reduce the financial impact of being under enrolled.

3. Lastly, we have items in our budget related to: project supplies, travel, technology, and furniture that may be delayed. While these items are valuable and important within our model, they may be delayed or reduced in order to offset the financial ramifications of being under enrolled.

1dmnews.com/channel-marketing/direct-mail/news/13059655/dma-direct-mail-response-rates-beat-digital

Evaluation Criteria-Student Recruitment

A strong response will:

✓ Identify any groups to be targeted for student recruitment and describes why targeted groups will be best served by the proposed mission, vision, and educational program;

✓ Present specific strategies that will effectively reach the community, citing research, theory and/or experience;

✓ Identify specific roles and responsibilities of person(s), position(s), and/or entities that will be involved in planning, implementation, and evaluation and outline sufficient education and/or experience requirements;

✓ Presents specific strategies, activities, schedules, and metrics that will measure recruitment effectiveness and outline contingency plans if enrollment numbers are lower than expected; and

✓ Reference budget amounts that are congruent with the financial workbook.
1. Discuss plans and strategies to address the receipt of applications that exceed maximum enrollment, including:
   a. The Admission Period (including start and end dates);
   b. The date of the Enrollment Lottery, if needed; and
   c. Any classes of students exempted from the lottery (e.g., returning students, siblings of enrolled students, children of founders and staff, others) and the anticipated percentage of exempt students in Year 1.

Narrative Response:

The Gathering Place is committed to being a free, open-enrollment, public school. We are inclusive of all children and ensure that our application process is transparent, equitable, and fair. Per requirements outlined in TEC § 12.111(a)(6), we always specify the grade levels to be offered by The Gathering Place. TEC § 12.1171 states that charter schools specializing in performance arts may require applicants to audition for admission to the school; although we offer daily arts we are not applying as a charter school specializing in performance arts and therefore do not require applicants to audition for admission to the school. Next, we meet all state and federal laws and design our application process so that it includes all families. The application is easy to understand, available in at least English and Spanish (and translated into additional primary home languages, as needed), and available in-print and online.

We make clear and public our non-discrimination policy which complies with TEC § 12.111(a)(5) and states, "No person shall, on the basis of a person's actual or perceived identity with regard to race, color, religion, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, ancestry, nationality, pregnancy, political or religious beliefs, national or ethnic origin, veteran status, parental status, academic, artistic, or athletic ability, any other distinguishing physical or genetic characteristics, or the district the child would otherwise attend, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying under any education program or activity including admission or enrollment at The Gathering Place."

The admission period runs from November 1st to March 31st each year. If The Gathering Place is awarded a charter, the application is made available online and in-print as of November 1, 2019. We will hold multiple public events from November 1, 2019 through March 31, 2020 where paper applications are available to raise awareness and ensure families with limited access to the internet are able to apply. To ensure inclusivity, we have Spanish translators available at public events and provide all materials in English and Spanish. Additionally, the co-founders, as part of their Innovative Schools Fellowship with City Education Partners, are currently learning Spanish with the support of a private Spanish tutor and will also be in attendance at public meetings and enrollment events. As evidenced by our Admission and Enrollment Policy (See Attachment FOG4), we do not ask any unnecessary questions on the application that could serve as a deterrent for families including questions related to citizenship, academic performance, behavior, the existence of an IEP or 504 plan, or previous participation in an English Language program.
If more applications than seats are received, a random, public lottery is conducted within three weeks of the deadline to submit an application using an electronic lottery management system. Each student in our primary attendance boundary is assigned a unique ID with equal weight. We notify families of their enrollment status via phone call (and email, if provided) within 72 hours of the lottery, and if the applicant fails to respond within 5 days of the phone call, they are withdrawn from the application process. After all students in our primary boundary have been admitted, and if any enrollment seats remain unfilled, the remaining seats are filled with student applicants from the secondary boundary in the order in which applications were received unless student applications from the secondary boundary exceed the number of remaining seats. In that event, we fill remaining seats with students from the secondary boundary using the lottery system described earlier. Any families who are not awarded a seat are put on a waitlist in the order in which their names were drawn from the remaining names in the lottery. Any parent or guardian who requests to be removed from our waitlist needs to notify The Gathering Place. Upon notification, they are removed immediately and the next family on our waitlist is given the open seat. The only exempt groups from our lottery are returning students, siblings of enrolled students, as well as children of any staff members or school founders as long as these exempt individuals are in our geographic boundary and the total numbers of exempted students meets TEA guidance. We expect between 0-2% of our enrolled student population to be exempt students in Year 1.

Upon accepting their seat, families engage in our enrollment process to complete the documents specified in our Admission and Enrollment Policy. (see Attachment FOG 4.) We also collect voluntary information about students who have received special education or bilingual services, so that we may fully serve them beginning the first day of school.

If seats open up during the school year, waitlist families are notified in the order in which they appear. If a waitlist does not exist, openings are posted on our website, and families may apply to transfer their student to The Gathering Place at any point during the year until all available seats are filled.

Attachment(s):
- FOG 4: Admission and Enrollment Policy

**Evaluation Criteria-Admission and Enrollment**

A strong response will:

✓ Present an application period and application process that clearly supports fair and equitable opportunity for all students;

✓ Describe a fair and equitable selection process in the event of oversubscription;

✓ Demonstrate alignment with any enrollment requirements described in Texas Education Code (TEC) §12.111(a)(6) and §12.1171; and

✓ Provide a non-discrimination statement in Attachment E2 that satisfies TEC §12.111(a)(5).
FINANCE/OPERATIONS/GOVERNANCE PLANS

SCHOOL CALENDAR AND SCHEDULE

1. Describe the proposed school calendar, including the first and last day of school, any planned breaks, and the total number of instructional minutes in the school year. Compare the proposed calendar to the calendar in the geographic district. **NOTE:** To receive full funding, a charter school must now offer 75,600 minutes of instruction (including intermissions and recess) minus any minutes waived by the TEA in writing.

2. Describe the schedule for the school day and week, including how the proposed school week/day structure will help facilitate the applicant's vision and educational plan. Include:
   a. Start and dismissal time, including any variations by grade level; and
   b. The number of instructional hours per day, including any variations by grade level.

Narrative Response:

SCHOOL CALENDAR
The Gathering Place relies heavily on public showcases and performances for PBL and for our arts program. Students have, on average, two project showcases and two arts exhibitions each year. The calendar has been designed to have scheduled breaks immediately following each culminating project and art performance showcase. Further, with a shorter summer break, but longer fall, winter, and spring breaks, it meets the specific needs of our students by creating a strong continuum of learning, and providing break opportunities for rejuvenation (for students and staff), while mitigating summer slide in which students, especially from low-income neighborhoods, lose up to two months of their end-of-year reading ability over the summer.¹

School opens during the second week of August. Kindergarteners start that Monday and remaining students start that Wednesday, allowing for a smooth transition for our youngest students. In addition to all federal holidays, there are five scheduled staff PD days built into our calendar (See Teacher Development). The final day of school for students is during the second week of June, resulting in a total of 182 instructional days. With a 7.5-hour instructional schedule (which does not include a 15-minute dismissal), 182 days is equivalent to 81,900 minutes, far exceeding the required number of minutes (75,600) in TX.

SCHEDULE
The Gathering Place operates a 7 hour 45-minute school schedule for all grades with 7.5 hours of instruction and 15 minutes for dismissal. For students K-5, the school day is from 8:00 am through 3:45 pm and for students 6-8, the schedule is from 8:30 - 4:15 pm, allowing for staggered arrival and dismissal; and, to better accommodate research related to sleep, waking up, and the adolescent brain showing that middle school students benefit academically and socially from a later start.²

SAMPLE OF ELEMENTARY STUDENT SCHEDULE
8:00 - 8:30 am Community circle with explicit SEL curriculum
8:30 - 9:30 am Interdisciplinary Project Block
9:30-10:00 am Recess
10:00-11:00 am Balanced literacy with guided reading and targeted small group instruction
11:00-11:45 am Physical Education
11:45-12:15 pm Lunch
12:15-1:00 pm Art (Visual, Music, Theater, or Dance)
1:00-2:00 pm Inquiry-based CGI Mathematics
2:00 - 2:30 pm Recess
2:30 - 3:30 pm Interdisciplinary Project Block
3:30 - 3:45 pm Dismissal

This schedule aligns with our model by creating time for rigorous core content acquisition, daily creative arts, explicit time dedicated to SEL skill development, and time for students to develop agency through student-driven projects. (See Curriculum and Instruction.)

SAMPLE OF MIDDLE STUDENT SCHEDULE
8:30 - 9:00 am Community circle with an explicit SEL curriculum
9:00 - 10:30 am Block 1
10:30 - 12:00 pm Block 2
12:00 - 12:45 pm Lunch and free time
12:45 - 2:15 pm Block 3
2:15 - 3:45 pm Block 4
3:45 - 4:00 pm Closing community circle focused on goal setting and reflection
4:00 - 4:15 pm Dismissal

Our middle school schedule operates on a rotating, weekly block schedule. Each day, middle school students have a STEM block (integrating math and science TEKS standards) and a humanities block (integrating ELA and social studies TEKS standards) where they work on rigorous projects to master the TEKS standards. The other two blocks each day alternate between two electives (at least one each day), PE, and an additional PBL block that is primarily student driven. This schedule is aligned to our vision and core model components by creating time for social-emotional skill development, creative arts, and interdisciplinary student projects. As the co-founders have learned through their fellowship with High Tech High, the leading K-12 PBL school system in the country, 90-minute blocks of time are critical in middle school in order to allow for increasingly complex projects and immersive arts experiences that support academic achievement. (See Curriculum and Instruction.)

1 cde.state.co.us/cdellib/summerslide
2 cdc.gov/features/school-start-times/index.html

Evaluation Criteria-School Calendar and Schedule
A strong response will:
✓ Present a clear alignment with between the school calendar and student needs and school goals; and
✓ Provide a clear description and rationale for the proposed school schedule.
FINANCE/OPERATIONS/GOVERNANCE PLANS

START-UP PLAN

Identify the fiscal year for the sponsoring entity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>July 1-June 30</th>
<th>September 1-August 31</th>
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Identify the fiscal year for the proposed charter school.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>July 1-June 30</th>
<th>September 1-August 31</th>
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1. Provide a detailed start-up plan for the school, specifying tasks, timelines, Board input, and responsible individuals that will take place between charter approval (June 2019) and school opening (August 2020). The plan should describe the segregation of duties. Include specific contingencies if funding is not as anticipated.

2. Describe the costs anticipated during the start-up year. Include:
   a. Personnel
   b. Service Costs
   c. School Operation
   d. Facility Operation and Maintenance

3. Describe how the Board will monitor the creation, adoption, and implementation of the start-up plan and associated budget.

4. Present a description of how the charter school operations will mitigate waste, fraud, and abuse. NOTE: Applicants must select financial accounting software that enables compliance with the requirements discussed in the Special Supplement to the Financial Accounting System and Resource Guide, available by right clicking HERE.

Narrative Response:

The founding year for a new charter school requires expertise and knowledge across a range of skills. Our initial start-up plan was drafted by our Board. We then collected feedback and input from both of the fellowships in which the co-founders are currently participating in which includes High Tech High, a network that has launched 12 of the most successful project-based schools in the nations, and City Education Partners, a local San Antonio nonprofit with extensive knowledge and experience in San Antonio’s educational and nonprofit sectors.

START-UP FUNDING

Secured commitments from City Education Partners, Choose to Succeed, and The Brackenridge Foundation totaling $425,000 are contingent on charter approval. (See Attachment FOG 14.)

START-UP COSTS AND CONTINGENCIES IN THE EVENT OF A BUDGET SHORTFALL

All costs outlined below are congruent with our budget. (See Budget Narrative and Financial Workbook.) If awarded a charter and per their non-delegable duties, The Gathering Place Board reviews and approves the annual budget. Our June 2019 - July 2020 expenses are as follows:

- Personnel. We have budgeted $213,750 for personnel costs, which include salaries and benefits for
the Superintendent (hired for 100% of the 12-month timeframe), Principal (hired for 100% of the 12-month timeframe), Director of Finance and Operations (hired for the latter 50% of the 12-month timeframe), and the PEIMS Coordinator (hired for the latter 30% of the 12-month timeframe).

**Service Costs.** We have budgeted $20,000 for service costs, which includes $5,000 for accounting, auditing, and backend payroll services, $5,000 for legal consultation, and $10,000 in contracted special education services to ensure our backend systems for our special education programming are compliant and high-quality from day one.

**School Operations.** We have budgeted $71,590. This includes $3,000 for board member training and development, $2,000 for furniture and equipment, $3,800 for staff technology and equipment, $20,000 for the purchase of our Year 1 school bus, $1,000 for office expenses, $10,450 for staff recruitment, and $31,340 for student recruitment.

**Facility Operation and Maintenance.** The total facility operation and maintenance expenses are $47,140 which includes a year of office space and the first month’s deposit for our school facility, as well as $10,000 for any initial repairs or maintenance needed. It should be noted that we have worked with City Education Partners to explore sources for guaranteeing a facilities renovation loan if needed. (See Campus Facility Not Identified.)

**Contingency.** We have budgeted a conservative $70,000 for reserves and contingencies which makes up over 15% of our total expenses during our planning year. (See Financial Workbook Summary Line 24.) This large reserve is our primary contingency in case of unanticipated budget shortfalls or unanticipated expenses. The most likely shortfalls that could lead to us using this reserve are: (1) if enrollment goals are not on track, reserve funds are used to increase student recruitment efforts (See Student Recruitment); and, (2) if a facility that we identify includes renovation and repair costs above our current budgeted amount, reserve funds are used to cover those additional costs.

**START-UP PLAN AND BOARD MONITORING**

Alongside our Board and leaders within the co-founders’ Innovative Schools Fellowship with City Education Partners who have expertise opening and running schools, we have developed the following four key priorities for our start-up year that guide our focus, timeline, and tasks which are outlined below. To explain how our Board and organizational leaders oversee the creation, adoption, and implementation of our start-up plan, we have outlined the owners of key responsibilities and tasks below.

[Key: SUP=Superintendent, PR=Principal, DFO=Director of Finance and Operations, BD=Board]

**Priority 1: Lease and prepare a facility that meets the needs of our school model.**

- Work with JLL Realty to identify and evaluate at least 3 potential properties within our primary geographic boundary by Nov 2019. Owner: BD, SUP, PR
- Negotiate lease terms and conditions by Jan 2020. Owner: BD, SUP, PR
- Sign lease by Jan 2020. Owner: BD
- Collect at least 3 bids for needed renovations and repairs by Feb 2020. Owner: BD, SUP, PR
- Secure funding through most competitive loan product bid for any necessary renovations and/or repairs by Mar 2020 (if needed). Owner: BD, SUP, PR
- Complete any needed renovations and pass final inspections by June 2020. Owner: DFO
- Secure required insurance and permits to open doors on schedule and operate in full compliance with the law by Jun 2020. Owner: SUP, DFO
- Order equipment, furniture, and supplies for facility by Jun 2020. Owner: PR, DFO
Priority 2: Meet or exceed enrollment goals, ensuring that our school is fully enrolled and that our admission, lottery, and enrollment system is clear, easy to navigate, and welcoming to all families.
- Develop marketing plan for student enrollment including print and digital media in English and Spanish by Aug 2019. Owner: SUP, PR
- Design, print, and post on our website a student application form that makes it clear The Gathering Place is open to all students by Aug 2019. Owner: SUP, PR
- Work with community partners to host enrollment events by Nov 2019. Owner: SUP, PR
- Attend school enrollment events and schedule press releases to inform community about ongoing opportunity to enroll by Jan 2020. Owner: SUP, PR
- Complete open-enrollment period by Mar 2020. Owner: SUP, PR
- Promote and hold admission lottery compliant with federal & Texas law, and notify families of admission status by Apr 2020. Owner: SUP, PR, BD
- Create waitlist, if applicable, based on lottery order by Apr 2020. Owner: SUP, PR
- Complete enrollment process for families accepted through the lottery system and obtain all necessary student records by Apr 2020. Owner: SUP, PR
- Host at least 4 open house and parent onboarding events to ensure families and students are prepared for the first day of school by Jun 2020. Owner: SUP, PR

Priority 3: Recruit and hire high-quality founding staff with a preference to local talent.
- Develop staff recruitment plan that prioritizes local talent by Aug 2019. Owner: SUP, PR, BD
- Set and track staff diversity goals by Aug 2019. Owner: SUP, PR, BD
- Establish hiring process, policies, and employee handbook by Sept 2019. Owner: SUP, PR, BD
- Establish employee benefits by Sept 2019. Owner: SUP, BD
- Create local DFO hiring committee to provide expertise during interview process by Oct 2019. Owner: SUP, PR, BD
- Launch online application portal for instructional staff by Nov 2019. Owner: SUP, PR
- Hire DFO by Dec 2019. Owner: SUP, PR
- Recruit and hire aligned leadership team by Jan 2019. Owner: Sup, PR
- Attend local hiring fairs by Feb 2020. Owner: SUP, PR
- Hire all staff by Jun 2020. Owner: SUP, PR

Priority 4: Finalize all administrative, financial, and model components of our school.
- Establish payroll systems and providers by Jul 2019. Owner: SUP, DFO, BD
- Board of Directors approves budget by Jul 2019. Owner: BD
- Finalize school calendar by Nov 2019. Owner: SUP, PR, BD
- Finance Committee finalizes accountability metrics for Year 1 by Dec 2019. Owner: BD
- Finalize financial reporting systems for Year 1 by Feb 2020. Owner: DFO, BD
- Onboard PEIMS Coordinator to begin creating database system for student reporting and attendance by Mar 2020. Owner: SUP, PR
- Create all organizational filing systems needed for student records and organizational documentation by Mar 2020. Owner: DFO, SUP
- Create case filing structures to support records for students with IEPs by Mar 2020. Owner: SUP, PR
- Finalize all safety policies including fire, lockdown, lockout, and medical emergency protocols by May 2020. Owner: SUP, PR, BD
- Complete all external contracts with service providers including nursing. Owner: SUP, DFO, BD
STRATEGIES TO MITIGATE FRAUD, WASTE, AND ABUSE
As a public entity, we recognize the critical importance of good stewardship of the public money given to us to operate a high-quality charter school. We have established multiple measures that ensure we mitigate fraud, waste, and abuse. All of our internal financial oversight systems and procedures are aligned with TEC, Texas Financial Account Standards (FAS) and the Generally Acceptable Accounting Practices (GAAP), and include:

(1) Board Oversight. Our Board provides ongoing financial oversight through our finance committee. The Board selects a treasurer who leads the finance committee and who has extensive experience in both finance and financial oversight.

(2) External Audits. Each year we conduct a third-party external audit of all our financial records to ensure there are no potential cases of fraud, waste, or abuse. The external audit is presented to the finance committee with specific findings, recommendations, and concerns.

(3) Multiple checks and balances. Based on ESC Region 20’s purchasing manual recommendations, approval for purchases over $50,000 should be approved by the Board. To be conservative, we have cut that limit in half requiring Board approval for purchases over $25,000. The DFO prepares monthly financial reports which are reviewed by the Superintendent. The Superintendent submits these financial reports to the Board’s financial committee to review and monitor. By having multiple checks and balances, The Gathering Place ensures there is no one person responsible for spending and supervising spending.

1 esc20.net/page/open/47021/0/ModelPurchasingManual2010.pdf

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Evaluation Criteria-Start-Up Plan

A strong response will:

- Outline a detailed and comprehensive start-up plan that will promote a successful school opening, including specific contingencies in the event of a budget shortfall;
- Describes how the Board will monitor the creation, adoption, and implementation of the start-up plan and budget;
- Outline the costs associated with all start-up activities;
- Present expenses and revenues that are congruent with the financial workbook; and
- Describes clear and appropriate strategies to mitigate fraud, waste, and abuse.
FINANCE/OPERATIONS/GOVERNANCE PLANS

CONTRACTED SERVICES

1. Describe any services that will be outsourced and the year in which these contracted services will begin. Provide a discussion of costs, timelines, and the selection process for each vendor. Include:
   a. back-office Services
   b. Food Services
   c. Transportation
   d. Janitorial and Grounds
   e. Other

2. Describe the applicant’s plan to negotiate service agreements with any organization(s) and/or individual(s) that will provide any form of financial accounting, payroll, and or tax/accounting services. Include a discussion of costs, timelines, and the selection process for each vendor.

3. If using a Charter Management Organization (CMO), describe the services to be provided and the fee structure of the contract. Include discussion of costs, timelines, and the selection process of the CMO.

4. If applicable, indicate whether the applicant will adopt the provisions of TEC, Chapter 44 Subchapter B as the process for awarding a contract for the construction, repair, or renovation of a structure or other improvement or addition to real property in the charter application.

Narrative Response:

The Gathering Place evaluated all school services against three criteria: does contracting this service (1) result in improved quality due to providers’ expertise; (2) provide substantial cost savings that can be reallocated to budget items directly aligned with our mission and model; (3) have an adverse impact on our ability to excellently execute our model? Using this process, we decided to contract the following: (1) food services, (2) back-office services, (3) some specialized special education services, (4) nurse services, and (5) IT services. Janitorial services are in house. As The Gathering Place intends to lease a facility and negotiate repairs and renovations through the landlord, we do not anticipate contracting construction services directly. If this changes, we plan to work with an attorney to ensure we are compliant with provisions of TEC, Chapter 44 Subchapter B. We adopt procurement policies and procedures in compliance with EDGAR (federal regulations) and TEA rule and guidelines for any such contracts paid for with federal funds. The Board evaluates and approves all contracts.

The identified need for each service is embedded below:
(1) Food Services. Children who eat breakfast and lunch at school consume over 4,000 school meals during their childhood, and meal quality has a substantial impact on a child’s well-being. After evaluating the cost of building an internal kitchen that meets food safety requirements, we determined the most financially responsible decision was to contract a food service provider. We issue a Request for Proposals (RFP), our Board evaluates all submissions, and we select a provider that meets all USDA standards, has proven experience navigating the FRL system, and provides nutritious options. Our Board finalizes a contract in April 2020. We have budgeted $3.97 per student per day allocated for food services at 90% ADA and an additional 3% in expenses for food waste (based on
conversations with local school operations), which includes breakfast and lunch.

(2) Back-Office Services. While our DFO does all internal accounting including accounts payable, there are back-office services that require specialized individuals for: legal consultations, independent audits, background checks, and payroll processing. Contracting these services is less expensive than hiring internal staff. We have budgeted $39,325 in Year 1 for back-office services including an independent auditor, legal consultation, payroll processing and bank reconciliations. We have also budgeted $21,825 in Year 1 for financial software compliant with TEA requirements, using ESC Region 20 as a reference to estimate pricing. Service providers are evaluated based on their record of supporting TX schools, cost, and ability to ensure compliance with all TEA requirements.

(3) Special Education Services. We contract services for specialized services that cannot be completed by our special education teachers and are required in student IEPs under IDEA (See Special Populations). This includes physical therapy (PT), occupational therapy (OT), speech services, psychology services, and/or life skills. We issue an RFP for a general service provider and then secure the specific services once we have reviewed all IEPs. We contract with this service provider prior to school launch to set up systems to store records, submit reports to the state, and ensure compliance with all TX or federal laws governing special education. We have budgeted $37,439 for these services including OT, PT, speech, psychology services, compliance audits, administrative set up, and transportation needs (if required by a student’s IEP). When evaluating potential providers, we check that all service providers are required to have appropriate certifications, the contracting agency is in good standing with the state, and has a proven track record serving local schools.

(4) Nurse Services. Nurse services are contracted at a rate of $25 per student per year to provide mandatory vision and hearing screening for students in grades K, 3, and 5, and to enable us to have a nurse on site 4 hours per week to see students with medical concerns. When evaluating potential providers, we check that potential nurses are in good standing with the TX Board of Nurses, have up-to-date nursing certifications, and have proven experience working with children.

(5) IT and Technology. The budget includes Apple computers for staff, iPads (K-1) and Chromebooks (2-8). (Costs for technology, as it is not a service, are outlined in the Budget Narrative.) All technology purchased over the term of the charter come with warranties that last the duration of our budgeted depreciation and are chosen for their low repair needs. If a computer is damaged, it is sent to the vendor for repair. As a result, we anticipate very low IT support needs. We have budgeted $2,000 for support with initial internet setup and $20 per student per year for IT related expenses. (See Financial Workbook Assumptions Tab Line 99). Co-founder Ryan York’s experience as the Chief Information Officer of a multi-state charter organization included overseeing IT and costs are realistic and congruent with IT expenses during his time in that role.

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**Evaluation Criteria-Contracted Services**

A strong response will:

✓ Rationalize the need for each proposed service, including an extensive decision-making process;

✓ Discuss the professional qualifications that will be required and expected of those to be retained for each service proposed;

✓ Detail specific costs, timelines, and selection processes of all types of prospective vendors; and

✓ Present costs that are congruent with the financial workbook.
FINANCE/OPERATIONS/GOVERNANCE PLANS

PUBLIC EDUCATION INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (PEIMS)

1. If a PEIMS coordinator will be employed, provide the following:
   (i) The education and experience requirements for the PEIMS coordinator;
   (ii) The year in which the PEIMS coordinator will be first employed; and
   (iii) The starting salary range for the PEIMS coordinator.

2. If a PEIMS coordinator will not be employed, outline the positions that will facilitate all applicable duties associated with PEIMS collection and reporting and the rationale for this decision.

3. Describe plans to provide training(s) for the PEIMS coordinator or individuals charged with PEIMS-related duties, including timelines and budgeted funds. **NOTE:** The Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) encompass all data requested and received by TEA about public education; including student demographic and academic performance, personnel, financial, and organizational information. More importantly, open-enrollment charter schools receive their Foundational School Program (FSP) funds based on average student daily attendance, of which is collected, approved, and uploaded (submitted) directly by the charter school superintendent. A failure, on the part of the charter school, to report accurate PEIMS data can result in the recapture of FSP funds.

Narrative Response:

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS
Our PEIMS Coordinator is required to have: an associate’s degree (a bachelor’s degree is preferred); ≥2 years of prior PEIMS experience; and preference is given for candidates fluent in English and Spanish. (See Attachment E3.)

PROCESS FOR FILLING THE ROLE AND TRAINING PLAN
Staff recruitment budget allocations include sourcing a high-quality PEIMS Coordinator (See Financial Workbook Personnel Tab Line 32) who completes our 5-step staff hiring process. (See Teacher Recruitment.) During the interview process, we assess for basic database navigation, troubleshooting during data handling, accuracy in data transcription, and Microsoft Office proficiency. Once hired, in collaboration with ESC Region 20, we provide continued professional development and training on: PEIMS Data Standards, data collection and submission, PID Enrollment Tracking, TREx software, Edit+, and TSDS Unique ID & PEIMS. We have allocated $5,000 for the general PD of non-instructional staff, including the PEIMS Coordinator. (See Financial Workbook Assumptions Tab Line 105.) If awarded a charter, we will hire a full-time PEIMS Coordinator in April of 2020 during Year 0 to ensure ample time for training and the setup of initial systems. The PEIMS Coordinator, a 12-month employee, attends training and development sessions beginning in the first month they are hired (April 2020) and throughout the remainder of spring and summer 2020.

PEIMS COORDINATOR SALARY
We believe it is essential to hire a PEIMS Coordinator that is highly skilled, has a proven track record, and has experience with Texas administrative systems so that PEIMS reporting is accurate and fully compliant, and all initial system setup at a new open-enrollment charter school is completed prior to school launch. The salary range for a PEIMS Coordinator in districts throughout San Antonio is
between $25,000 and $35,000. We have budgeted $37,500 plus benefits for our PEIMS Coordinator in order to attract a highly experienced PEIMS Coordinator.

<table>
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<th>Evaluation Criteria—Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS)</th>
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<td>A strong response will:</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Provide clear education and experience requirements for the PEIMS coordinator;</td>
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<td>✓ Describe a process for filling the role;</td>
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<td>✓ Provide salary information aligned to budget documents; and</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Describe a comprehensive plan to train any individuals who will fulfill PEIMS-related duties.</td>
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</table>
1. If the Board has already identified an individual to serve as superintendent, provide a justification for the selection of this individual as the best candidate for the position. **NOTE:** The superintendent must reside in the State of Texas at the time of employment.

2. If the Board has not identified an individual to serve as superintendent, detail the process (and considerations) by which the ideal candidate will be selected.

3. Provide specific metrics that will be used to evaluate the performance of the superintendent. Metrics must be provided to measure performance in the following areas:
   - (i) Governance and Board Relations
   - (ii) Community Relations
   - (iii) Staff Relations
   - (iv) Business and Finance
   - (v) Instructional Leadership

4. Outline the starting salary of the superintendent and provide a description of how this amount was calculated. **NOTE:** Open-Enrollment Charter Schools may not compensate an individual in excess of the fair market value of the services rendered. The fair market value of the services rendered is based on the individual’s education, experience, prior salary history, job duties actually performed, and what a typical person with similar skills, experience, and job duties would earn. See 19 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) 100.102 (c)(2)(B)(i).

Narrative Response:

Co-founder, Ryan York, has been identified as the proposed Superintendent of The Gathering Place. He meets all educational and experience requirements outlined in the Superintendent Job Description. (Attachment E3.) His proven track record of student achievement, school leadership, and innovation make him the best candidate. He holds a master’s in education and is a San Antonio resident.

Ryan began his career by co-founding a nonprofit that served hundreds of children each year through its flagship program “Southern Girls Rock and Roll Camp” where girls (ages 13-18) were immersed in programming designed to build self-esteem through music. This afforded him the opportunity to grow an organization from its start-up phase. He then opened a 6,000 sq ft after-school arts facility outside of Nashville where arts were offered after-school, on weekends, and during school breaks. He then transitioned into the classroom (5-8th grade) where he mastered the instructional practices needed to lead his students (of similar FRL demographics as the proposed target population) to academically outperform state averages. Here, Metro Nashville Public Schools recognized him as a district All-Star teacher. He also developed a blended learning software platform that led to the highest math growth in the district by enrolled middle school math teachers. As a principal, Ryan led a school turnaround that achieved the highest math scores, 5th grade reading growth, and staff retention in his network. As the Chief Information Officer of one of the highest performing charter networks in TN, Ryan created a middle and high school project-based computer science curriculum that won the National Sally Ride & Deloitte Award for Innovation. The program went on to be implemented in public schools across the country and now serves over 10,000 students. Later, he became the Director of Academics...
at Caliber Schools, where he managed principals and oversaw all academic programming K-8, including special education. Along with Joanna Klekowicz (proposed Principal), he has been involved in all community outreach and the design of The Gathering Place. These combined experiences and accolades demonstrate his robust skills and proven leadership capacity that make him the best candidate for the Superintendent position.

EVALUATING SUPERINTENDENT PERFORMANCE
The Superintendent’s performance is measured across the following five domains:
(1) Governance and Board Relations. Measures of performance include working collaboratively with the Board to create annual strategic plans with input from students, staff, families, and the community; converting annual strategic plans into quarterly and monthly targets, and effectively communicating these targets to all stakeholders including staff, families, and the Board; and completing and presenting monthly academic reports to the Academic Committee, monthly financial reports to the Finance Committee, and presenting quarterly reports at all board meetings.
(2) Community Relations. Measures of performance include creating organizational systems that are responsive to family voice and concerns; overseeing the collection of family input at least once per year through a comprehensive survey provided digitally and in-print in both English and Spanish with ≥75% response rate; working with local media and utilizing the organization’s website and social media to maintain an accurate and positive image of the organization; overseeing admission and enrollment systems and ensuring the school is within 5% of its target enrollment each year.
(3) Staff Relations. Measures of performance include overseeing that 90% of staff positions are filled by the start of summer PD; that collection of staff feedback occurs at least twice per year through a digital survey with ≥90% return rate; that the annual retention rate of high-performing staff is at 70% or higher; and that recruitment, hiring, evaluation, and promotion processes are equitable and transparent, and staff members’ confidentiality and dignity maintained.
(4) Business and Finance. Measures of performance include compiling monthly budget reports to the Finance Committee in a timely manner; working with the Board to ensure the annual budget is aligned with the organization’s mission, vision, and annual strategic priorities and approved by the Board; the organization maintains a minimum of 30 days cash on hand beginning at the end of Year 1; the district receives an A or B on their annual Charter FIRST review; employee salaries and benefits are competitive with nearby districts and schools; and that the organization has multiple checks and balances to protect itself from fraud, waste, and abuse.
(5) Instructional leadership. Measures of performance include ensuring/overseeing that the school meets all state academic accountability standards; the school provides all necessary accommodations and modifications to students through Individualized Education Programs (IEPs); the school sets and meets academic goals for subgroups; all curriculum and instructional programs are reviewed annually to ascertain their effectiveness; all teachers are either be certified, pursuing certification, or have equivalent qualifications; all special educators and bilingual teachers are state-certified; and that all staff receive regular and ongoing training and professional development. (See Teacher Development.)

TIMELINE
The Superintendent’s progress towards the metrics explained are analyzed at each quarterly board meeting and the Superintendent is responsive to ongoing questions and requests for follow-up from the Board. Annual goals are set by September of each year and formally reviewed during the Board’s August meeting after the end of the school year. The Superintendent is formally evaluated by the Board on an annual basis.
SUPERINTENDENT SALARY

The Superintendent salary is $70,000 plus benefits in the founding year. This number was calculated by looking at the salaries of nearby districts, where it was observed that there was a proportional relationship between the number of students served and the dollar amount per student the superintendent received. To calculate the superintendent's salary, we looked at the two ISDs in our geographic boundaries with the closest number of students to our total enrollment at full-capacity, Somerset and Alamo Heights ISD, with 4067 and 4857 students respectively. The average of their two salaries is $47.80 per student. At full enrollment, we serve 1458 students, which comes out to $70,000 annually. (See Financial Workbook Personnel Tab Line 10.)

Evaluation Criteria-Superintendent/CEO

A strong response will:

✓ Provide a justification for the selection of a specific individual (as superintendent) as the best candidate for the position or identify rigorous criteria (and process) for the recruitment and selection of the superintendent position;
✓ Present specific and applicable metrics that will evaluate and assess superintendent performance;
✓ Propose a starting salary range that is reasonable with respect to estimated student enrollment; and
✓ Reference budget amount(s) that are congruent with the financial plan workbook.
FINANCE/OPERATIONS GOVERNANCE PLANS

STAFF RECRUITMENT

1. Describe the process to be used to identify, recruit, and hire individuals to support operation of the proposed school (e.g., para-professionals, office staff, custodial and food service staff).

2. Discuss strategies that will be utilized in the event of unforeseen support staff shortages.

Narrative Response:

The Gathering Place’s operational support staff are defined as our Director of Finance and Operations (DFO), Director of Curriculum and Instruction (DCI), Director of Social Emotional Learning (DSEL), Director of Human Resources and Talent (DHRT), Director of Special Education (DSPED), Assistant Principals (APs), Community Engagement Coordinator (CEC), Bookkeeper, Talent Recruiter (TR), SEL Counselors, Behavior Interventionists (BIs), Paraprofessionals, Social Workers, Office Manager (OM), PEIMS Coordinator (See PEIMS Coordinator), Receptionists, Bus Drivers, and Custodians. (See Contracted Services for contracted support staff, which include food service staff and nurses.)

To develop our strategy for identifying, recruiting, and hiring qualified school support staff, the collective expertise of our founding board were combined with best practices gleaned from conversations with local and national schools and school talent organizations like Bellwether Education Partners. The co-founders interviewed superintendents, principals, and talent directors at charter schools to better understand firsthand accounts of the San Antonio talent marketplace. Marketplace analyses were conducted by creating a comparative salary analysis within each of the 17 San Antonio-area ISDs compared to salaries of other regions, the number of unfilled local postings on charter and ISD job boards, and identifying Indeed and Glassdoor trends to understand how quickly key positions are filled. Our staff recruitment process and strategy distributes roles and responsibilities to ensure staff meet required qualifications, are hired in a timely manner, and are mission aligned. The Superintendent holds ultimate personnel authority for the DFO, Principal, DHRT, and CEC, while the Principal holds ultimate personnel authority over all other school support staff.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

>Talent Recruiter, beginning in Year 1, holds responsibility for sourcing high-quality candidates and moving them through the first two stages of our interview process: the application review and the phone interview. The TR has prior experience in talent recruitment and is trained by the Superintendent (Year 1-3) and the DHRT (Year 4 and on) on how to assess candidate qualifications.

>Director of HR and Talent is responsible for the talent strategy including identifying, recruiting, and hiring staff. They manage the TR as well as Greenhouse, an all-in-one talent management software platform to screen resumes based on the required qualifications of each position. (See Financial Workbook Assumptions Tab Line 106). The DHRT annually assesses hiring structures and systems, shares findings with the Superintendent, and makes any needed strategy adjustments. The DHRT holds a bachelor’s degree and prior experience in a human resources related field.

>Direct supervisors sit on hiring committees for their direct reports (See Teacher Recruitment for hiring committee structure; Attachment E1 for Organization Chart for lines of direct reporting; Attachment E3 for qualifications).

>Principal, in addition to interviewing/hiring their direct reports (DCI, DSEL, DSPED, APs, and OM), is responsible for training all school staff who serve as direct supervisors (See Attachment E1) on hiring
best practices. The Principal holds a master’s degrees in education and ≥5 years of teaching or school leadership experience.

Superintendent, in addition to interviewing/hiring their direct reports (Principal, DFO, DHRT, CEC), has responsibility of overall talent strategy and evaluation systems until the DHRT is hired. They directly support the Principal to ensure consistency on interview best practices. The proposed Superintendent, Ryan York, has hired 60+ school employees in previous roles. The Superintendent holds a master’s degree in education and ≥5 years of teaching or school leadership experience.

**PROCESSES TO IDENTIFY, RECRUIT, HIRE OPERATIONAL SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF**

Identification and recruitment. Identical to our top priority for instructional staff (See Teacher Recruitment), we prioritize local talent and recruit locally through social media, including Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter; print media, including San Antonio’s Express News; local job fairs; and will leverage referral bonuses (See Financial Workbook Assumptions Tab Line 106). Additionally, we prioritize candidates fluent in Spanish for school support roles that regularly interact with families which include office staff, social workers, and CEC. To reach a wide pool of Spanish-speaking candidates, we market in English and Spanish and recruit through Spanish-dominant communication channels including radio stations and newspapers. The TR leads recruitment efforts. To live out our vision to be a diverse gathering place of people with limitless collective potential, our goal is for our organization’s school support leaders to identify as at least 51% people of color and at least 51% female. To accomplish this, recruitment efforts emphasize channels that develop local people of color and women, including the San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce’s leadership program, Leadership SAISD’s fellowship (which is not associated with San Antonio Independent School District), and the San Antonio Women’s Chamber of Commerce’s leadership program.

**Hiring.** Process follows the rigorous 5-step hiring process for teachers. (See Teacher Recruitment.)

Program Evaluation. Greenhouse software evaluates pre-identified Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) which determine the return on investment of recruiting strategies as measured by total cost of each strategy compared to (1) the number of high-quality candidates recruited, (2) the number of candidates that were ultimately hired, and (3) how candidates hired through that recruitment pipeline perform within our organization on their annual evaluations. The Superintendent evaluates and adjusts the talent strategy based on this data in Years 1-3 until the DHRT is hired in Year 4.

**CUSTOMIZATION**

Through conversations with Compass Rose Academy, former leaders of KIPP San Antonio, and local district principals, the co-founders determined which school support staff roles are uniquely difficult to identify, recruit, and/or hire. Their input and market research analysis (described earlier in this section) prompted creation of a customized recruitment and hiring strategy for the DFO, DHRT, DSEL (called hard-to-staff-directors), Bus Drivers, and SEL Counselors, including the following:

Hard-to-staff-directors are identified by hiring committees consisting of two local experts in the respective field and at least one organizational leader. If awarded a charter, the first director, the DFO, is hired halfway through Year 0 and a hiring committee is finalized fall of 2019. To-date, we have sourced the following members for this hiring committee: Jordana Markman-Epstein, Chief Financial Officer of Silver Ventures, Diego Capeletti, The Gathering Place Board Member, Sukhdeep Kaur, Director of Seat Investments for City Education Partners, the proposed Principal and the proposed Superintendent. The second director hired is the DSEL in the summer of 2020 and a hiring committee is finalized spring of 2020. To-date, we have sourced the following members for the the hiring committee: Soundhari Balaguru, Director of SEL and Mental Health at Caliber Schools, Sarah Mercado, Training Specialist at the KP Institute of Child Development, the proposed Principal and the proposed
Superintendent. Hiring committee members hold expertise specific to the position and/or ensure alignment to the mission and vision.

» Bus drivers are offered higher full-time salaries that nearby ISDs and a $1,000 signing bonus for new bus drivers (See Financial Workbook Assumption Tab Line 106) to address the shortage of local bus drivers.

» SEL Counselors implement an innovative SEL curriculum (See School Culture) unique to San Antonio. As a result, hiring processes include a practicum component to assess the candidate's understanding and abilities in trauma-informed practices, de-escalation, and SEL strategies.

FORESEEABLE OBSTACLES
The two most likely foreseeable obstacles for leadership school support roles are: (1) lower salaries than similar roles in non-education fields, which we address by identifying candidates passionate about our mission and vision, working with local leadership development programs and universities to identify high-capacity individuals that may be newer to the profession, and focusing national recruitment marketing on the low cost of living in San Antonio; and, (2) limited experience with context unique to education, which we address by providing internal and external training on education-specific topics and leveraging professional development through ESC Region 20 to familiarize hires with nuances of educational context.

The two most likely foreseeable obstacles for non-leadership school support roles are: (1) reluctance to apply because we are a new start-up which we address by offering 12-month positions and/or higher salaries than nearby ISDs, and (2) potential lack of access to digital recruitment marketing, which we address by focusing recruitment efforts on both in-person and digital mediums and leveraging word-of-mouth marketing through referral bonuses (described earlier in this section).

UNFORESEEN STAFF SHORTAGES
In the event of staff shortages, we have identified several third-party service providers that would enable us to contract services until the role is filled, like temporarily contracting back office services until a DFO is hired; custodial services; and SEL counselors through wrap-around social service providers like Communities in Schools or A.I.M.

Evaluation Criteria-Staff Recruitment
A strong response will:

✓ Present a clear process for using the proposed methods to identify, recruit, and hire qualified support staff;

✓ Include a rationale for the proposed recruitment strategies/methods and establish its applicability to successful recruitment of staff with desired areas of expertise;

✓ Identify specific roles and responsibilities of person(s), position(s), or entities that will be involved in planning, implementation, and evaluation of recruitment activities and supports the description with sufficient educational and/or experience requirements;

✓ Address any foreseeable obstacles to successfully recruiting quality staff and provide clear strategies to overcome those obstacles; and

✓ Present specific strategies to deal with unforeseen staff shortages.
1. Describe the governance system of the proposed school, including (but not limited to) the primary roles of the governing Board, its relationship with the superintendent, and policies that reinforce goals/expectations that will accomplish the mission and vision. The response must align with superintendent performance evaluation as discussed in the Superintendent/CEO narrative.

2. Describe the composition of the governing Board. *NOTE: Family members who are related within the third degree of consanguinity or third degree of affinity are prohibited from serving on a charter school Board. In addition, no family member within the third degree of consanguinity or third degree of affinity of any charter holder Board member, charter school Board member, or school officer shall receive compensation in any form from the charter school, charter holder, or any management company that operated the charter school unless exempted by TEC 12.1054 (a)(1).* Include:
   (i) The number of Board members and the number domiciled in Texas;
   (ii) Whether any current Board members intend to apply for an employed position with the proposed charter school; and
   (iii) How each Board member will contribute to effective governance of the proposed school(s).

3. Describe the relationship between the governing Board and the proposed charter school. How often will the superintendent report to the Board? How often will the Board review financial reporting data?

4. If the governing Board is an existing entity, indicate whether the entity is a current grantee or subgrantee of a state and/or federal grant and whether the entity has been investigated for grant mismanagement within the past 5 years.

5. Discuss the system/tools/metrics that will be used to assess and promote Board effectiveness, including self-evaluation, training, and school involvement.

Narrative Response:

The Board of Directors (Board) at The Gathering Place is ultimately responsible and accountable to the Commissioner of Education, the authorizer, for the organization's operations and outcomes. In addition to holding the overall legal, financial, and fiduciary responsibility, the Board provides external accountability, internal oversight, mission-based leadership, and oversees student academic outcomes. The Board delegates its management responsibilities, except for non-delegable duties to the Superintendent who is hired, reports to, and is evaluated by the Board. Per 19 TAC §100.1017 and §100.1033(c)(7), the Board's non-delegable duties are, "...to hear or decide employee grievances, citizen complaints, or parental concerns; to adopt or amend the budget of the charter holder or the charter school, or to authorize the expenditure or obligation of state funds or the use of public property; to direct the disposition or safekeeping of public records, except that the governing body may delegate this function to any person, subject to the governing body's superior right of immediate access to, control over, and possession of such records; to adopt policies governing charter school operations; to approve audit reports under TEC, §44.008(d); to select, employ, direct, evaluate, renew, non-renew, terminate, or set compensation for the superintendent or, as applicable, the
administrator serving as the educational leader and chief executive officer." Additionally, Board members act in accordance with the organization’s code of ethics and conflict of interest policies (Attachment FOG 9) and adhere to the organization’s bylaws (Attachment FOG 7). Both of the above referenced attachments outline clear rules regarding relationships by consanguinity or affinity. These include guidelines stating that no board member may appoint, confirm the appointment of, or vote for the appointment of any individual they are related to by the definitions outlined in 19 TAC §100.1113 and Texas Government Code §573.021-573.025.

The Board confirms (and dismisses if necessary) and holds the Superintendent accountable. The Board’s role is one of oversight and management of the Superintendent, and is not involved in daily operations of running the school. The Superintendent is evaluated annually against the five domains outlined in the Superintendent section. The Board meets at least quarterly or more frequently as necessary, at which the Superintendent provides a formal report on the organization’s progress to date towards goals, success indicators, and priorities and the Board tracks progress and makes recommendations. Additionally, the Superintendent submits monthly academic and finance reports to the Academic and Finance Committee of the Board, respectively. (See Academic Performance Indicators and Finance Performance Indicators.) Process for recruiting and selecting board members, which has been used throughout the development of the organization’s current Board, uses the following process and criteria to add new members: (1) We prioritize local candidates. Currently, 100% of our board members live in San Antonio and a majority have spent most their lives here; (2) Our Board reflects the community it serves. Our goal is for 51% of board members to identify as people of color and 51% to identify as female. We are currently at 71% and 57% respectively; (3) Each board member contributes specialized skills and experiences. Each time a new board member is recruited, the Board first examines its current assets, identifies skills that would fill any skill gaps; and, (4) All potential candidates are deeply aligned to the mission and vision of The Gathering Place.

Over the past eight months, co-founder board members, Joanna Klekowicz (current Board Chair and proposed Principal) and Ryan York (current Board Secretary and proposed Superintendent), interviewed over 90 prospective board candidates and assessed them against the criteria outlined above. From those interviews, a seven-member board of directors was developed, all of whom share invaluable experience, perspective, and diverse skills, and are described below. (Please note: some language is shared from full board members’ biographies found at www.thegatheringplacek12.org, their employers’ websites, personal websites, award websites, personal LinkedIn accounts and/or board affidavits found in Attachment FOG 8.)

(1) Quincy Boyd - A San Antonio native, a proud first-generation college graduate, and today, she leads as the San Antonio Regional Director of Families Empowered. She spent several years in Houston leading college access initiatives at Phillis Wheatley High School and KIPP Sunnyside High School with a Texas educator certificate in ELA/R 8-12. She then joined the admission office at Harvard University where she led successful initiatives to increase student diversity. After graduating from Harvard with a Master’s in Education Policy and Management, she returned to San Antonio to re-engage with the K12 public school sector. She served as the Director of Academic Programs at Basis San Antonio, a high-performing charter network, and today, she

(2) Jon Hinojosa - A native Texan and He left home at 15, and through self-determination, hard work, and passion, found his way to Say Sí in San Antonio where he is in his 24th year of service as the organization’s Executive Director. Say Sí, a nationally-acclaimed and locally
beloved youth arts organization, serves 200 youth on-site and over 4,000 youth off-site through multidisciplinary, tuition-free arts programming each year. Currently, Jon is also a trustee for the National Guild for Community Arts Education, the National Advisory Committee of the National Teaching Artists Guild, and a board member of Texans for the Arts. Through his work, he sees the transformative effects of the arts and is inspired by the creative power of youth as forces of dynamic change. Lastly, Jon also served as a founding board member of Henry Ford Academy, a local San Antonio charter school.

(3) Janet Young - The Chief Operating Officer for Parallon Business Solutions in San Antonio since 2005, which serves over 650 hospitals, interacts with 35 million patients, and collects over $41 billion annually. She has 15 years of executive leadership and also brings 13 years of board expertise in the nonprofit sector, where she has also served as the Chairperson of Grace First Baptist Church for 6 of those years. Janet began volunteering with multiple education-focused nonprofits and recognizes the importance of school choice. She was the first in her family to attend college, and deeply believes in the power of mentorship.

(4) Diego Capeletti - He manages the Center for Innovation, Technology, and Entrepreneurship (CITE) at the University of Texas at San Antonio where he oversees all grants and programming. He brings over 9 years of combined experience in financial accounting, nonprofit accounting, project management, and financial consulting, including experience supporting start-up organizations and entrepreneurs looking to launch new businesses through the Hub of Human Innovation in El Paso. Prior to his work in Texas, Diego worked as a financial accountant and research partner in his home country of Argentina, where he formed research partnerships in entrepreneurship with universities in Argentina, Bolivia, and Peru. He also co-founded a technology start-up in the water nanofiltration industry.

(5) Jen Maestas - Born and raised in San Antonio, she is a product of its K-12 and university systems. She is currently the Education Director at Key Ideas and the Founder of San Antonio Leaders & Teachers (San Antonio’s first and only social network for educators). While serving as a Texas educator for seven years, Jen earned national board certification from the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards. She then became a campus instructional coach and accepted her first role as a campus administrator in 2009. For the next eight years, Jen served as either the assistant principal or the principal of three urban elementary schools in SAISD. Today, she continues to support SAISD schools by serving as an Interim Principal when principals take long-term leaves of absences.

(6) Ryan York - He was born into a family of musicians and began his career by co-founding a nonprofit that served hundreds of children each year through its flagship program “Southern Girls Rock and Roll Camp” and opening a 6,000 sq ft after-school arts facility outside of Nashville. As principal, Ryan led a school turnaround that ended with the highest math scores, 5th grade reading growth, and staff retention. As the Chief Information Officer of one of the highest performing charter networks in TN, Ryan created a middle and high school project-based computer science curriculum that won the National Sally Ride & Deloitte Award for Innovation. The program went on to be implemented in public schools across the
country and now serves over 10,000 students. Ryan has a Master's of Education and is a resident of San Antonio. He currently serves the Board Secretary and is the proposed Superintendent.

(7) Joanna Klekowicz - She was born into a family of Polish immigrants. While studying neuroscience, she began to tutor inmates at a local prison and entered the movement for educational equity after witnessing the injustice of the school-to-prison pipeline. She joined Teach for America-Memphis and led her students to achieve over two years of growth, ranking in the highest percentiles across the state. She transitioned to developing secondary math teachers across Chicago where she was the only coach in her organization to be recognized for excellence by every teacher in her cohort. Joanna then teamed up with Ryan York to codify and scale the nationally-acclaimed computer science program. As the Director of Expansion at the high-performing charter network, she partnered with public district and public charter schools to scale the project-based CS program from 250 students to 10,000+ students. Her work also resulted in the largest district-charter partnership in Nashville's history, bringing the program to all district middle schools. Joanna has a Master's of Education and is a resident of San Antonio. She currently serves as the Board Chair and is the proposed Principal.

COMPOSITION
Board members select the officers of the Board, including Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary. The following descriptions are pulled from The Gathering Place Bylaws (see Attachment FOG 7) and were influenced by BoardOnTrack, an online nonprofit board training resource.¹

»Board Chair shall be the chief volunteer officer of the Corporation and lead the Board in performing its duties and responsibilities, including, if present, presiding at all meetings of the Board; and shall perform all other duties incident to the office or properly required by the Board.

»Vice Chair, in the absence or disability of the Chair, the ranking Vice Chair or Vice Chair designated by the Board shall perform the duties of the Chair. When so acting, the Vice Chair shall have all the powers of and be subject to all the restrictions upon the Chair. The Vice Chair shall have such other powers and perform such other duties prescribed for them by the Board or the Chair; and, shall normally accede to the office of Chair upon the completion of the Chair's term of office.

»Secretary shall keep or cause to be kept a book of minutes of all meetings and actions of Directors and committees. The minutes of each meeting shall state the time and place that it was held and such other information as shall be necessary to determine the actions taken and whether the meeting was held in accordance with the law and these Bylaws. The Secretary shall cause notice to be given of all meetings of Directors and committees as required by the Bylaws; shall have such other powers and perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board or the Chair. The Secretary may appoint, with approval of the Board, a Director to assist in performance of all or part Secretary duties.

»Treasurer shall be the lead Director for oversight of the financial condition and affairs of the Corporation; shall oversee and keep the Board informed of the financial condition of the Corporation and of audit or financial review results; in conjunction with other Directors or officers, shall oversee budget preparation and shall ensure that appropriate financial reports, including an account of major transactions and the financial condition of the Corporation, are made available to the Board on a timely basis or as may be required by the Board. The Treasurer shall perform all duties properly required by the Board or the Chair. The Treasurer may appoint, with approval of the Board a qualified fiscal agent or member of the staff to assist in performance of all or part of their duties.

Currently, Joanna Klekowicz (proposed Principal) serves as Board Chair, and Ryan York (proposed Superintendent) serves as Secretary. If awarded a charter, they will roll off the board in order to be eligible to apply for employment. The remaining Board will fill their seats and nominate a director for
each role: board chair, vice chair, secretary and treasurer.

COMMITTEES
The Board holds final authority for policy and operational decisions at the school, but, to assist the Board in promoting effective governance of the school, a committee structure is followed. Committees have been selected by evaluating governance structures for 10 other successful nonprofit educational organizations in Texas. If awarded a charter, the committees are the following:

>>Academic Committee is responsible for the academic well-being of the organization. They set annual goals during the Board’s annual strategic planning retreat related to organizational priorities including reading performance and growth, academic outcomes tied to the STAAR and student projects. They meet monthly to review academic data and recommend actions on any needed re-adjustments that the Superintendent will then execute. (See Academic Performance Indicators.) They are responsible for preparing and presenting a report to the Board at each board meeting regarding academic progress against annual goals.

>>Finance Committee is responsible for the financial sustainability of the organization. They support in drafting and providing final approval of each year’s annual budget; develop and make adjustments as needed to the organization’s five-year financial forecast; and build long-range financial plans. They will meet monthly to review financial statements, variances in budget, track progress against indicators (See Financial Performance Indicators), and recommend actions on any needed re-adjustments that the Superintendent will then execute. The finance committee is responsible for presenting a financial report to the Board at each board meeting.

>>Governance Committee is responsible for the recruitment and nomination of new board members, board training, legal oversight of the organization, and ensuring the organization’s bylaws and legal obligations are met. They meet quarterly to assess Board needs and areas of growth for the purposes of recruitment and training. They are responsible for planning strategic initiatives and board retreats. They also hold an annual review of the bylaws and other legally binding documents, and bring any recommendations to the Board at board meetings.

>>Ad hoc Committees may be created, per Board discretion, to address specific, time-sensitive issues, and may be dissolved upon goal achievement.

OPEN MEETINGS ACT
The Board meets at least quarterly or more frequently as necessary to discuss the school’s operations and to hear updates from each member, committees, and the Superintendent. All committee and board meetings comply with provisions in the TEC and Chapters 551 and 552 of the Texas Government Code including meeting all requirements of the Texas Open Meetings Act.

BOARD EVALUATION STRATEGIES
The Gathering Place Board is committed to continuous improvement. Individuals on the Board are highly encouraged to seek personal growth plans as it pertains to their responsibilities on the Board; and, participate in Board trainings each year, including participating in an annual retreat to enhance capacity to govern the board. All members participate in TEA’s Evaluating and Improving Student Outcomes (EISO) training that specifically develops the Board’s ability to set student outcome goals, create board agendas that align with organizational priorities, and monitor goals. During the annual retreat, annual accountability metrics are established in alignment with the academic and financial performance indicators described in their respective sections below. The Board conducts self-evaluations quarterly to assess the Board’s progress towards annual metrics of success and the
Governance Committee aligns training to the goals and metrics of success used to evaluate the Board.

Attachment(s):
- FOG 5: 501(c)(3) Determination Letter
- FOG 6: Articles of Incorporation
- FOG 7: Organization Bylaws
- FOG 8: Board Member Biographical Affidavit
- FOG 9: Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy

**Evaluation Criteria-Board of Directors**

A strong response will:

- Provide a clear list of roles and responsibilities of the governing Board;
- Discusses the composition of the governing Board, including how it will promote effective
governance of the proposed school(s);
- Present a governance structure that is compliant with 19 TAC § 100.1113 and Texas
  Government Code § 573.021-573.025, relating to Relationships by Consanguinity or Affinity;
- Provide strong evidence that the propose governance structure will be effective and that the
  structure will be supported by a significant number of Board members with administrative
  and/or leadership roles in charter school operations;
- Describe the relationship between the governing Board and the charter school, including
  reporting schedules; and
- Demonstrates a consistent and sufficient evaluation schedule and metrics to determine
  Board effectiveness.
1. Discuss the Board’s plan to assess academic performance indicators, including:
   (i) Specific indicators and metrics to be monitored;
   (ii) How often the Board will assess each indicator; and
   (iii) Thresholds that will determine success or failure.

2. List the Board members with demonstrable experience to lead the review of academic performance indicators and provide a brief description of each individual’s specific areas of expertise.

Narrative Response:

The Board holds overall accountability for academic performance at The Gathering Place and assesses academic performance indicators on a regularly scheduled basis to evaluate progress. Each month, the Superintendent provides an academic dashboard report to the Board’s Academic Committee to evaluate progress. Data provided may include student growth and achievement rates, class passing rates, reading levels, student work samples, attendance, as well as interim, STAAR and/or MAP assessment data. The committee has the opportunity to ask clarifying questions to the Superintendent and may recommend adjustments or interventions in response to the school’s overall academic performance. The Academic Committee, with the support of the Superintendent, prepares quarterly reports to the Board outlining the organization’s progress towards academic progress indicators (APIs) as well as requests for Board action. The specific APIs monitored as well as the thresholds that determine success or failure at The Gathering Place are as follows:

INDICATOR 1: Grade level mastery of TEKS standards is assessed through interim assessments (administered at the end of the first and second trimester), the STAAR assessment (administered to students 3-8 during the third trimester according to the state’s evaluation schedule), and the MAP assessment (administered to students K-8 at the end of the third trimester).

>>Metric 1: Overall achievement on grade level standards.
- Threshold: 80% of students enrolled for at least 1 year perform satisfactorily on the STAAR as defined by TEC §28.0211, the threshold needed to score a B or higher on the state accountability system.

>>Metric 2: Student growth on grade level standards.
- Threshold: 70% of students enrolled for at least 1 year demonstrate at least one year’s growth on the STAAR as over the previous year, the threshold needed to score a B or higher on the state accountability system.

INDICATOR 2: Academic performance on interim assessments; the STAAR; and the MAP is analyzed and disaggregated by specific subgroups including race, gender, EL status, and SPED designation.

>>Metric 1: Overall achievement comparisons between subgroups.
- Threshold 1: All subgroups meet overall achievement goals in the “closing the gaps” domain on the state accountability system set by the TEA for that given year.

>>Metric 2: Overall growth comparisons between subgroups.
- Threshold 1: All subgroups meet overall growth goals in the “closing the gaps” domain on the state accountability system set by the TEA for that given year.

INDICATOR 3: Academic performance on the STAAR is compared annually with nearby districts.

>>Metric 1: Comparative achievement on grade level standards.
Threshold 1: The percentage of students performing satisfactorily on the STAAR as defined by TEC §28.0211 equals or exceeds the percentage of students performing satisfactorily in our occupied district.

Metric 2: Comparative growth on grade level standards.

Threshold 1: Student growth on the STAAR equals or exceeds student growth in occupied district.

Indicator 4: Student reading levels and growth are measured by the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System three times per year.

Metric 1: Percentage of students reading on grade level of their enrolled grade level.

Threshold 1: At least 80% of students demonstrate at least one year of reading growth each year of enrollment.

Threshold 2: 25% or more of students in their first year of enrollment are reading within 1 grade level of their enrolled grade level.

Threshold 2: 50% or more of students in their second year of enrollment are reading within 1 grade level of their enrolled grade level.

Threshold 3: 75% or more of students in their third year of enrollment are reading within 1 grade level of their enrolled grade level.

Threshold 4: 90% or more of students in their fourth year of enrollment are reading within 1 grade level of their enrolled grade level.

Metric 2: Reading growth of students each year.

Threshold 1: At least 80% of students demonstrate at least one year of reading growth each year of enrollment.

Indicator 5: Average daily attendance is tracked and compared with the occupied district and chronic absenteeism is tracked and compared with the city of San Antonio.

Metric 1: Average daily attendance (ADA) as compared to occupied district.

Threshold 1: ADA equals or exceeds our occupied district’s ADA (SAISD’s current ADA is 95%).

Metric 2: Chronic absenteeism, defined by the US DOE as missing 10 percent or more of the school year, is compared to the city of San Antonio.

Threshold 1: Chronic absenteeism will be less than San Antonio’s chronic absenteeism in public schools (San Antonio’s current chronic absenteeism is 15%).

Indicator 6: Through project-based learning, students complete meaningful projects and participate in public showcases, measured annually using BIE’s high-quality PBL framework and participation.

Metric 1: Completed projects.

Threshold 1: All students complete at least two TEKS-aligned projects each year.

Metric 2: Public showcases.

Threshold 1: All students participate in at least two public project showcases each year.

Indicator 7: Language acquisition of English Learners (ELs) is measured annually on the TELPAS.

Metric 1: Percentage of ELs on track to exit our bilingual program by the timeline outlined in their individual goals from our LPAC committee.

Threshold 1: 100% of students will be on track to exit our bilingual program by the timeline outlined in their individual goals.

Indicator 8: Annual progress towards goals outlined in Individual Education Programs (IEPs) are measured annually.

Metric 1: Percentage of annual IEP goals identified as met during annual IEP reviews.

Threshold 1: At least 75% of annual IEP goals are met each year.

Indicator 9: Early childhood developmental goals are measured twice a year on the TEKS-aligned Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment.

Metric 1: Percentage of kindergarten and 1st grade students within one grade level of developmentally appropriate goals.
- Threshold 1: 50% or more of kindergarteners enrolled for a full academic year are within one grade level of developmentally appropriate goals.
- Threshold 2: 75% or more of 1st graders enrolled for at least one year are within one grade level of developmentally appropriate goals.

Multiple board members have demonstrable experience and competency to assess academic performance. Currently, board member Jennifer Maestas (Master’s in Education from UTSA) serves as an interim principal in San Antonio ISD, and has served as a Texas teacher and school administrator for over 15 years. Additionally, board member Quincy Boyd (Master’s in Education from Harvard University) holds a Texas teacher certification in English Language Arts 8-12, has led college initiatives at Phillis Wheatley High School and KIPP Sunnyside High School in Houston, and has served as the Director of Academic Programs at Basis in San Antonio.

3tpr.org/post/15-percent-san-antonio-students-are-chronically-absent

### Evaluation Criteria-Academic Performance Indicators

A strong response will:

- Present specific and applicable metrics that will evaluate and assess academic performance indicators;
- Demonstrate a consistent and sufficient evaluation schedule;
- Identify specific thresholds/performance levels that will determine success or need for intervention; and
- Identify multiple Board members that have demonstrable experience and competency to assess academic performance.
1. Discuss the Board's plan to assess financial performance indicators, including
   (i) Specific indicators and metrics to be monitored;
   (ii) How often the Board will assess each indicator; and
   (iii) Thresholds that will determine success or failure.
2. List the Board members with demonstrable experience to lead the review of financial performance indicators and provide a brief description of each individual's specific areas of expertise.

Narrative Response:

The Board is accountable for all financial performance indicators (FPIs). Each month, the Superintendent provides a financial report to the Board's Finance Committee to evaluate progress including a cash flow statement, statement of financial position, statement of activities (revenues and expenditures, by function), and the budget to actuals report. The committee has the opportunity to ask clarifying questions to the Superintendent and Director of Finance and Operations, and may recommend adjustments or interventions in response to the school's overall financial performance. The Finance Committee then prepares quarterly reports to the Board outlining the organization's progress on all FPIs as well as requests for Board action. The specific FPIs monitored as well as the thresholds that determine success or failure at The Gathering Place are as follows:

INDICATOR 1: Our state-mandated annual financial report (AFR) and all charter school financial data are submitted on time according to deadlines set by the TEA.
   Metric 1: Complete and timely submissions in accordance with TEA's established deadlines.
   - Threshold 1: State-mandated AFR and associated financial data is submitted on time with an unmodified opinion and free of any material weaknesses over internal controls.

INDICATOR 2: TGP Public Schools is compliant with the payment terms of all debt agreements.
   Metric 1: Full and timely compliance with all debt servicing, if applicable.
   - Threshold 1: All debt will be paid in full and on time according to debt repayment terms.

INDICATOR 3: Our fund balance and reserve ratio is determined and assessed quarterly.
   Metric 1: Fund balance and reserve ratio is calculated as follows: current assets / current liabilities.
   - Threshold 1: The fund balance and reserve ratio will be greater than 1.

INDICATOR 4: Our revenue versus expenses is determined and assessed annually.
   Metric 1: Revenue v. expenses is calculated as follows: total revenue - total expenses year-to-date.
   - Threshold 1: Total revenue - total expenses is net positive annually.

INDICATOR 5: Our administrative cost ratio is determined and assessed annually.
   Metric 1: The ratio of admin staff to overall staff as defined by the Charter FIRST rating system.
   - Threshold 1: The administrative cost ratio does not exceed 15% by Year 5. These percentages are in alignment with a satisfactory rating for this indicator on the Charter FIRST rating system.

INDICATOR 6: Our days of cash on hand will be determined and assessed monthly.
   Metric 1: Cash on hand is calculated as follows: (cash and equivalents plus current Investments) / (total expenses - facilities acquisition and construction) times 365.
   - Threshold 1: Have ≥30 days cash on hand by the end of Year 1, ≥60 by days cash on hand by the end of Year 5, and ≥90 days cash on hand at full scale.

INDICATOR 7: The percentage of overall expenditures by each budget category, as defined within our Financial Workbook, is assessed quarterly and never surpasses threshold ceilings outlined below.
Metric 1: Percentage of overall expenditures spent on personnel, personnel benefits, and taxes.
- Threshold 1: Percentage of overall expenditures spent on personnel, benefits, and taxes is always within ±5% of our goal of 65% in any given year and is subject to Metric 5 outlined below.

Metric 2: Percentage of overall expenditures spent on contracted services.
- Threshold 1: Percentage of overall expenditures spent on contracted services is always within ±5% of our goal of 10% in any given year and is subject to Metric 5 outlined below.

Metric 3: Percentage of overall expenditures spent on operations.
- Threshold 1: Percentage of overall expenditures spent on operations is always within ±5% of our goal of 12.5% in any given year and is subject to Metric 5 outlined below.

Metric 4: Percentage of overall expenditures spent on facilities.
- Threshold 1: Percentage of overall expenditures spent on facilities is always within ±5% of our goal of 10% in any given year and is subject to Metric 5 outlined below.

Metric 5: Percentage of expenditures spent on each budget category in our Financial Workbook.
- Threshold 1: While yearly percentages may fluctuate within the given ranges outlined in the thresholds under metrics 1-4, the percentage of all categories summed together must stay ≤100% in any given year.

INDICATOR 8: Student enrollment versus projected enrollment is measured and assessed monthly.
- Metric 1: Student enrollment versus projected enrollment is calculated by actual enrollment divided by projected enrollment.
  - Threshold 1: 95% or higher.

INDICATOR 9: Compliance with internal controls is measured and assessed monthly.
- Metric 1: Percentage of transactions with appropriate supporting documentation and approval.
  - Threshold 1: 100% of transactions have appropriate supporting documentation and approval.
- Metric 2: Number of reconciliations to control ledger and subsidiary ledger.
  - Threshold 1: Reconciliation happens at least once per month.

Board member Janet Young is the COO at Parallon Business Solutions. They are, “…one of the country’s largest premier revenue cycle partners, with more than 16,500 employees serving 650+ hospitals and 2,400+ physician practices. Annually, we collect more than $41 billion and interact with 35 million patients.” Additionally, board member Diego Capeletti (MBA from the University of Texas at El Paso) served as the financial expert supporting start-ups at the Hub of Human Innovation incubator, and currently leads at the Center for Innovation, Technology, and Entrepreneurship at the University of Texas at San Antonio where he continues to support start-ups.

1parallon.com/about-us

Evaluation Criteria-Financial Performance Indicators

A strong response will:
- Present specific applicable metrics that will evaluate and assess financial performance indicators;
- Demonstrate a consistent and sufficient evaluation schedule;
- Identify specific thresholds/performance levels that will determine success or need for intervention; and
- Identify multiple Board members that have demonstrable experience and competency to assess financial performance.
1. Provide a detailed budget narrative and sources of funding, which must include a description of assumptions and revenue estimates (including but not limited to) the basis and calculations for revenue projections, staffing levels, and expenditures. The narrative response should specifically address the degree to which the school/campus budget will rely on variable income (e.g. grants, donations, fundraising). NOTE: A child who is eligible for enrollment in a prekindergarten (PK) class under Texas Education Code, 29.153, Free Prekindergarten for Certain Children, will only generate half-day attendance. Prekindergarten classes must operate on a half-day basis unless funding other than Foundation School Program (FSP) funding is used to offer a full-day PK program.

2. Indicate the amount and sources of funds, property or other resources expected to be available through banks, lending institutions, corporations, foundations, grants, etc. Note which are secure and which are anticipated, and include evidence of commitment for any funds as Attachment FS5. Explain the basis for assumptions around unsecured/anticipated funding sources.

3. Provide the cumulative total amount for each of the following and the number of donors included in each amount:
   a. Donations collected;
   b. Donations with a firm commitment;
   c. Additional donations anticipated; and
   d. Donations contingent upon charter.

4. Discuss the school's contingency plan to meet financial needs if anticipated revenues are not received or are lower than estimated. Also provide a detailed cash flow contingency (for Year 1), in the event that revenue projections are not met in advance of opening.

Narrative Response:

REVENUE PROJECTIONS, SOURCES OF INCOME, AND ASSUMPTIONS OF AVAILABILITY

>>Average Daily Attendance (ADA) is estimated on student demographics, count, and grade level and implements Robin Aldridge's suggestion during TEA's Generation 24 charter information session on 10/12/2018 of building a conservative budget by using 90% as our ADA (which is also 5% lower than the ADA of our occupied district, SAISD¹).

>>FSP funding is based on ADA, enrollment, and demographics. We anticipate serving 162 students in each grade K-8. (Note: Financial Workbook Enrollment Tab shows some grade levels launching with <162 students; this is intentional and designed to support the Education Plan by establishing grade level culture prior to reaching full grade level enrollment.) We project 89% students on FRL, 24% English Learners (EL), and 12% students in special education (SPED). Projections are based on, SAISD, our occupied district and nearby schools in our proposed attendance zone. (See Enrollment and Demographic Projections.)

>>Federal funding for Title I and IDEA revenue assumptions were calculated and referenced against Compass Rose Academy and Austin Achieve, two Texas charter schools serving similar percentages of students on FRL and in SPED. Both schools reported receiving ~$500 in Title 1 Part A funds per student on FRL and ~$2000 in IDEA Part B funds per student in SPED. To conservatively budget, we cut those
numbers in half for our assumptions. For food services we budget $3.97/student/day based on
estimates from the National Lunch and Breakfast program and nearby schools; therefore, federal
revenue through meal reimbursements are estimated using an ADA of 90% * 182 school days * 3.97 *
89% of students eligible for FRL, for a reimbursement of $218,769 in Year 1 that scales with growth.
>>Food service revenue for students who are not eligible for FRL and pay directly was calculated using
an ADA of 90% * 182 school days * 3.97 * 11% of students not eligible for FRL, for a revenue total of
$27,039 in Year 1 that scales with growth.
>>Commitments have been secured from City Education Partners for $325,000, Choose to Succeed
for $50,000, and The Brackenridge Foundation for $50,000 for Year 0; contingent on charter award.
(See Attachment FOG14.)
>>Transportation revenue is calculated using TEA’s Transportation program allotment rate of 1.11 as
the result of a total density of 1.25 based on an anticipated route of 25 miles. Since the route runs
before and after school, we calculated 50 miles a day for 182 days * 1.11 to estimate annual revenue
of $10,101 per bus plus an additional $1,750 allotment for SPED program transportation, which totals
$11,851 in total transportation revenue.
>>Variable income is not included in this budget. Although we will apply for state and federal grants,
including the Charter School Program Start-Up Grant through TEA, if awarded a charter, they have not
been secured and are therefore not included.

PERSONNEL TO SUPPORT EDUCATIONAL, OPERATIONAL, AND BUSINESS OPERATIONS

>>Staffing levels are based on three commitments: maintain the overall student to teacher ratio
under 20:1, comply with the American Psychological Association’s recommendation to maintain the
ratio of student to counselor under 250:1, and ensure small caseloads for SPED teachers by having a
ratio of less than 45:1 which is substantially lower than the national average of 57:1.
>>Salaries are competitive with the occupied district of SAISD to ensure high-quality staff. Teacher
salaries are budgeted at an average of $51,500, which is the starting teacher salary in SAISD and the
second highest paying ISD in Bexar county. Teaching assistant salaries are budgeted at $19,500,
$1,200 more than the starting TA salary in SAISD. The Principal, DFO, and DCI are hired at $70,000
which is lower than SAISD but takes into account the smaller student population of the proposed
school. The APs are budgeted at $65,000 which is above SAISD’s entry AP salary. Teachers are
supported by content coaches, including a PBL Coach, Literacy Coach, and Restorative Practices
Coach, each budgeted at $55,000, and the SEL team, including a DSEL to oversee programming, SEL
Counselors to support students 1:1, social workers, and behavior interventionists, each budgeted
competitively with nearby school districts. The PEIMS Coordinator is budgeted at $37,500, higher than
SAISD, to ensure a highly experienced candidate. The office manager, receptionists, bus drivers, and
custodians are all budgeted conservatively with nearby districts.
>>Payroll taxes and benefits include Medicare, calculated at 1.45% of total personnel costs per federal
mandate; state unemployment, calculated at 2.7% of the first $9,000 per year per employee, or $243
per employee per year; Workers’ Compensation Insurance, estimated as 1% of payroll based on
insurance quotes; teacher retirement calculated using 6.8% for the first 90 days and 0.75% of annual
wages; and a contribution of 8% of each employee’s salary for health insurance and 0.5% for dental,
vision, and life insurance based on data obtained from other Texas charter operators.
>>Contracted services include audit services, calculated at $10,000 and legal services at $7,500 for
Year 1 with a 3% increase each year based on comparative data from local charters; nurse services,
budgeted at $9,450 to complete mandatory vision and hearing screenings for K, 3, and 5 and provide
4 hours of weekly nursing services based on comparative data from local charters; payroll services,
budgeted at $450/employee/year based on quotes from ESC Region 20; specialized SPED services,
budgeted at $10,000 in Year 0 to set up database and record keeping systems and $37,439 in Year 1 (which includes $12,000 for transportation required by IEPs) based on estimates from A.I.M., a local SPED service provider and calculated using our projected demographics, which scale with yearly enrollment growth; and substitute teacher services, budgeted at $10,500 in Year 1, which provides each teacher with a substitute for 5 days and is based on daily rates of nearby ISD substitutes.

SCHOOL OPERATIONS TO SUPPORT ED PLAN, OPERATIONAL PLAN, AND BUSINESS OPERATIONS
>>Board expenses are budgeted at $3,000/year for onboarding new members, and an annual training and strategic planning retreat.
>>Our instructional learning model to support student mastery of TEKS standards includes the following: Reading A-Z/Learning A-Z at $99.95/classroom/year; Project Foundry at $8/student/year; ed software for enrichment and intervention at $200/teacher/year; PBL supplies budgeted at $1,000/teacher/year; art supplies budgeted at $1,500/teacher/year; special education materials for students with IEPs, e.g. weighted blankets, noise cancelling headphones, assistive reading technology, etc. at $250/student with an IEP/year; other supplies and materials that include $200/teacher/year for general classroom supplies; and expenses related to PBL and art showcases at $20,048 in Year 1.
>>Accelerated instruction software is budgeted at $10/student/year to provide adaptive support for academic intervention. We have budgeted Year 1 at a lower amount as K-2 students are not eligible to take the STAAR. While we do not anticipate all students requiring accelerated instruction, we have budgeted at 100% of all students in tested grades to be conservative.
>>For any student on an accelerated instruction plan who qualifies for Spectrum’s Wi-Fi program for low-income families at $14.99/month, we have budgeted to pay for the family’s Wi-Fi service so that the child may continue to access adaptive technology programs at home. To be conservative, we have budgeted to provide this service for 10% of our student population in any given year.
>>Classroom furniture is budgeted at $4,971/new classroom plus furniture for shared spaces like the cafeteria and gym for a total of $108,822 in Year 1. Each year, this total is dependent on the number of rooms added due to enrollment growth and a budgeted 10-year depreciation for existing furniture. Year 2-4 are lower as we add classrooms and hallways, and Year 5 is higher as we launch our middle school.
>>Office phone is budgeted at $960/year. We do not provide staff cell phones, and instead leverage free tools like Slack and email for inter-staff communication.
>>Office expenses are budgeted at $5,670 for front office supplies based on data from local schools.
>>Technology is budgeted at one classroom set of iPads shared among K-1; Chromebooks budgeted at a ratio of 1:6 in 2-3, 1:3 in 4-5, and 1:1 in 6-8; Apple laptop/employee and classroom projector/teacher; $20/student/year in IT and network service fees; $58/student for financial and SIS software using estimates from ESC Region 20; and $100/staff member/year for miscellaneous tech.
>>Assessment costs include NWEA MAP assessment at $13.50/student/year plus $1,000 annual site license; F&P assessments at $325/classroom plus $1,000 annual site license; TELPAS at $7/EL/year; $2,500 for school-set of Panorama SEL surveys and assessments.
>>Transportation is budgeted at $20,000/used bus based on estimates from used bus dealerships; $6,000/bus/year for repairs and gas assuming 6 miles to the gallon and $3/gallon; $7.62/student/year for insurance based on estimate school insurance companies; $800/bus driver for driver safety training; and $20/student for field trips, which account for added gas and event admission fees. Costs reflect one bus in Years 1-2, two buses in Year 3, three buses in Year 4, and four buses in Year 5.
>>Student services line item reflects $10/student/year to fund popup parent/community workshops.
>>Student recruitment is budgeted at $30/new student to cover digital and print marketing; and $10,000/year for hourly bilingual enrollment ambassadors who support door-to-door recruitment. There is an additional $10,000 in our start-up year to support our enrollment for school launch.

>>Staff recruitment includes $350/new teacher and $600/new leader and accounts for a conservative 80% annual staff retention rate and referral bonuses; $1,000 new bus driver hiring bonuses; and $2,500 for Greenhouse.

>>Staff development includes $12,000 for Buck Institute of Education’s PBL summer onsite training; $6,000 in Years 1-3 ($12,000 in Years 4-5) for Yale’s Ruler training and curriculum; $500/teacher and leader for additional PD and trauma-informed trainings; and $5,000 for training of non-instructional staff per year.

>>Travel expenses are budgeted at $600/leader for school visits, conferences, and trainings that directly align with the school’s mission, vision, and increasing student outcomes.

>>Stipends include $4,000 for staff to provide after-school programming at no cost to families, have budgeted for two facilitators, and will make adjustments as needed based on demand; and $2,000/bilingual certified teacher to fill these critical roles with high-quality staff, currently projected to be 25% of lead teachers.

FACILITIES & MAINTENANCE TO SUPPORT ED PLAN, OPERATIONAL PLAN, AND BUSINESS OPERATIONS
Facilities and maintenance expenses include insurance, budgeted at $1/sq ft/year based on other San Antonio charter schools; janitorial services, which reflect custodial supplies and waste removal as custodians are reflected in personnel, budgeted at $10/student/year; $15/sq ft for rent budgeted conservatively based on lease costs for potential properties that range between $12-$15/sq ft sourced through JLL Realty; repair and maintenance budgeted at $0.50/sq ft; utilities and security at $1.50/sq ft/year based on comparative data with local charter schools.

CONTINGENCY PLANNING
In Year 0, we allocate $70,000 for contingency reserves; in Year 1 and on, contingency reserves are calculated at 1.5% of school expenses. There are variables related to funding and revenue that can change, causing us to have to make difficult decisions within our budget. We foresee three potential events in which anticipated revenues are not received or are lower than estimated, including:
(1) Under enrollment leads to lowered than estimated revenue. The Board has examined the existing budget and categorized expenses as essential (e.g. rent, SPED teacher, etc.) or non-essential. If enrollment is lower than projected, non-essential expenses will be cut or decreased (e.g. total amount for PBL supplies; number of field trips; etc.).
(2) Changes to FSP or federal revenue. If minor changes occur, the Board evaluates and identifies which expenses may be adjusted or cut to offset revenue shortfalls (e.g. substitute paid software for free software to support accelerated instruction, suspend Spectrum program, etc.). If major changes occur, like they did in 2010, the Board, similarly to public schools across Texas, will examine the educational model to accommodate substantial changes which may include increasing class size, reducing coaching and administrative support, and/or cutting transportation. Any substantial changes will be submitted to TEA for approval consideration for a charter amendment.
(3) Start-up year commitments fall through. If awarded a charter, we will apply for the Charter School Program Start-up Grant through TEA to ensure we have the funds needed in our start-up year regardless of philanthropy. If we are unable to get the CSP grant and committed philanthropy falls through, our plan is to consider short-term loans through local banks. We would also make budget cuts to non-essential items to account for the loan interest incurred.
**LOAN REPAYMENT FOR BORROWED FUNDS**

We do not anticipate having loans in our first 5 years of operation. However, if a loan is required for facility renovations, we will ensure debt servicing for the loan remains net neutral with our current budget by confirming a lease is lower than the $15/sq ft budgeted. (See Campus Facility Not Identified.) If a loan is needed, we will assess all lenders for the most competitive loan product and interest rate. We are also working with City Education Partners to explore sources for guaranteeing a facilities renovation loan if needed. (See Campus Facility Not Identified.)

2. tea.texas.gov/Finance_and_Grants/State_Funding/State_Funding_Reports_and_Data/State_Funding_Reports_and_Data/
3. asha.org/uploadedFiles/ASHA/Practice_Portal/Professional_Issues/Caseload_and_Workload/State-Caseload-Chart.pdf
4. saisd.net/main/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=5127&Itemid=0

Attachment(s):
- FOG 10: Financial Plan Workbook
- FOG 11: Audit Report
- FOG 12: Credit Report
- FOG 13: [IRS] Form 990, Form 990-N, or Form 990-EZ
- FOG 14: Evidence of Other Financial Support

**Evaluation Criteria-Budget**

A strong response will:
- Present expenditures that cover the Educational Plan, Operational Plan, and all Business Operations that are discussed in the application;
- Provide a clear description of assumptions and revenue estimates (including but not limited to) the basis of calculations for revenue projections, staffing levels, and expenditures;
- Present Average Daily Attendance (ADA) estimates that are congruent with the estimated student demographics, count, and grade level;
- Address the source of all anticipated income and make reasonable assumptions around the level of commitment and availability of variable funds;
- Describe all repayment terms for borrowed funds; and
- Outlines strong contingency planning to be implemented in the event that anticipated revenues are not received or are lower than estimated.
Provide the Following:

The Proof of Attendance documentation received at the conclusion of the Applicant Information Session attended in October, 2018. Applicants who attended both sessions need only submit one document.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) hosted identical Applicant Information Sessions on October 5, 2018 and October 12, 2018, of which applicants were required to attend one. Each session provided details about (i) applying for (and holding) a charter in the state of Texas; (ii) contents of the RFA document; and (iii) application preparation and submission requirements for both electronic and hard copy application documents.

Consequently, attendees received a Proof of Attendance document at the conclusion of each session.

For an application to be deemed complete, at least one member of the governing board of the sponsoring entity requesting the charter must have attended one of the sessions and signed the Proof of Attendance document. It was recommended that the individual(s) with primary responsibility for preparing and submitting the application also attend one of these required information sessions.

PLEASE NOTE: Attachment A1 is referenced on page 3 of the Application Coversheet under Enrollment Overview.
Texas Education Agency
Division of Charter School Administration
Generation Twenty-Four Applicant Information Session Registration Form

This form should be saved locally and must be completed using Adobe Acrobat. Preview Mode, the default program for working with PDF files on a Mac, will not work correctly. The completed form should be submitted as an attachment to charterapplication@tea.texas.gov along with the completed application.

Attendance by one governing board member of the sponsoring entity is required. Proof of attendance will be provided to attendees for inclusion as attachment A1 in the submitted application.

Each session will provide details about applying for and holding a charter in the state of Texas, the contents of the RFA, the application preparation guidelines and submission requirements for both electronic and hard copy application documents.

Paper copies of the RFA will NOT be made available.

Proposed Charter School Name: The Gathering Place

Sponsoring Entity Name as reflected on the 501(c)(3): TGP Public Schools

Application Contact Name: Ryan York & Joanna Klekowicz

Title/Role: Co-founders

Email: founders@thegatheringplacek12.org Phone: 615-631-0479

Board Member Attending: Janet Young

Date of Session:  □ Friday, October 5, 2018, 9:00 a.m. - 4:20 p.m.
  □ Friday, October 12, 2018, 9:00 a.m. - 4:20 p.m.

Submit the completed form at least 24 hours prior to the session indicated above to charterapplication@tea.texas.gov.

If you have any questions about the sessions or registration, please contact Jennifer Hagan at 512-463-0359 or jennifer.hagan@tea.texas.gov.
Provide the Following:

Organizational charts that show the school governance, management, and staffing structure. An applicant must submit separate organizational charts for ‘year one’ and ‘at-capacity.’ If the organizational structure is not projected to change during the initial contract period; an applicant must indicate this somewhere on the chart provided.

Each organizational chart should clearly delineate the roles and responsibilities of – and lines of authority and reporting among – the governing board, staff, any related bodies (such as advisory bodies or parent/teacher councils), and any external organizations that will play a role in managing the school. The organizational charts shall also document clear lines of authority and reporting within the school.

All positions listed on the organizational charts shall be noted on the Staffing Chart provided as Attachment O2 and have a corresponding Supplemental Human Resources Information Forms submitted in Attachment O3.

PLEASE NOTE: Attachment E2 is referenced on the Teacher Recruitment narrative page of the Education Plan.
Network Org Chart At Capacity

The Gathering Place

Board of Directors

Superintendent

Principal

Director of Finance & Operations

Director of Human Resources & Talent

Community Engagement Coordinator

See School Org Chart

Book Keeper

Talent Recruiter
Provide the Following:

A staffing chart outlining the staffing plan for the campus(es), as applicable.

Using the template provided at [http://tea.texas.gov/charterapp.aspx](http://tea.texas.gov/charterapp.aspx), the staffing chart must include staffing projections for each year during the initial contract period (Years 1-5).

The staffing chart should also align with the Organizational Charts (Attachment 01) and the Supplemental Human Resources Information Forms (Attachment 03) and should identify, but not limited to, the following positions:

1. Principal(s) and Assistant Principal(s)
2. Additional Campus Leadership
3. Classroom Teachers (core subjects)
4. Classroom Teachers (specials)
5. Student Support (e.g. social workers)
6. Specialized Campus Staff
7. Teacher Aide(s) and Assistant(s)
8. Campus Operations Support Staff
9. PEIMS

Adjust or add functions and titles as needed.

PLEASE NOTE: Attachment E3 is referenced on the Teacher Recruitment narrative page of the Education Plan.
## Name of Proposed Charter School:
The Gathering Place

## Name of Sponsoring Entity:
TGP Public Schools

### Elementary School Campus Staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Special Education (K-8)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Social Emotional Learning (K-8)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model Coach (PBL, Literacy, RP) (K-8)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers (Core Subjects)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers (Specials)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEL Team (Social Worker, Counselors, BIs) (K-8)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special Education Teachers (K-8)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraprofessionals (K-8)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEIMS Coordinator (K-8)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Aides and Assistants</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Operations Support Staff</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total FTEs at elementary campus(es)</strong></td>
<td>44</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Middle School Campus Staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal(s)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Curriculum &amp; Instruction (K-8)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Finance &amp; Operations (K-8)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of HR &amp; Talent (K-8)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers (Core Subjects)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers (Specials)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talent Recruiter (K-8)</td>
<td>0.5</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Engagement Coordinator (K-8)</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus Driver (K-8)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Custodian (K-8)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Aides and Assistants</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Operations Support Staff</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total FTEs at middle school campus(es)</strong></td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments:
see next page for additional comment box space.

All roles labeled K-8 and the Principal will serve grades kindergarten through 8th grade. The separation of these roles between the elementary school and the middle school campus staff tables because of available lines in the template. Also, Campus Operations Support Staff includes the Office Manager, Receptionists, and Bookkeeper; and Specials teachers include physical education and art teachers.
### Name of Proposed Charter School:
The Gathering Place

### Name of Sponsoring Entity:
TGP Public Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>HIGH SCHOOL CAMPUS STAFF</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal(s)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add'l Campus Leadership Position 1 (specify)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add'l Campus Leadership Position 2 (specify)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add'l Campus Leadership Position 3 (specify)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers (Core Subjects)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers (Specials)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Support Position 1 [e.g., Social Worker]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Support Position 2 [specify]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialized Campus Staff 1 [specify]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialized Campus Staff 2 [specify]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Aides and Assistants</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Operations Support Staff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total FTEs at high school campus(es)</strong></td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total organization FTEs</strong></td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments:
Provide the Following:

Using the template provided at http://tea.texas.gov/charterapp.aspx, complete a Supplemental Human Resources Information Form for ALL paid positions required to operate the proposed school in year one and at capacity.

Ensure that the submission includes ALL positions necessary to operate the proposed school during the start-up year, the first year of operations, and finally, at capacity.

All positions represented here should also be represented on the organizational chart submitted in Attachment 01 and on the staffing chart submitted in Attachment 02.

PLEASE NOTE: Attachment E4 is referenced on the Teacher Recruitment narrative page of the Education Plan.
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of sponsoring entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Assistant Principal

Reports to: Principal

Salary Range: $60,000 - $80,000

List any other potential form of remuneration (i.e., car allowance, cell phone, memberships, travel or housing allowance, etc...) to be given to the individual in this position. If none, please state N/A.

N/A

Proposed Location (City and County): San Antonio (Bexar County)

Number of Students anticipated in year one: 378

Number of Students anticipated in year five: 1,134

Minimum Qualifications Required:

Education Required: Bachelor's degree, advanced degree preferred

Experience Required: At least 3 years experience working in schools, experience in educational leadership preferred

Certification Required: N/A

Complete the following using information gathered from three different traditional districts comparable in size, student make-up, and location. A traditional district is identified by the abbreviation ISD or CISD. County district numbers may be accessed on line through the Texas Education Directory found at http://mansfield.tea.state.tx.us/TEA_AskTED.Web/Forms/Home.aspx. Additionally, traditional districts will not have an eight as the fourth digit in the county district number (CDN).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of District</th>
<th>CDN</th>
<th>Located in (City)</th>
<th># of Students Served</th>
<th>Salary Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lackland ISD</td>
<td>015913</td>
<td>San Antonio</td>
<td>1,051</td>
<td>$75,437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Randolph Field ISD</td>
<td>015906</td>
<td>San Antonio</td>
<td>1,449</td>
<td>$75,268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort Sam Houston ISD</td>
<td>015914</td>
<td>San Antonio</td>
<td>1,608</td>
<td>$86,572</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of Sponsoring Entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Assistant Principal

Reports to: Principal

Job Duties: List up to 10 key duties this individual will perform.

1. Conduct formal teacher evaluations
2. Oversee school systems and procedures including scheduling, and calendaring
3. Manage staff absences and support substitute teachers
4. Coordinate school-wide testing
5. Manage assigned teachers
6. Communicate directly with parents about upcoming events and school news
7. Assist the principal in school-wide initiative or goals
8. Oversee school showcases and performances
9. Oversee family-student conferences
10. Serve on school hiring committee

If a charter is awarded, this document becomes part of the original application. Changes to this information must be documented in the minutes of an open meeting of the charter holder board.
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of sponsoring entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Teaching Assistant

Reports to: Assigned Classroom Teacher

Salary Range: $18,000 - $30,000

List any other potential form of remuneration (i.e., car allowance, cell phone, memberships, travel or housing allowance, etc...) to be given to the individual in this position. If none, please state N/A.

N/A

Proposed Location (City and County): San Antonio (Bexar County)

Number of Students anticipated in year one: 378

Minimum Qualifications Required:

Education Required: High school diploma required, associate degree preferred

Experience Required: Experience working with children preferred

Certification Required: N/A

Complete the following using information gathered from three different traditional districts comparable in size, student make-up, and location. A traditional district is identified by the abbreviation ISD or CISD. County district numbers may be accessed on line through the Texas Education Directory found at http://monsfield.tea.state.tx.us/TEA.AskTED.Web/Forms/Home.aspx. Additionally, traditional districts will not have an eight as the fourth digit in the county district number (CDN).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of District</th>
<th>CDN</th>
<th>Located in (City)</th>
<th># of Students Served</th>
<th>Salary Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lackland ISD</td>
<td>015913</td>
<td>San Antonio</td>
<td>1,051</td>
<td>$20,647</td>
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<tr>
<td>Randolph Field ISD</td>
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<td>San Antonio</td>
<td>1,449</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fort Sam Houston ISD</td>
<td>015914</td>
<td>San Antonio</td>
<td>1,608</td>
<td>$27,364</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of Sponsoring Entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Teaching Assistant

Reports to: Assigned Classroom Teacher

Job Duties: List up to 10 key duties this individual will perform.

1. Support the lead classroom teacher in curriculum planning and instruction
2. Lead small group interventions based on data and teacher recommendation
3. Support students 1:1 and in small groups with behavioral needs
4. Assist with arrival, lunch, recess, and dismissal
5. Participate in professional development and training with all teachers
6. Participate in additional training and support on foundations of instruction
7. Support the lead classroom teacher in grading and providing feedback on student work
8. Lead balanced literacy stations during literacy block
9. Support lead teacher with parent communication
10. Facilitate student development of explicit social-emotional skills

If a charter is awarded, this document becomes part of the original application. Changes to this information must be documented in the minutes of an open meeting of the charter holder board.
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of sponsoring entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Behavior Interventionist

Reports to: Director of Social Emotional Learning

Salary Range: $18,000 - $30,000

List any other potential form of remuneration (i.e., car allowance, cell phone, memberships, travel or housing allowance, etc...) to be given to the individual in this position. If none, please state N/A.

N/A

Proposed Location (City and County): San Antonio (Bexar County)

Number of Students anticipated in year one: 378

Minimum Qualifications Required:

Education Required: High school diploma required

Experience Required: Experience working with students who have high behavioral needs

Certification Required: N/A

Complete the following using information gathered from three different traditional districts comparable in size, student make-up, and location. A traditional district is identified by the abbreviation ISD or CISD. County district numbers may be accessed online through the Texas Education Directory found at http://mansfield.tea.state.tx.us/TFA_AskTED_Web/Forms/Home.aspx. Additionally, traditional districts will not have an eight as the fourth digit in the county district number (CDN).

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lackland ISD</td>
<td>015913</td>
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</table>
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of Sponsoring Entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Behavior Interventionist

Reports to: Director of Social Emotional Learning

Job Duties: List up to 10 key duties this individual will perform.

1. Adapt classroom activities and materials as needed to support assigned students needs
2. Support in the development and implementation of Behavior Intervention Plans
3. Collect behavioral data for T2 and T3 interventions and for Functional Behavioral Assessments
4. Support school staff in understanding the needs and effective strategies for assigned students
5. Provide de-escalation and behavioral support to students as needed
6. Lead 1:1 and small group social and behavioral sessions with assigned students
7. Communicate regularly with family members regarding behavioral needs and progress
8. Monitor student behavior to ensure classrooms are safe and secure learning environments
9. Facilitate restorative conversations
10. Serve on assigned student’s ARD committee when applicable

If a charter is awarded, this document becomes part of the original application. Changes to this information must be documented in the minutes of an open meeting of the charter holder board.
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of sponsoring entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Book Keeper

Reports to: Director of Finance and Operations

Salary Range: $40,000 - $60,000

List any other potential form of remuneration (i.e., car allowance, cell phone, memberships, travel or housing allowance, etc...) to be given to the individual in this position. If none, please state N/A.

N/A

Proposed Location (City and County): San Antonio (Bexar County)

Number of Students anticipated in year one: 378

Minimum Qualifications Required:

Education Required: Associate degree required, bachelor's degree preferred

Experience Required: Experience working with financial software and managing financial records and reports, experience in school finance preferred

Certification Required: N/A

Complete the following using information gathered from three different traditional districts comparable in size, student make-up, and location. A traditional district is identified by the abbreviation ISD or CISD. County district numbers may be accessed on line through the Texas Education Directory found at http://mansfield.tea.state.tx.us/TEA_AskTED_Web/Forms/Home.aspx. Additionally, traditional districts will not have an eight as the fourth digit in the county district number (CDN).

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</table>
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of Sponsoring Entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Book Keeper

Reports to: Director of Finance and Operations

Job Duties: List up to 10 key duties this individual will perform.

1. Collect and categorize all school receipts
2. Prepare and conduct bank deposits
3. Process payments on all accounts as they become due
4. Prepare and provide financial reports to the Director of Finance and Operations
5. Manage all school reimbursements
6. Ensure confidentiality of all sensitive materials and information
7. Issue payments to vendors and manage all invoices
8. Prepare and submit all purchase orders for the school
9. Enter all financial data into financial management software
10. Coordinate with annual auditors

If a charter is awarded, this document becomes part of the original application. Changes to this information must be documented in the minutes of an open meeting of the charter holder board.
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of sponsoring entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Bus Driver

Reports to: Office Manager

Salary Range: $20,000 - $50,000

List any other potential form of remuneration (i.e., car allowance, cell phone, memberships, travel or housing allowance, etc...) to be given to the individual in this position. If none, please state N/A.

N/A

Proposed Location (City and County): San Antonio (Bexar County)

Number of Students anticipated in year one: 378

Minimum Qualifications Required:

Education Required: High school diploma required

Experience Required: Experience driving school buses required, basic maintenance skills preferred

Certification Required: CDL endorsement & completed bus driver certification

Complete the following using information gathered from three different traditional districts comparable in size, student make-up, and location. A traditional district is identified by the abbreviation ISD or CISD. County district numbers may be accessed on line through the Texas Education Directory found at http://mansfield.tea.state.tx.us/TEA.AskTED.Web/Forms/Home.aspx. Additionally, traditional districts will not have an eight as the fourth digit in the county district number (CDN).

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Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of Sponsoring Entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Bus Driver

Reports to: Office Manager

Job Duties: List up to 10 key duties this individual will perform.

1. Safely transport students from key pick-up destinations to the school
2. Maintain a safe and orderly bus culture amongst students
3. Follow all state and federal laws and traffic requirements
4. Effectively communicate with office staff regarding delays or changes in routes
5. Perform basic maintenance and upkeep on school bus
6. Keep attendance records to ensure all students are accounted for each day
7. Report any behavior incidents to school administration
8. Establish and maintain positive and caring relationship with students and families
9. 
10. 

If a charter is awarded, this document becomes part of the original application. Changes to this information must be documented in the minutes of an open meeting of the charter holder board.
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of sponsoring entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Community Engagement Coordinator

Reports to: Superintendent

Salary Range: $35,000 - $55,000

List any other potential form of remuneration (i.e., car allowance, cell phone, memberships, travel or housing allowance, etc...) to be given to the individual in this position. If none, please state N/A.

N/A

Proposed Location (City and County): San Antonio (Bexar County)

Number of Students anticipated in year one: 378

Minimum Qualifications Required:

Education Required: High school diploma required, bachelor's degree preferred

Experience Required: Experience organizing events and promoting or marketing events required, fluency in Spanish required, experience in education preferred

Certification Required: N/A

Complete the following using information gathered from three different traditional districts comparable in size, student make-up, and location. A traditional district is identified by the abbreviation ISD or CISD. County district numbers may be accessed online through the Texas Education Directory found at http://mansfield.tea.state.tx.us/TFA_AskTED.Web/Forms/Home.aspx. Additionally, traditional districts will not have an eight as the fourth digit in the county district number (CDN).

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Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of Sponsoring Entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Community Engagement Coordinator

Reports to: Superintendent

Job Duties: List up to 10 key duties this individual will perform.

1. Organize all workshops and events in the community center
2. Ensure our website, promotional materials and facility is easy to navigate for non-English speakers
3. Work with social worker to ensure families have access to community resources
4. Oversee pop-up family workshops
5. Oversee enrollment ambassadors
6. Support families with admission and enrollment process
7. Promote community events at the school including festivals, information sessions, and showcases
8. Establish and coordinate business and community partnerships for student projects
9. Work with organizational leadership to ensure family voice is integrated into all decision making
10. Represent The Gathering Place at public forums, events, and fairs

If a charter is awarded, this document becomes part of the original application. Changes to this information must be documented in the minutes of an open meeting of the charter holder board.
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of sponsoring entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Custodian

Reports to: Office Manager

Salary Range: $20,000 - $40,000

List any other potential form of remuneration (i.e., car allowance, cell phone, memberships, travel or housing allowance, etc...) to be given to the individual in this position. If none, please state N/A.

N/A

Proposed Location (City and County): San Antonio (Bexar County)

Number of Students anticipated in year one: 378

In year five: 1,134

Minimum Qualifications Required:

Education Required: High school diploma required

Experience Required: Custodial experience required, school custodial experience preferred

Certification Required: N/A

Complete the following using information gathered from three different traditional districts comparable in size, student make-up, and location. A traditional district is identified by the abbreviation ISD or CISD. County district numbers may be accessed on line through the Texas Education Directory found at http://mansfield.tea.state.tx.us/TEA_AskTED/Web/Forms/Home.aspx. Additionally, traditional districts will not have an eight as the fourth digit in the county district number (CDN).

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</table>
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of Sponsoring Entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Custodian

Reports to: Office Manager

Job Duties: List up to 10 key duties this individual will perform.

1. Ensure school facility is clean, sanitary, and welcoming to families and students
2. Order all needed cleaning supplies and materials
3. Maintain a positive and caring relationship with students, staff, and families
4. Respond to unexpected accidents and emergencies as needed
5. Ensure all cleaning materials and supplies are stocked in all classrooms and offices
6. Oversee cleaning of cafeteria during lunch
7. Ensure school recycles to the best of its ability
8. Support with minor maintenance and facility repair as needed
9. 
10. 

If a charter is awarded, this document becomes part of the original application. Changes to this information must be documented in the minutes of an open meeting of the charter holder board.
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of sponsoring entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Director of Curriculum and Instruction

Reports to: Principal

Salary Range: $60,000 - $100,000

List any other potential form of remuneration (i.e., car allowance, cell phone, memberships, travel or housing allowance, etc...) to be given to the individual in this position. If none, please state N/A.

N/A

Proposed Location (City and County): San Antonio (Bexar County)

Number of Students anticipated in year one: 378

Minimum Qualifications Required:

Education Required: Bachelor's degree, advanced degree preferred

Experience Required: 5 years experience teaching or in instructional leadership roles, project-based learning experience preferred

Certification Required: N/A

Complete the following using information gathered from three different traditional districts comparable in size, student make-up, and location. A traditional district is identified by the abbreviation ISD or CISD. County district numbers may be accessed online through the Texas Education Directory found at [http://mansfield.tea.state.tx.us/TEA_AskTED/Web/Forms/Home.aspx](http://mansfield.tea.state.tx.us/TEA_AskTED/Web/Forms/Home.aspx). Additionally, traditional districts will not have an eight as the fourth digit in the county district number (CDN).

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<tr>
<td>Somerset ISD</td>
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</table>
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of Sponsoring Entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Director of Curriculum and Instruction

Reports to: Principal

Job Duties: List up to 10 key duties this individual will perform.

1. Oversee curating or the creation of all curriculum
2. Prepare and lead teacher and instructional coaching professional development
3. Oversee the instructional staff evaluation system
4. Create and manage all systems and structures supporting professional learning communities
5. Collaborate with special education teachers to ensure curricular systems support all students
6. Oversee student portfolio systems
7. Oversee and lead summer professional development
8. Ensure alignment between student-driven projects and TEKS standards
9. Lead data analyses to determine small groups and academic interventions
10. Coordinate F&P reading assessments and interventions

If a charter is awarded, this document becomes part of the original application. Changes to this information must be documented in the minutes of an open meeting of the charter holder board.
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of sponsoring entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Director of Finance & Operations

Reports to: Superintendent

Salary Range: $70,000 - $140,000

List any other potential form of remuneration (i.e., car allowance, cell phone, memberships, travel or housing allowance, etc...) to be given to the individual in this position. If none, please state N/A.

Proposed Location (City and County): San Antonio (Bexar County)

Number of Students anticipated in year one: 378  
Number of Students anticipated in year five: 1,134

Minimum Qualifications Required:

Education Required: Bachelor’s degree required, advanced degree in business preferred

Experience Required: At least 5 years experience in financial and/or operational management, experience in education preferred

Certification Required: N/A

Complete the following using information gathered from three different traditional districts comparable in size, student make-up, and location. A traditional district is identified by the abbreviation ISD or CISD. County district numbers may be accessed on line through the Texas Education Directory found at http://mansfield.tea.state.tx.us/TEA_AskTED_Web/Forms/Home.aspx. Additionally, traditional districts will not have an eight as the fourth digit in the county district number (CDN).

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Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of Sponsoring Entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Director of Finance & Operations

Reports to: Superintendent

Job Duties: List up to 10 key duties this individual will perform.

1. Manage the financial statements and records for the charter
2. Create and maintain essential financial and operational systems
3. Create and review financial reports for the Board and Superintendent
4. Recruit, hire, and train operational staff
5. Coordinate all contracted service agreements
6. Oversee all back-end office services
7. Coordinate and oversee annual audits
8. Conduct financial analyses to inform decision making and strategic planning
9. Work with the Superintendent and Board to ensure strategic priorities are reflected in the budget
10. Oversee procurement, debt, and financial statements for grant reporting

If a charter is awarded, this document becomes part of the original application. Changes to this information must be documented in the minutes of an open meeting of the charter holder board.
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of sponsoring entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Director of Social Emotional Learning

Salary Range: $60,000 - $90,000

List any other potential form of remuneration (i.e., car allowance, cell phone, memberships, travel or housing allowance, etc...) to be given to the individual in this position. If none, please state N/A.

N/A

Proposed Location (City and County): San Antonio (Bexar County)

Number of Students anticipated in year one: 378

Minimum Qualifications Required:

Education Required: Advanced degree in school psychology or closely related field

Experience Required: Experience working in school psychology or closely related field

Certification Required: 

Complete the following using information gathered from three different traditional districts comparable in size, student make-up, and location. A traditional district is identified by the abbreviation ISD or CISD. County district numbers may be accessed online through the Texas Education Directory found at http://mansfield.tea.state.tx.us/TEA_AskTED/Forms/Home.aspx. Additionally, traditional districts will not have an eight as the fourth digit in the county district number (CDN).

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</table>
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of Sponsoring Entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Director of Social Emotional Learning

Reports to: Principal

Job Duties: List up to 10 key duties this individual will perform.

1. Curate or create the school’s SEL curriculum
2. Provide training and support for teachers on implementation of SEL curriculum
3. Co-facilitate morning circles with teachers to model SEL best practices
4. Observe and provide feedback on the school’s SEL curriculum implementation
5. Hire and manage SEL Counselors, Social Workers, Behavior Interventionists, and RJ Coaches
6. Oversee development and implementation of Behavior Intervention Plans
7. Develop and lead training on social-emotional learning and restorative practices for staff
8. Develop and lead workshops on social-emotional learning and restorative practices for families
9. Lead restorative conversations for higher-level offenses within the school
10. Communicate effectively with parents regarding behavioral concerns and accountability plans

If a charter is awarded, this document becomes part of the original application. Changes to this information must be documented in the minutes of an open meeting of the charter holder board.
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of sponsoring entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Director of Special Education

Reports to: Principal

Salary Range: $60,000 - $80,000

List any other potential form of remuneration (i.e., car allowance, cell phone, memberships, travel or housing allowance, etc...) to be given to the individual in this position. If none, please state N/A.

N/A

Proposed Location (City and County): San Antonio (Bexar County)

Number of Students anticipated in year one: 378

In year five: 1,134

Minimum Qualifications Required:

Education Required: Bachelor's degree required, advanced degree preferred

Experience Required: At least 3 years experience working in special education, fluency in Spanish preferred

Certification Required: Valid Texas Special Education Certification

Complete the following using information gathered from three different traditional districts comparable in size, student make-up, and location. A traditional district is identified by the abbreviation ISD or CISD. County district numbers may be accessed on line through the Texas Education Directory found at http://mansfield.tea.state.tx.us/TEA.AskTED.Web/Forms/Home.aspx. Additionally, traditional districts will not have an eight as the fourth digit in the county district number (CDN).

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Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of Sponsoring Entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Director of Special Education

Reports to: Principal

Job Duties: List up to 10 key duties this individual will perform.

1. Ensure all special education systems and documentation are in state and federal compliance
2. Create progress monitoring data collection processes
3. Ensure all IEPs are high-quality and compliant with state and federal regulations
4. Hire, manage, and coach Special Education Teachers
5. Create and run training for all staff on supporting students in the Special Education program
6. Attend trainings and workshops on modern techniques, research, and best practices
7. Serve as a case manager for a set number of students
8. Oversee all modifications to state testing for students in Special Education
9. Co-teach and model best practices for students in Special Education
10. Oversee all contracted services and service providers to ensure all minutes are met

If a charter is awarded, this document becomes part of the original application. Changes to this information must be documented in the minutes of an open meeting of the charter holder board.
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of sponsoring entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Director of Human Resources & Talent

Reports to: Superintendent

Salary Range: $60,000 - $100,000

List any other potential form of remuneration (i.e., car allowance, cell phone, memberships, travel or housing allowance, etc...) to be given to the individual in this position. If none, please state N/A.

N/A

Proposed Location (City and County): San Antonio (Bexar County)

Number of Students anticipated in year one: 378

Minimum Qualifications Required:

Education Required: Bachelor's degree required, advanced degree preferred

Experience Required: Prior experience in human resources or related field required, school experience preferred

Certification Required: N/A

Complete the following using information gathered from three different traditional districts comparable in size, student make-up, and location. A traditional district is identified by the abbreviation ISD or CISD. County district numbers may be accessed online through the Texas Education Directory found at http://mansfield.tea.state.tx.us/TEA_AskTED/Web/Forms/Home.aspx. Additionally, traditional districts will not have an eight as the fourth digit in the county district number (CDN).

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</table>
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of Sponsoring Entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Director of Human Resources & Talent

Reports to: Superintendent

Job Duties: List up to 10 key duties this individual will perform.

1. Manage all benefits and insurance for employees
2. Train staff on signing up for and using benefits and insurance
3. Oversee all protocols for whistle blowers and internal complaints including investigations
4. Oversee all personnel records ensuring state and federal compliance
5. Oversee all certification requirements and staffing contracts
6. Manage all payroll services
7. Create and oversee teacher recruitment plans
8. Build and sustain relationships with local university education departments
9. Create and oversee all hiring systems
10. Oversee all staff handbooks, policies, and procedures

If a charter is awarded, this document becomes part of the original application. Changes to this information must be documented in the minutes of an open meeting of the charter holder board.
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place
Name of sponsoring entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Literacy Coach
Reports to: Director of Curriculum & Instruction
Salary Range: $55,000 - $85,000

List any other potential form of remuneration (i.e., car allowance, cell phone, memberships, travel or housing allowance, etc...) to be given to the individual in this position. If none, please state N/A.
N/A

Proposed Location (City and County): San Antonio (Bexar County)

Number of Students anticipated in year one: 378  In year five: 1,134

Minimum Qualifications Required:
Education Required: Bachelor's degree, advanced degree preferred
Experience Required: 3 years teaching experience, educational leadership preferred
Certification Required: Bilingual certification and ESL certification

Complete the following using information gathered from three different traditional districts comparable in size, student make-up, and location. A traditional district is identified by the abbreviation ISD or CISD. County district numbers may be accessed on line through the Texas Education Directory found at http://mansfield.tea.state.tx.us/TEA_AskTED_Web/Forms/Home.aspx. Additionally, traditional districts will not have an eight as the fourth digit in the county district number (CDN).

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<tr>
<td>Lackland ISD</td>
<td>015913</td>
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</table>
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of Sponsoring Entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Literacy Coach

Reports to: Director of Curriculum & Instruction

Job Duties: List up to 10 key duties this individual will perform.

1. Observe classrooms and provide teacher feedback
2. Curate and support with the creation of ELA/R curriculum
3. Provide teacher training on balanced literacy approaches
4. Provide teacher training on culturally responsive ELA/R instruction
5. Plan and lead small group data-driven ELA/R instruction
6. Design and support the school’s bilingual ELA/R program
7. Curate and oversee school library and library books
8. Oversee F&P testing and data collection
9. Plan and host parent literacy events
10. Support teacher professional learning communities with ELA/R TEKS integration into projects

If a charter is awarded, this document becomes part of the original application. Changes to this information must be documented in the minutes of an open meeting of the charter holder board.
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of sponsoring entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Office Manager

Reports to: Principal

Salary Range: $45,000 - $75,000

List any other potential form of remuneration (i.e., car allowance, cell phone, memberships, travel or housing allowance, etc...) to be given to the individual in this position. If none, please state N/A.

N/A

Proposed Location (City and County): San Antonio (Bexar County)

Number of Students anticipated in year one: 378

Minimum Qualifications Required:

Education Required: Bachelor's degree required, advanced degree preferred

Experience Required: Experience working in an office setting is required, school operations or office experience preferred. Fluency in Spanish required.

Certification Required: N/A

Complete the following using information gathered from three different traditional districts comparable in size, student make-up, and location. A traditional district is identified by the abbreviation ISD or CISD. County district numbers may be accessed online through the Texas Education Directory found at http://mansfield.tea.state.tx.us/TEA.AsksTED.Web/Forms/Home.aspx. Additionally, traditional districts will not have an eight as the fourth digit in the county district number (CDN).

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</table>
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of Sponsoring Entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Office Manager

Reports to: Principal

Job Duties: List up to 10 key duties this individual will perform.

1. Ensure the front office is inviting for families and children
2. Manage the bus drivers, PEIMS Coordinator, Receptionists, and Custodians
3. Design bus routes and coordinate with maintenance as needed
4. Organize and run central supplies ordering processes for staff
5. Ensure all mail is sent and delivered to appropriate recipients
6. Manage all centralized school communication including robo-calls and newsletter distribution
7. Ensure records and compliance documents meet state and federal requirements
8. Supports the Principal and Director of Finance and Operations with admission and enrollment
9. Ensure office is equipped to meet student and staff needs
10. Ensure a safe school visitor check-in and check-out system

If a charter is awarded, this document becomes part of the original application. Changes to this information must be documented in the minutes of an open meeting of the charter holder board.
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place
Name of sponsoring entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Paraprofessional
Reports to: Director of Special Education
Salary Range: $18,000 - $30,000

List any other potential form of remuneration (i.e., car allowance, cell phone, memberships, travel or housing allowance, etc...) to be given to the individual in this position. If none, please state N/A.

N/A

Proposed Location (City and County): San Antonio (Bexar County)
Number of Students anticipated in year one: 378
Number of Students anticipated in year five: 1,134

Minimum Qualifications Required:
Education Required: High school diploma required
Experience Required: Experience working with children preferred
Certification Required: Any applicable certifications based on job responsibilities

Complete the following using information gathered from three different traditional districts comparable in size, student make-up, and location. A traditional district is identified by the abbreviation ISD or CISD. County district numbers may be accessed on line through the Texas Education Directory found at [http://mansfield.tea.state.tx.us/TEA_AskTED_Web/Forms/Home.aspx](http://mansfield.tea.state.tx.us/TEA_AskTED_Web/Forms/Home.aspx). Additionally, traditional districts will not have an eight as the fourth digit in the county district number (CDN).

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</table>
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of Sponsoring Entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Paraprofessional

Reports to: Director of Special Education

Job Duties: List up to 10 key duties this individual will perform.

1. Provide 1:1 or small group support for students in accordance with a BIP or IEP

2. Ensure all services required in a child's BIP or IEP are met for assigned students

3. Ensure assigned students engage in their least restrictive environment

4. Communicate regularly with families of assigned students

5. Participate in training to best meet the needs of assigned students depending on their BIP or IEP

6. Collaborate with classroom teachers to ensure assigned students are meeting class expectations

7.

8.

9.

10.

If a charter is awarded, this document becomes part of the original application. Changes to this information must be documented in the minutes of an open meeting of the charter holder board.
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of sponsoring entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: PEIMS Coordinator
Reports to: Office Manager
Salary Range: $30,000 - $55,000

List any other potential form of remuneration (i.e., car allowance, cell phone, memberships, travel or housing allowance, etc...) to be given to the individual in this position. If none, please state N/A.
N/A

Proposed Location (City and County): San Antonio (Bexar County)

Number of Students anticipated in year one: 378
Number of Students anticipated in year five: 1,134

Minimum Qualifications Required:
Education Required: Associate degree required, bachelor's degree preferred

Experience Required: Two years of prior experience working in Texas as a PEIMS coordinator is required. Fluency in Spanish preferred.

Certification Required: N/A

Complete the following using information gathered from three different traditional districts comparable in size, student make-up, and location. A traditional district is identified by the abbreviation ISD or CISD. County district numbers may be accessed on line through the Texas Education Directory found at http://mansfield.tea.state.tx.us/TEA_AskTED.Web/Forms/Home.aspx. Additionally, traditional districts will not have an eight as the fourth digit in the county district number (CDN).

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<td>San Antonio</td>
<td>1,608</td>
<td>$30,195</td>
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</table>
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of Sponsoring Entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: PEIMS Coordinator

Reports to: Office Manager

Job Duties: List up to 10 key duties this individual will perform.

1. Collect data required for PEIMS compliance with TEA
2. Organize data in compliance with PEIMS data standards
3. Ensure PEIMS data is submitted on time
4. Attend PEIMS trainings each year
5. Train school staff on any required formatting or reporting compliance measures
6. Ensure student and staff privacy laws are met while aggregating school data
7. Submit regular reports to the Supt, Board of Directors, and Director of Finance and Operations
8. Ensure only people with the right permissions are able to access school data
9. Ensure all data is stored in secure places both physically and digitally
10. Ensures systems for collecting and submitting data are monitored for errors or inaccurate info

If a charter is awarded, this document becomes part of the original application. Changes to this information must be documented in the minutes of an open meeting of the charter holder board.
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of sponsoring entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Principal

Reports to: Superintendent

Salary Range: $70,000 - $120,000

List any other potential form of remuneration (i.e., car allowance, cell phone, memberships, travel or housing allowance, etc...) to be given to the individual in this position. If none, please state N/A.

N/A

Proposed Location (City and County): San Antonio (Bexar County)

Number of Students anticipated in year one: 378

Minimum Qualifications Required:

Education Required: Bachelor's degree required, advanced degree preferred

Experience Required: At least 5 years teaching or working in public schools, school leadership experience preferred

Certification Required: N/A

Complete the following using information gathered from three different traditional districts comparable in size, student make-up, and location. A traditional district is identified by the abbreviation ISD or CISD. County district numbers may be accessed on line through the Texas Education Directory found at [http://mansfield.tea.state.tx.us/TEA,AskTED,Web/Forms/Home.aspx](http://mansfield.tea.state.tx.us/TEA,AskTED,Web/Forms/Home.aspx). Additionally, traditional districts will not have an eight as the fourth digit in the county district number (CDN).

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</tbody>
</table>
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of Sponsoring Entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Principal

Reports to: Superintendent

Job Duties: List up to 10 key duties this individual will perform.

1. Ensure the school meets all academic goals
2. Oversee the curriculum and instruction at the school
3. Coach and manage the school’s senior leadership team
4. Ensure the school operates within its budget
5. Oversee the training and professional development of staff
6. Communicate with and respond to parent concerns, questions, and ideas
7. Oversee the school-wide student and adult culture
8. Ensure the school is safe and responding appropriately to student behavior
9. Recruit, hire, and oversee the management and coaching of all school staff
10. Work with the Director of Special Education to ensure students’ special needs are met

If a charter is awarded, this document becomes part of the original application. Changes to this information must be documented in the minutes of an open meeting of the charter holder board.
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of sponsoring entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Project Based Learning Coach

Reports to: Director of Curriculum and Instruction

Salary Range: $55,000 - $85,000

List any other potential form of remuneration (i.e., car allowance, cell phone, memberships, travel or housing allowance, etc...) to be given to the individual in this position. If none, please state N/A.

N/A

Proposed Location (City and County): San Antonio (Bexar County)

Number of Students anticipated in year one: 378

Minimum Qualifications Required:

Education Required: Bachelor's degree required, advanced degree preferred

Experience Required: At least 3 years experience teaching or leading in a project-based environment

Certification Required: N/A

Complete the following using information gathered from three different traditional districts comparable in size, student make-up, and location. A traditional district is identified by the abbreviation ISD or CISD. County district numbers may be accessed on line through the Texas Education Directory found at http://mansfield.tea.state.tx.us/TEA_AskTED.Web/Forms/Home.aspx. Additionally, traditional districts will not have an eight as the fourth digit in the county district number (CDN).

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<td>Randolph Field ISD</td>
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<td>Fort Sam Houston ISD</td>
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<td>San Antonio</td>
<td>1,608</td>
<td>$70,838</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of Sponsoring Entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Project Based Learning Coach

Reports to: Director of Curriculum and Instruction

Job Duties: List up to 10 key duties this individual will perform.

1. Oversee the development of project-based curricula
2. Train staff on the creation and execution of project-based curricula
3. Co-teach with classroom teachers to model project-based best-practices
4. Help teachers connect with community and business leaders for real-world connections
5. Observe and provide feedback to teachers during their project-based units
6. Support integration of TEKS into projects
7. Coordinate project-based community showcases
8. Support teachers with data analysis on student mastery of TEKS standards within projects
9. Attend PBL trainings and workshops
10. Provide workshops and information to families about project-based learning

If a charter is awarded, this document becomes part of the original application. Changes to this information must be documented in the minutes of an open meeting of the charter holder board.
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of sponsoring entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Receptionist

Reports to: Office Manager

Salary Range: $20,000 - $40,000

List any other potential form of remuneration (i.e., car allowance, cell phone, memberships, travel or housing allowance, etc...) to be given to the individual in this position. If none, please state N/A.

N/A

Proposed Location (City and County): San Antonio (Bexar County)

Number of Students anticipated in year one: 378

Minimum Qualifications Required:

Education Required: High School diploma required, associate degree preferred

Experience Required: Experience with office software required, experience in office settings preferred, fluency in Spanish required.

Certification Required: N/A

Complete the following using information gathered from three different traditional districts comparable in size, student make-up, and location. A traditional district is identified by the abbreviation ISD or CISD. County district numbers may be accessed on line through the Texas Education Directory found at http://mansfield.tea.state.tx.us/TEA_AskTED/Web/Forms/Home.aspx. Additionally, traditional districts will not have an eight as the fourth digit in the county district number (CDN).

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</table>
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of Sponsoring Entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Receptionist

Reports to: Office Manager

Job Duties: List up to 10 key duties this individual will perform.

1. Manage school telephone calls
2. Welcome visitors and families
3. Collect and store enrollment applications
4. Collect and store attendance data
5. Collect and store immunization records
6. Support school staff with parent communication as needed
7. Ensure students and families feel welcomed while in the front office

8.
9.
10.

If a charter is awarded, this document becomes part of the original application. Changes to this information must be documented in the minutes of an open meeting of the charter holder board.
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of sponsoring entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Restorative Practices Coach

Reports to: Director of Social Emotional Learning

Salary Range: $55,000 - $85,000

List any other potential form of remuneration (i.e., car allowance, cell phone, memberships, travel or housing allowance, etc...) to be given to the individual in this position. If none, please state N/A.

N/A

Proposed Location (City and County): San Antonio (Bexar County)

Number of Students anticipated in year one: 378

Minimum Qualifications Required:

Education Required: Bachelor's degree required, advanced degree preferred

Experience Required: At least 3 years either teaching, in instructional leadership, or working in a restorative facilitation role elsewhere

Certification Required: N/A

Complete the following using information gathered from three different traditional districts comparable in size, student make-up, and location. A traditional district is identified by the abbreviation ISD or CISD. County district numbers may be accessed on line through the Texas Education Directory found at http://mansfield.tea.state.tx.us/TEA_AskTED_Web/Forms/Home.aspx. Additionally, traditional districts will not have an eight as the fourth digit in the county district number (CDN).

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<td>$70,838</td>
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</table>
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of Sponsoring Entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Restorative Practices Coach

Reports to: Director of Social Emotional Learning

Job Duties: List up to 10 key duties this individual will perform.

1. Support staff with restorative conversations either with each other or with students
2. Train staff on restorative mindsets and practices
3. Support students in navigating restorative conversations with each other
4. Lead restorative circles with staff
5. Co-lead restorative circles with students alongside staff
6. Manage restorative accountability systems
7. Communicate with families about school incidents and subsequent accountability
8. Investigate student behavioral issues
9. Lead training and workshops with families about restorative practices
10. Manage sensitive data and records in compliance with all state and federal laws

If a charter is awarded, this document becomes part of the original application. Changes to this information must be documented in the minutes of an open meeting of the charter holder board.
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of sponsoring entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: SEL Counselor

Reports to: Director of Social Emotional Learning

Salary Range: $45,000 - $75,000

List any other potential form of remuneration (i.e., car allowance, cell phone, memberships, travel or housing allowance, etc…) to be given to the individual in this position. If none, please state N/A.

N/A

Proposed Location (City and County): San Antonio (Bexar County)

Number of Students anticipated in year one: 378

In year five: 1,134

Minimum Qualifications Required:

Education Required: Bachelor's degree required, advanced degree preferred

Experience Required: At least 3 years experience working in a school or educational related setting with children

Certification Required: Must have a passing score on the School Counselor exam or a degree in childhood psychology or related field

Complete the following using information gathered from three different traditional districts comparable in size, student make-up, and location. A traditional district is identified by the abbreviation ISD or CISD. County district numbers may be accessed on line through the Texas Education Directory found at http://mansfield.tea.state.tx.us/TEA_AskTED.Web/Forms/Home.aspx. Additionally, traditional districts will not have an eight as the fourth digit in the county district number (CDN).

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</table>
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of Sponsoring Entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: SEL Counselor

Reports to: Director of Social Emotional Learning

Job Duties: List up to 10 key duties this individual will perform.

1. Identify and assess students that need 1:1 or small group counseling
2. Provide direct 1:1 counseling to assigned students
3. Provide small group counseling sessions to assigned students
4. Observe students in classroom settings to provide feedback and support to teachers on strategies
5. Co-lead morning circles with teachers to model best SEL practices
6. Observe and provide feedback on teacher implementation of SEL curriculum
7. Support in the development of teacher professional development and training on SEL
8. Curate or help create SEL curriculum
9. Support with student de-escalation
10. Communicate with families about interventions and student needs or concerns

If a charter is awarded, this document becomes part of the original application. Changes to this information must be documented in the minutes of an open meeting of the charter holder board.
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of sponsoring entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Social Worker

Reports to: Director of Social Emotional Learning

Salary Range: $50,000 - $80,000

List any other potential form of remuneration (i.e., car allowance, cell phone, memberships, travel or housing allowance, etc...) to be given to the individual in this position. If none, please state N/A. N/A

Proposed Location (City and County): San Antonio (Bexar County)

Number of Students anticipated in year one: 378

Minimum Qualifications Required:

Education Required: Bachelor's in social work (BSW), advanced degree preferred

Experience Required: Experience working as a school social worker, fluency in Spanish preferred

Certification Required: Social Work License

Complete the following using information gathered from three different traditional districts comparable in size, student make-up, and location. A traditional district is identified by the abbreviation ISD or CISD. County district numbers may be accessed online through the Texas Education Directory found at http://mansfield.tea.state.tx.us/TEA_AskTED_Web/Forms/Home.aspx. Additionally, traditional districts will not have an eight as the fourth digit in the county district number (CDN).

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Name of District</th>
<th>CDN</th>
<th>Located in (City)</th>
<th># of Students Served</th>
<th>Salary Range</th>
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<td>1,608</td>
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</table>
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of Sponsoring Entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Social Worker

Reports to: Director of Social Emotional Learning

Job Duties: List up to 10 key duties this individual will perform.

1. Design and implement interventions for students experiencing learning and behavioral difficulties
2. Assess individual student's needs through student, family, and school interactions
3. Coordinate with families about community resources related to issues they may be experiencing
4. Provide written reports and referrals to outside agencies regarding specific students
5. Monitor attendance, chronic absenteeism, and truancy and problem solve with families
6. Oversee school spectrum WiFi assistance program
7. Provide direct services to students and families through conferencing
8. Work collaboratively with SEL team and ARDs to meet individual student needs
9. Provide evaluations and reevaluation for school and non-school related services
10. Safeguard student and family records in compliance with all state and federal law

If a charter is awarded, this document becomes part of the original application. Changes to this information must be documented in the minutes of an open meeting of the charter holder board.
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of sponsoring entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Special Education Teacher

Reports to: Director of Special Education

Salary Range: $50,000 - $70,000

List any other potential form of remuneration (i.e., car allowance, cell phone, memberships, travel or housing allowance, etc...) to be given to the individual in this position. If none, please state N/A.

N/A

Proposed Location (City and County): San Antonio (Bexar County)

Number of Students anticipated in year one: 378

Minimum Qualifications Required:

Education Required: Bachelor's degree required, advanced degree preferred

Experience Required: Teaching experience preferred

Certification Required: Valid Texas special education certification

Complete the following using information gathered from three different traditional districts comparable in size, student make-up, and location. A traditional district is identified by the abbreviation ISD or CISD. County district numbers may be accessed online through the Texas Education Directory found at [http://mansfield.tea.state.tx.us/TEA_AskTED.Web/Forms/Home.aspx](http://mansfield.tea.state.tx.us/TEA_AskTED.Web/Forms/Home.aspx). Additionally, traditional districts will not have an eight as the fourth digit in the county district number (CDN).

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<tr>
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<td>1,608</td>
<td>$61,780</td>
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</table>
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of Sponsoring Entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Special Education Teacher

Reports to: Director of Special Education

Job Duties: List up to 10 key duties this individual will perform.

1. Oversee screening and testing for students considered for special education

2. Work with the ARD committee to develop IEPs that address unique student assets and needs

3. Monitor implementation of all accommodations and modifications in IEP for assigned students

4. Maintain strong communication channels for all members of the ARD committee

5. Support teachers in creating accommodations and modifications

6. Implement 1:1 and small group instruction to support assigned students

7. Co-teach lessons with teachers to model implementation of accommodations and modifications

8. Maintain all records of assigned students to state and federal requirements

9. Oversee progress monitoring for all assigned students

10. Participate in training and professional development to improve practice

If a charter is awarded, this document becomes part of the original application. Changes to this information must be documented in the minutes of an open meeting of the charter holder board.
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of sponsoring entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: CEO/Superintendent

Reports to: Charter Holder Board of Directors

Salary Range: $70,000 - $160,000

List any other potential form of remuneration (i.e., car allowance, cell phone, memberships, travel or housing allowance, etc...) to be given to the individual in this position. If none, please state N/A.

N/A

Proposed Location (City and County): San Antonio (Bexar County)

Number of Students anticipated in year one: 378

In year five: 1,134

Minimum Qualifications Required:

Education Required: Advanced degree in education required

Experience Required: At least 5 years teaching or working in public schools, school leadership experience preferred.

Certification Required: N/A

Complete the following using information gathered from three different traditional districts comparable in size, student make-up, and location. A traditional district is identified by the abbreviation ISD or CISD. County district numbers may be accessed online through the Texas Education Directory found at http://mansfield.tea.state.tx.us/TEA.AsksTED.Web/Forms/Home.aspx. Additionally, traditional districts will not have an eight as the fourth digit in the county district number (CDN).

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Page 177
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of Sponsoring Entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: CEO/Superintendent

Reports to: Charter Holder Board of Directors

Job Duties: List up to 10 key duties this individual will perform.

1. Manage external relations and the overall perception of the charter within the community
2. Listen and respond to student, parent, and community feedback, questions, and concerns
3. Recruit, hire, and manage the Director of Finance
4. Recruit, hire, and manage the Principal
5. Recruit, hire, and manage the Director of Human Resources and Talent
6. Work with the Board to ensure successful execution of mission & vision
7. Report to the Board the charter's progress towards academic and financial indicators
8. Ensure the successful implementation of the annual strategic plan
9. Develop policies and procedures with the Board
10. Ensure the charter is in compliance with all TEA regulations

If a charter is awarded, this document becomes part of the original application. Changes to this information must be documented in the minutes of an open meeting of the charter holder board.
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of sponsoring entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Talent Recruiter

Reports to: Director of Human Resources & Talent

Salary Range: $30,000 - $50,000

List any other potential form of remuneration (i.e., car allowance, cell phone, memberships, travel or housing allowance, etc...) to be given to the individual in this position. If none, please state N/A.

N/A

Proposed Location (City and County): San Antonio (Bexar County)

Number of Students anticipated in year one: 378

Minimum Qualifications Required:

Education Required: High school diploma required

Experience Required: Experience in talent or talent recruitment related fields

Certification Required: N/A

Complete the following using information gathered from three different traditional districts comparable in size, student make-up, and location. A traditional district is identified by the abbreviation ISD or CISD. County district numbers may be accessed on line through the Texas Education Directory found at http://mansfield.tea.state.tx.us/TEA_AskTED/Web/Forms/Home.aspx. Additionally, traditional districts will not have an eight as the fourth digit in the county district number (CDN).

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</table>
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of Sponsoring Entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: Talent Recruiter

Reports to: Director of Human Resources & Talent

Job Duties: List up to 10 key duties this individual will perform.

1. Attend talent events and fairs representing The Gathering Place
2. Screen all applicants and resumes
3. Conduct initial phone screens with all potential candidates
4. Manage social media accounts and website
5. Manage print and digital advertising related to hiring
6. Oversee initial stages of the hiring process
7. Coordinate and schedule interviews including travel
8. 
9. 
10. 

If a charter is awarded, this document becomes part of the original application. Changes to this information must be documented in the minutes of an open meeting of the charter holder board.
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place
Name of sponsoring entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: K-8 Teacher (includes PE and arts)
Reports to: Assistant Principal
Salary Range: $50,000 - $70,000

List any other potential form of remuneration (i.e., car allowance, cell phone, memberships, travel or housing allowance, etc...) to be given to the individual in this position. If none, please state N/A.
N/A

Proposed Location (City and County): San Antonio (Bexar County)

Number of Students anticipated in year one: 378
In year five: 1,134

Minimum Qualifications Required:

Education Required: Bachelor's degree required, advanced degree preferred

Experience Required: Teaching experience in a setting aligned with The Gathering Place's school model preferred

Certification Required: N/A

Complete the following using information gathered from three different traditional districts comparable in size, student make-up, and location. A traditional district is identified by the abbreviation ISD or CISD. County district numbers may be accessed online through the Texas Education Directory found at http://mansfield.tea.state.tx.us/TEA.AskTED.Web/Forms/Home.aspx. Additionally, traditional districts will not have an eight as the fourth digit in the county district number (CDN).

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<td>$61,780</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Page 18
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of Sponsoring Entity: TGP Public Schools

Position: K-8 Teacher (includes PE and arts)

Reports to: Assistant Principal

Job Duties: List up to 10 key duties this individual will perform.

1. Plan learning experiences that align with The Gathering Place's mission, vision, & design principles

2. Engage collaboratively in PLCs that foster a culture of adult feedback and support

3. Integrate TEKS into contextual, student-driven projects

4. Design learning experiences that manifest in public showcases of learning (not including PE)

5. Design and execute a balanced literacy curriculum (not including arts and PE)

6. Design and execute CGI mathematics lessons (not including arts and PE)

7. Use formative and summative assessments to guide instruction and interventions

8. Communicate regularly and professionally with parents/guardians

9. Implement the school's social emotional curriculum and leads a restorative classroom culture

10. Assist during arrival, recess, and dismissal

If a charter is awarded, this document becomes part of the original application. Changes to this information must be documented in the minutes of an open meeting of the charter holder board.
Provide the Following:

A scanned/photo copy of the official public notice/advertisement (as printed) in the newspaper. The copy that is provided in this application must include the name of the publication (as printed) and publication date.

Each public notice must include:
- the proposed school/campus name;
- the sponsoring entity name;
- date, time, and place of meeting; and
- the names of all sponsoring entity board members.

All public notices/advertisements must be published in a newspaper of general distribution within the geographic boundary of the proposed charter school. Any public notice in newspaper(s) with limited circulation (Greensheet, Dallas Observer, Austin Chronicle etc.) will be ineligible for consideration.

All public notices/advertisements must be published in a newspaper that is distributed in print (not just electronic).

At a minimum, applicants must hold a public meeting within the charter school’s proposed geographic boundary. The purpose of this meeting must address/discuss this application for a Generation 24 Open-Enrollment Charter School.

This meeting must take place no earlier than 18 months before the charter application due date. Consequently, any prior public meetings in (or before) July, 2017 are not eligible for consideration.

Lastly, any person may attend and participate in the meeting.

ATTENTION: All submitted notices must be dated prior to January 4, 2019.

PLEASE NOTE: Attachment A2 is referenced on the Outreach and Public Meetings narrative page of the Finance/Operations/Governance Plans.
San Antonio Express-News

Sunday, October 21, 2018 | ExpressNews.com and mySA.com | Vol. 154, No. 20 | The voice of South Texas since 1865 | $4.00

PUBLIC MEETING

TOP Public Schools, the sponsoring entity of a new proposed charter school in San Antonio called The Gathering Place, will conduct a public informational meeting on Monday, October 22nd, 2018 from 6:30 PM at Grace First Baptist Church, 2514 Observation Dr. The Gathering Place would serve students grades K-8, starting with grades K-2. Participants will be presented with the proposal and have the opportunity to ask questions. If approved, the school would launch August 2020.

Members of the school board are: Ryan Capeless, Phyllis Oki-Krakowczyk, Jill Pellicone, Audrey Borey, Janet Young, and Diego Cappetti.
Get set to salute the Commanders' uniforms. C1

Stephen Hillenburg soaked up fame as the creator of SpongeBob SquarePants. B4

Santa gets record amount of help on Cyber Monday. B1

PUBLIC NOTICE
TBP Public Schools, the sponsoring entity of a new proposed charter school in San Antonio called The Gathering Place will conduct a public informational meeting on Sunday, December 2nd at 11:45 am at Bethany Congregational UCC located at 300 Pilgrim Dr. and a second meeting on Saturday, December 8th at 11 am at The Riviera Inn Co. located at 3035 Donaldson Ave. The Gathering Place would serve students grades K-8, starting with grades K-3. Participants will be presented with the proposal and have the opportunity to ask questions. If approved, the school would launch August of 2020. Members of the school board are: Ryan York, Joanna Kieflowitz, Jon Hinojosa, Quincy Boyd, Janet Young, Diego Cipelletti, and Jennifer Maestas.
Provide the Following:

Certified Mail Receipt Cards showing the dates the Statement of Impact forms and Application Coversheets were received by the superintendent of each traditional school district from which the proposed school intends to draw students.

In the absence of signed certified mail return receipt cards, the certified mail receipt showing each school district, fees paid, and the date mailed will be accepted.

Mailing address must include the name of the school district to which the information was sent.

Arrange certified mail receipts in alphabetical order by district. Limit six receipts per page.

Applicants must send a Statement of Impact Form (found at, http://tea.texas.gov/charterapp.aspx) and Application Coversheet to the superintendent of each traditional district from which the proposed school intends to draw students. The Statement of Impact Form is the formal opportunity for superintendents of traditional districts to document any impact the proposed school might have. While applicants are required to distribute these documents, they are not responsible for ensuring that superintendents return the Statement of Impact Forms to the TEA.

Additionally, applicants must also send a Statement of Impact Form and Application Coversheet to:
- the President of the Board of Trustees of each traditional school district from which the proposed school intends to draw students,
- each member of the Texas legislature that represents the geographic area to be served by the proposed school, and
- the State Board of Education member that represents the geographic area to be served by the proposed school.

PLEASE NOTE: Attachment A3 is referenced on the Outreach and Public Meetings narrative page of the Finance/Operations/Governance Plans.
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**Certified Mail Fee** | **Certified Mail Fee**
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**Total Postage and Fees** | **Total Postage and Fees**
--- | ---
$2.95 | $3.95

**Sent To**
Superintendent
Northside ISD
PO Box 2217 Bldg 1225
Randolph AFB
Universal City, TX
78148

**Sent To**
Superintendent
Northside ISD
PO Box 2217 Bldg 1225
Randolph AFB
Universal City, TX
78148

**Sent To**
Superintendent
San Antonio ISD
141 Lavaca St.
San Antonio, TX
78210

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Superintendent
San Antonio ISD
141 Lavaca St.
San Antonio, TX
78210

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**11/14/2018**

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**11/14/2018**
CERTIFIED MAIL® RECEIPT
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Domestic Mail Only

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U.S. Postal Service

DOMESTIC MAIL® RECEIPT

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U.S. Postal Service

DOMESTIC MAIL® RECEIPT

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**Certified Mail Fee:** $3.45 | 0212 | 08

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  - Return Receipt (electronic) $0.00
  - Certified Mail Restricted Delivery $0.00
  - Adult Signature Required $0.00
  - Adult Signature Restricted Delivery $0.00

- Postage: $0.50
- Total Postage and Fees: $3.95

**Postmark Here:** 11/14/2018

**Sent To:**
Texas SBOE District 3
Ms. Maria Perez-Diaz
PO Box 1055
Converse, TX
78109

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**Certified Mail Fee:** $3.45 | 0212 | 08

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  - Adult Signature Required $0.00
  - Adult Signature Restricted Delivery $0.00

- Postage: $0.50
- Total Postage and Fees: $3.95

**Postmark Here:** 11/14/2018

**Sent To:**
Texas SBOE District 1
Ms. Georgina Perez
1401 Montana, Suite 1
El Paso, TX
79902

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**Postmark Here:** 11/14/2018

**Sent To:**
Texas SBOE District 5
Mr. Ken Mercer
PO Box 781321
San Antonio, TX
78278
Provide the Following:

I. Scans/photocopies of any (i) advertising content; (ii) community outreach surveys; (iii) social media campaigns; and (iv) any additional documentation that demonstrates community engagement and support.

II. Public Meeting Protocol—this is the script or list of questions that were prepared and presented at the public meeting. Do NOT provide petitions, meeting sign-in sheets, or other materials that violate the public disclosure policy.

III. Letter(s) of Support—provide (if any) non-financial letters of support from individuals, organizations, officials, etc.

PLEASE NOTE: Attachment A4 is referenced on the Outreach and Public Meetings narrative page of the Finance/Operations/Governance Plans.
FOOD TRUCK SUMMER CAMP INSPIRES YOUNG CHEFS-TO-BE

Eating tacos and watching commercials on a sultry San Antonio summer afternoon in August turned out to be as edifying as it was satisfying. Thanks to The Gathering Place and their Great Food Truck Summer Camp Showcase, we had the opportunity to see first-hand the type of educational experience that The Gathering Place's founders, Joanna Klekowicz and Ryan York, plan to provide at their future charter school.

With decades of experience between them, developing curriculums and visiting classrooms across the country, Ms. Klekowicz and Mr. York joined forces and put together a model of best practices to create a great environment for learning.

"Our goal is to create a school that kids actually want to go to," Ms. Klekowicz explained.

Getting a charter school application approved in Texas these days is challenging, but The Gathering Place is ready for the rigorous application process. In that spirit, they offered a free, one-week summer camp with a food truck entrepreneurship theme for 25 kids ages 9 to 12. Compass Rose Academy, a relatively new charter school at Brooks, graciously shared their campus for the week.

"We have a clear vision for The Gathering Place, and the food truck camp was a way for us to refine our model and learn from the students and the community," Mr. York said. "Part of the goal was to give the students and parents a chance to have input on how the school will be designed."

They designed a program to motivate students to work as teams and get excited about learning skills like website building, branding and more. The week-long camp also covered about 30 Texas state education standards, content that schools are required to cover.

On the first day, students met with their mentors - local, working food truck owners from Food Maniacs, Benjie's Munch Truck, FIG Mobile Eatery and Naco Mexican Brunch Truck. Armed with tips and insider perspectives, the student teams roared into action.

Brand names and logos were designed for branding and merchandising. The kids even got to screen print their logos onto T-shirts thanks to Printed Apparel, who donated supplies.

Young aspiring chefs experimented with taco recipes and their respective teams settled on menus and worked out budgets and advertising messages. The teams even learned how to plan and film TV commercials for their ventures (visit http://bit.ly/FTCVideos to get a peek). Students created 3D mockups of their food truck designs, and since we are in the digital age, members of each new company learned how to put together a website.

Like a true entrepreneurial boot camp, students developed and practiced elevator pitches and got feedback from the professional mentors. By the end of the week, students were ready and excited to cook and prepare tacos and homemade tortillas for the showcase.

Guests surveyed the tables where each team had set up their signs, truck models and, most importantly, baskets of tacos. Votes went into a colorful ballot box. The winning team, will get to visit Rackspace headquarters to meet with business leaders and learn more about entrepreneurship. Of course, the young entrepreneurs are visiting Rack Space on food truck day.

There is a kind of learning that happens when you have a goal, but still have to communicate and work with other team members. That joy and intensity creates lasting memories. Students at the Gathering Place's Great Food Truck Summer Camp experienced that kind of learning.

To learn more about The Gathering Place charter school, visit TheGatheringPlaceK12.org. - Inga Cotton

Inga Cotton is the Founder and Executive Director of San Antonio Charter Moms, a blog and online community to help families research school options for their children and become advocates for high-quality education in our community.
San Antonio families don't forget! Tonight is the community meeting for The Gathering Place! If you can't make it tonight please stay tuned for more dates this fall.

**The Gathering Place added an event.**

**Date:** October 9

Join us for a free public event to learn more about a proposed new charter school in San Antonio focused on the arts and student-driven projects. Food and drinks provided!

**MON, OCT 22**

Come learn about a proposed new art-based school in SA

and 4 friends

**The Gathering Place added an event.**

**Date:** October 22

Join us for a free public event to learn more about a proposed new art-based charter school in San Antonio. The Gathering Place will be hosting a community meeting on Monday, October 22 from 5:30-6:30pm at Grace First Baptist Church (2514 Observation Drive).

**What's at stake in Harvard suit: decades of debate on race**

By: America Ferrera

...
SAVE THE DATE

The Gathering Place, a proposed project-based arts charter school in San Antonio, will be hosting an information session on Sunday, December 2 from 11:45am-1:00pm at Bethany Congregational UCC.

The Gathering Place added an event.

October 31

Join us for a free public event to learn more about a proposed new charter school in San Antonio focused on the arts and student-driven projects. Food and drinks provided!

Check out www.thegatheringplacek12.org to read more about our proposed school!

You're Invited to a Free Community Event for a Proposed New K12 Arts School in SA

Sunday 12/2 @ 11:45am
Bethany Church
500 Pilgrim Dr 78213
or
Saturday 12/8 @ 11am
The Koffee Kup
1025 Donaldson Ave 78228

Free Food and Drinks
Bring the Whole Family!

Te invitamos a un evento gratis de nuestra comunidad para una nueva escuela de artes K12 que proponemos en San Antonio

Domingo el 2 de Diciembre a
las 11:45am
Bethany Church
500 Pilgrim Dr 78213

Sábado el 8 de Diciembre a
las 11:00am
The Koffee Kup Co.
1025 Donaldson Ave 78228
¡Comida y bebidas gratuitas para toda la familia!
San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce is at La Nuestra
1130am.

December 7 at 9:32 AM - San Antonio, TX

Tune in to La Nuestra 1130am to hear our Members of the Week, Ryan, Joanna, and Diego talk about The Gathering Place; a proposed K-12 network of schools opening in San Antonio in 2020!

#WorldsBestMembers #TheGatheringPlaceK12 #LatinosAreLeaders

Like Your Page

Choose to Succeed shared an event.

December 7 at 8:18 AM.

Come check out The Gathering Place at The Koffee Kup Co. tomorrow morning at 11 AM to learn more about their school program proposed for 2020!

Go Like

Comment

The Gathering Place added an event.

October 31.

Join us for a free public event to learn more about a proposed new charter school in San Antonio focused on the arts and student-driven projects. Free coffee & food!

Check out www.thegatheringplacek12.org to read more about our proposed school!

Go Going

SAVE THE DATE

The Gathering Place, a proposed project-based arts charter school in San Antonio, will be hosting an information session on Saturday, December 8 from 11:00am-12:15pm at The Koffee Kup Co. (1025

SAT, DEC 8

Come learn about a proposed new project-based arts school in SA

Go Going

Like

Comment

Go Going

Go Going
Community Survey Questions & Results

Questions:

1. Do you believe it's important for schools here in San Antonio to have a strong arts program?

2. Do you think it's important for schools to offer hands-on projects for kids to see how what they're learning connects to their own lives?

3. Should schools help students develop social and emotional skills that help with collaboration and being respectful towards other people?

4. Would you support a new kindergarten through eighth grade public school opening in this part of town that focuses on the arts and classes that gives kids the opportunity to learn through projects?

Results:

- 915 homes visited in all 5 zip codes outlined as our primary attendance boundary
- 98% of respondents said it's important for schools here in San Antonio to have a strong arts program.
- 97% think it's important for schools to offer hands-on projects for kids to see how what they're learning connects to their own lives.
- 100% said schools should help students develop social and emotional skills that help with collaboration and being respectful towards other people.
- 98% indicated they support a new public school in their part of town that focuses on the arts and classes that give kids the opportunity to learn through projects.
The Gathering Place Public Meeting Protocol
2018 Community Information Session

I. Opening and introductions

II. Audience discussion of what the purpose of school should be

III. Audience discussion of what the purpose of school is in most schools today

IV. Why create The Gathering Place?
   A. Negative impacts of cutting arts programming
   B. Negative impacts of cutting play and social emotional support for children

V. What skills and abilities are colleges and CEO's looking for?

VI. What have we heard so far from families about the educational needs in San Antonio?

VII. What have we heard from kids?

VIII. Ryan York & Joanna Klekowicz biographies

IX. The Gathering Place Board of Directors biographies

X. The Gathering Place Mission, Vision, and Design Principles
   A. Restorative Practices
   B. Daily Creative Arts
   C. Student-Driven Projects

XI. A Day in the life of a typical student

XII. Community input and questions
Letters of Support

Below is a list of the formal letters of support from individuals and organizations who support The Gathering Place’s mission and goal of opening a K-8 public charter school in San Antonio.

1. Dr. Maria Ferrier, Texas A&M University - San Antonio Founder and President Emeritus
2. Mr. Lionel Sosa, Founder/CEO of Yes Our Kids can
3. Sarah Baray, Executive Director of Pre-K 4 SA
4. Ravi Gupta, Founder of RePublic Schools
5. Anashay Wright, Regional Director of TNTP
6. PJ Lovejoy, Director of Equity and Inclusion at Rackspace
7. Bruce Rockstroh, CEO/Superintendent of Braination Inc
8. Shawn McCormack, Regional Director for Building Hope
9. Joel Harris, CEO of City Education Partners
10. Colleen Dippel, Executive Director of Families Empowered
11. Nora Walsh, Executive Director of The Brackenridge Foundation
12. Randy Boatright, Trustee of The Brackenridge Foundation
13. David H.O. Roth, Trustee of The Brackenridge Foundation
14. Victoria Rico, Chairwoman of The Brackenridge Foundation
15. Esteban Lopez, Chief Medical Officer at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas
16. Vanessa Hurd, Education Consultant and Founding CEO of the DoSeum
17. Zach Salesman, CEO of A.I.M. Consulting
18. Patricia Morales, Director of Young Artist Programs at Southwest School of the Arts
19. Inga Cotton, Executive Director of San Antonio Charter Moms
20. Rebecca Cedillo, Interim CEO of the San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
21. Dan Menelly, Executive Director of The DoSeum
22. Rudy Reyna, Regional Director for the San Antonio STEM Ecosystem
23. Nicole Amri, Program Director at Say Sí
24. Jackie Moczygemba, Executive Director of The Ewing Halsell Foundation
25. Stacey Lopaz, Director of the High Tech High New Schools Creation Fellowship
26. Chip Haass, CEO of Choose to Succeed
November 9, 2018

Commissioner Mike Morath
Texas Education Agency
1701 N. Congress Ave
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Commissioner Mike Morath:

I am excited to be writing my full support for The Gathering Place, a proposed new charter school here in San Antonio. The Gathering Place offers students a strong academic foundation seeded in a rich and contextual project-based learning environment, opportunities to express themselves through creative arts, and provides supports for students’ social and emotional needs.

I am the founding President Emerita of Texas A&M University San Antonio. When our college was opening, I met with every Superintendent within San Antonio to learn about their schools, families and unique needs. I have also served as the Assistant Deputy Secretary in the Department of Education under George W. Bush learning from and engaging with successful academic leaders across the country. Throughout these experiences, I have learned what types of schools and school leaders best serve their community, and believe that The Gathering Place will play an important and impactful role in San Antonio’s educational landscape.

Joanna and Ryan are passionate leaders with a deep love for kids and a relentless hope for what they can accomplish through The Gathering Place. I am confident they will create a school that fills a void in San Antonio by simultaneously serving students’ academic, creative, and social emotional needs. I highly recommend The Gathering Place for state authorization.

Sincerely,

Maria H. Ferrier

Texas A&M University-San Antonio
President Emeritus
11/23/2018

Commissioner Mike Morath  
Texas Education Agency  
1701 N. Congress Ave  
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Commissioner Mike Morath:

I am writing to express my support for The Gathering Place, a proposed K-8th grade school in my hometown of San Antonio. As the Founder and CEO of Yes! Our Kids Can, I am excited by the prospect of a school model rooted in project-based, real-world learning, and amplified by the arts and social-emotional development.

As a live-long San Antonian, I believe in the potential of every single one of our children no matter their circumstance. At Yes! Our Kids Can, we work to develop intrinsic motivation within our students by combining high expectations with a prosperity mindset. We are currently serving over 6,500 local students by bridging the gap between home and school through motivational, bilingual lessons that develop self-efficacy, resilience, and character.

The mission and vision of The Gathering Place deeply resonates. Its focus on celebrating and nurturing the inner-brilliance of every child set high expectations for both academic and character development. The background and experiences of its founders, Joanna Klekowicz and Ryan York, lead me to believe that they will be successful in creating the learning environment where each child meets and exceeds all goals.

It is with pleasure that I recommend The Gathering Place for authorization.

Sincerely,

Lionel Sosa  
Founder/CEO
November 26, 2018

Commissioner Mike Morath
Texas Education Agency
1701 N. Congress Ave
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Commissioner Mike Morath:

I am writing to express my support for The Gathering Place, a proposed charter school in San Antonio. During my first meeting with Ryan York and Joanna Klekowicz, the co-founders of The Gathering Place, I was excited to learn about the model these two inspiring educators were developing. After having visited with Ryan and Joanna multiple times since then, I am convinced they have conceptualized a unique charter school model that aligns to the needs of our San Antonio community and the best practices in the field of education, especially early childhood development.

As the CEO of Pre-K 4 SA, I work with schools across San Antonio and believe in the importance of a model that prioritizes student voice, creativity, and curiosity. The Gathering Place’s mission is aligned to these priorities and I believe will be a positive force in San Antonio’s educational ecosystem. I’m also excited to partner with The Gathering Place to offer feedback and support as they design their kindergarten through 3rd grade school model trajectory, extending many of the most successful aspects of Pre-K 4 SA upwards through early elementary.

Ryan and Joanna have a vision that is aligned with the best practices of early childhood development and I believe are the right people to lead this innovative and inspiring new school that will be a true benefit to our community.

Sincerely,

Sarah Baray, Ph.D.
Pre-K 4 SA CEO
November 29th, 2018

Ravi Gupta  
171 Elizabeth Street #1  
New York, New York  
10012  
917-558-3594

Dear Commissioner Mike Morath:

As the founder and CEO of RePublic Schools, I hired and subsequently directly managed Ryan York for roughly three years. He was hired to create a computer science curriculum and teacher training program for our existing schools based on his software development capabilities and his strong record as a classroom teacher. He immediately surpassed my highest expectations when he built a curriculum and assessment software program to house lessons, projects, and training materials. As a result of his work in developing innovative software, he went on to win the National Sally Ride & Deloitte Award for Innovation.

Within his first year at RePublic, he was promoted to Chief Information Officer and joined the organization’s executive team. Our network of schools was in the process of rapid growth, adding two new schools to our existing three schools, including the first-ever charter school in Mississippi. Our existing data and technological infrastructure needed a full overhaul to increase quality and reduce expenses. In three months, Ryan transitioned all staff to Macs and all students to Chromebooks; and developed an internal IT, repair, and software team that cut our overall technology costs by 50%, while producing software in-house. Together, we envisioned a 1:1 laptop model for the network, and worked to successfully secure the funding and grants to make this a reality.

Three months into his second year, one of our new middle schools began to experience significant struggles. Within the first quarter, the school had lost a third of its staff and over 15% of its students. By the end of the quarter, the founding principal unexpectedly resigned. Recognizing Ryan’s strength as a leader and his academic expertise, I asked him to take over as principal of the school. Ryan’s work that year was exceptional. He reduced student attrition from 15% in Q1 to <2% in Q4 and closed out the year with the highest staff retention percentages in the network. Academically, on internal benchmark assessments, less than 25% of students were on grade level in Q1. Under Ryan’s leadership and by the end of Q4, over 60% of students were on grade level. Additionally, his school achieved the highest overall 5th grade reading state scores across our four middle schools.

During his years as principal, Ryan continued to serve as the CIO at RePublic leading computer science, IT, data, and software development. The computer science program, piloted within our own schools, began to capture national attention. Six schools in Texas asked to use the program during the 2015-2016 school year. Ryan hired Joanna Klekowicz to oversee the successful implementation at our partner schools and to lead the further expansion of the computer science program. Joanna received exceptional feedback from our initial partner schools, and ultimately scaled the program from 6 schools to 30 schools
in her first year. The following year, Joanna and Ryan led a cross-sector collaborative effort that resulted in a monumental charter-district partnership, bringing the RePublic computer science program to every district middle school in Nashville. From an initial pilot cohort of 250 students in Texas, the program scaled to serve over 10,000 students. Parallel to this time, Ryan and the CS team worked alongside key community leaders and our organizational board to design, build, and run the first-ever community computer science center in Nashville, called the Cato Computer Science Center. The center featured camps, after-school classes, and community events that brought children together from all over the city to benefit from RePublic’s innovation.

In his final year at RePublic, Ryan once again stepped in to help a school that had suffered the sudden loss of a school principal. Our high school, in its second year, had begun to face significant challenges after its founding principal, facing significant health issues, had to resign. Ryan transitioned to the high school as Interim Principal to help the school recover from a difficult start. He made substantial changes in a short period of time significantly improving the culture of the school and, along with Joanna and his CS team, led an entire grade-level of sophomores to take the AP Computer Science Exam which resulted in a ~500% increase in the number of students of color in the entire state of Tennessee who took the exam. More students of color at RePublic passed the exam than the total number of students of color in the state who took it the previous year.

During that same time, he worked with his CS team to design a new personalized learning software platform that was awarded a significant grant from the Carnegie Foundation to reimagine what personalized learning can look like in a project-based environment. To this day, the program continues to be funded and has scaled across several courses and grade levels.

This is a long letter of recommendation, but each of Ryan’s accomplishments listed above is unique and remarkable, and deserve recognition. I enthusiastically endorse Ryan and Joanna’s new school The Gathering Place and am confident in their ability to build and lead a school that is innovative and transformative for children in San Antonio. I know that what they create will have a substantial impact not only for the children they serve, but for the ongoing transformation of what is possible in education.

Sincerely,

Ravi Gupta
Co-Founder of The Arena
Commissioner Mike Morath  
Texas Education Agency  
1701 N. Congress Ave  
Austin, TX 78701  

Dear Commissioner Mike Morath:

I am writing to express my support for The Gathering Place, a proposed kindergarten through 8th grade public charter school here in San Antonio. In my role as a Partner at TNTP, I support districts with improving the quality of Academic and Talent Management systems in service of increasing academic/social outcomes for students and families. We do this by authentically engaging with families, community and district stakeholders. I believe that the role of educators is to empower families and students through high-quality instruction to live the lives they want to lead.

The Opportunity Myth, our most recent publication at TNTP, found that four resources are necessary to ensure that students are able to access future opportunities: rigorous and grade appropriate work, strong instructional design, deep engagement, and educators with high expectations. These elements are central in the vision of The Gathering Place. Additionally, I am excited to see The Gathering Place layer in strong social and emotional supports. When schools are able to support the whole students - academically, socially, and emotionally - and honor their full identities, children and communities thrive.

I have had the pleasure of meeting with Joanna and Ryan and learning about their experience and passion to lead such a visionary school, and I look forward to seeing The Gathering Place over the coming years. I am excited to see The Gathering Place serve scholars in the city of San Antonio.

Sincerely,

Anashay Wright  
Partner  
TNTP

(404) 798-8234  [website]  www.tntp.org

What can 4,000 students teach us about school? Read The Opportunity Myth.  
facebook • linkedin • twitter • blog
November 29, 2018

Commissioner Mike Morath
Texas Education Agency
1701 N. Congress Ave
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Commissioner Mike Morath:

I am thrilled to write this letter of recommendation for The Gathering Place. As the Program Manager of Global Engagement and Inclusion at Rackspace, I am inspired by The Gathering Place's vision and commitment to creating a learning environment that nurtures the inner genius of every child.

This past summer, I had the honor of attending The Great Food Truck Summer Camp showcase, which was Joanna Klekowicz and Ryan York's prototype of their school model, and was awestruck by the pride I saw in each child's eyes as they shared their final projects to the public in attendance. I was impressed with the sheer amount of work kids were able to complete that week. From drawing logos, screen printing their own t-shirts, designing a cardboard food truck, shooting, editing and posting a commercial, creating a website, and cooking their food truck menu from scratch, the children were able to work through an impressive number of projects in such a short amount of time, and were enthusiastic to share their learnings with the broader San Antonio community.

What I was most impressed with was the way the members of each team relied on their teammates' strengths. In many organizations—educational and professional—people are appraised on individual results, but, in reality, very few accomplishments happen based on the work of just one person. As I approached the table of the eventual winning team, one of them explained to me how they contributed to the team's overall success. It was then and there that I understood the power of Joanna and Ryan's teaching model.

I truly believe that The Gathering Place will produce highly successful students who are well adapted to performing in the organizations of tomorrow—organizations where they recognize the power of their unique strengths, abilities, and perspectives and harness the power of their differences to achieve the greatest results.

The winning team from the Great Food Truck Summer Camp was invited to my office for a tour and a food truck lunch. This prize was the brainchild of Joanna and Ryan, and it was brilliant. Our hope was to spark interest and fuel ambition by showing the students what a dynamic workplace looks like.

I firmly believe that Ryan and Joanna's vision can change the educational landscape for the city of San Antonio. I'm really excited about helping them make it a reality in any way I'm able and highly recommend The Gathering Place for authorization.

If you have any further questions, please contact me at (210) 428-1580.

Sincerely,

PJ Lovejoy
Program Manager, Global Engagement & Inclusion
Rackspace
November 12, 2018

Commissioner Mike Morath  
Texas Education Agency  
1701 N. Congress Ave  
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Commissioner Mike Morath:

I am writing to express my support for The Gathering Place, a proposed K-8 school in San Antonio. As the Superintendent and CEO of Braination, which opened its first charter school in Texas in 1998, I believe in the vision of The Gathering Place, as well as the leadership capacities of its founders, Joanna Klekowicz and Ryan York.

As a Texas educator with 30-years of experience, I am excited by the pedagogical vision of The Gathering Place's model which includes student-driven projects, arts, and social-emotional learning. Additionally, as a local San Antonian, I believe the proposed school will uniquely add to the ecosystem of educational options available to families in our city.

After meeting with Joanna and Ryan, I believe that their experiences and background strengthen their abilities and skills to successfully lead The Gathering Place and ensure that the school is serving all students. I fully support The Gathering Place as a school that will help fulfill the promise of innovation and creativity that charter schools uphold. It has my highest recommendation for authorization.

Sincerely,

Bruce Rockstroh, CEO/Superintendent  
BRAINATION, Inc.  
The Inspire Academies
November 14, 2018

Commissioner Mike Morath
Texas Education Agency
1701 N. Congress Ave
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Commissioner Mike Morath:

I would like to express my strong support for The Gathering Place, a proposed kindergarten through 8th grade public charter school here in San Antonio. I believe the school would provide a unique school model for our community that is not currently present.

In my previous role as a Chief Financial Officer at a high-performing charter network in San Antonio, I witnessed firsthand the importance of strong financial stewardship to ensure that schools are operationally able to provide a world class education. In my conversations with the cofounders, Ryan York and Joanna Klekowicz, I was compelled by their vision and sound execution plan to guiding the organization to both academic success and financial sustainability.

Additionally, as a parent here in San Antonio, I think The Gathering Place will be a unique school model to the city’s landscape and a welcome addition to the education community. The proposed school will offer a rare combination of arts, project-based learning, and social and emotional development, and I look forward to seeing the vision being enacted.

I fully support The Gathering Place and recommend it for authorization.

Sincerely,

Shawn McCormack
Director, Southwest Region
Building Hope
www.buildinghope.org
11/12/2018

Commissioner Mike Morath  
Texas Education Agency  
1701 N. Congress Ave  
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Commissioner Mike Morath:

I am writing to express my strong support for The Gathering Place, a proposed kindergarten through 8th grade school focused on student-driven projects, daily creative arts, and social and emotional development. As the Executive Director of City Education Partners, I believe that The Gathering Place will make a great contribution to the overall education ecosystem here in San Antonio.

At City Education Partners, we are devoted to groundbreaking public schools in San Antonio so that all of our students are college and career-ready upon graduation. We were struck by the mission and vision of The Gathering Place, and its focus on rigorous instruction through student driven projects, daily creative arts, and social-emotional supports for all students. Upon deeper analysis, we invited the co-founders, Joanna Klekowicz and Ryan York, to apply to our Innovative School Fellowship. After assessing the strength of their experiences and leadership capacity, as well as the groundbreaking potential of the school model, they were selected to be our first Innovative School Fellows.

The goal of the fellowship is to incubate the groundbreaking vision for The Gathering Place and support its growth to academic and operational excellence. As fellows, Joanna and Ryan continue to develop as leaders and visionaries through executive coaching, feedback from local legal, operational and financial experts, and access to a wealth of development opportunities.

I am excited to see the impact of The Gathering Place in years to come, and strongly recommend it for authorization.

Sincerely,

Joel Harris  
Executive Director  
City Education Partners
December 10, 2018

Commissioner Mike Morath  
Texas Education Agency  
1701 N. Congress Ave  
Austin, TX 78701  

Dear Commissioner Mike Morath:

I am writing to share my enthusiastic support for The Gathering Place, a proposed charter school in San Antonio serving students from kindergarten through eighth grade. As the founder and Executive Director of Families Empowered, I believe that The Gathering Place will be a unique public option for families in San Antonio.

Currently, Families Empowered serves over 60,000 families in San Antonio, Houston, and Austin by providing access to information, resources, and tools to families as they choose schools that best fit their children's needs. The Gathering Place's educational model, which includes a heavy focus on restorative practices, daily arts, and project-based learning, is a first-of-its-kind within San Antonio. I believe it will meet a current unmet need and fill an existing gap within the local educational landscape.

Ryan and Joanna are both passionate individuals and have already demonstrated a clear commitment to honoring and including family voice in their school design. I'm excited to see how they continue to empower families as they plan for and launch their new school, and strongly recommend them for authorization.

Sincerely,

Colleen Dippel  
Founder & Executive Director  
Families Empowered
December 10, 2018

Commissioner Mike Morath
Texas Education Agency
1701 N. Congress Ave
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Commissioner Mike Morath:

I am writing to convey my support for The Gathering Place, a proposed new kindergarten through 8th grade public charter school in San Antonio. In my role as the Executive Director of The Brackenridge Foundation, I have worked closely with many charter schools throughout our city. I have seen the indicators of both success and failure and believe The Gathering Place is destined to be an exceptional school for the children of San Antonio.

Joanna and Ryan, the organization’s co-founders, first reached out to me almost a year ago looking for people to speak with who could help them truly understand our city’s context and culture. Since then, I’ve been continually impressed with their community engagement, innovative school model, and attention to quality.

I also believe Joanna and Ryan have the passion and technical skill to transform their vision into a reality. Their backgrounds are impressive and mirror the quality of work I’ve seen from them over this past year.

The Gathering Place will help address the voluminous demand from families for school choice in our city and serve a much-needed role in our community as a rigorous, high-quality, arts-focused school. I look forward to continuing to support them throughout the application process and hope to see them approved this summer.

Sincerely,

Nora J. Walsh
Executive Director
December 10, 2018

Commissioner Mike Morath  
Texas Education Agency  
1701 N. Congress Ave  
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Commissioner Mike Morath:

It is my pleasure to write this letter in support of The Gathering Place, a proposed new kindergarten through eighth grade open-enrollment, public charter school in San Antonio.

Through my role as a trustee of the George W. Brackenridge Foundation, I have seen San Antonio embrace school choice and the promise of a new beginning for Public Education. More importantly, I have seen San Antonio become a city filled with families vocal about their appetite for choices. If granted a charter, I am confident that The Gathering Place would offer these families another valuable option for not only short-term education but also setting students up for long-term success.

I recommend The Gathering Place and its founders, Joanna Klekowicz and Ryan York, without reservation.

Sincerely,

Randy J. Boatright
Trustee
December 10, 2018

Commissioner Mike Morath  
Texas Education Agency  
1701 N. Congress Ave  
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Commissioner Mike Morath:

It is with great pleasure that I write this letter of support for The Gathering Place as they apply for a Generation 24 charter. I am a true believer that zip code should not dictate a child’s educational opportunities. School choice has always been an option for some — those that can afford to write a check for a private school — but I want every parent to be empowered by choice.

The academic program The Gathering Place offers is designed to not only prepare students for academic success but also provide a well-rounded arts education. Businesses consistently name creativity as a skill they looked for in applicants and while education becomes more and more standardized, The Gathering Place model emphasizes creativity and project-based learning.

I am happy to recommend The Gathering Place as a quality option for San Antonio students and their families. Thank you in advance for your consideration of their application.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

David H.O. Roth  
Trustee
December 10, 2018

Commissioner Mike Morath  
Texas Education Agency  
1701 N. Congress Ave  
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Commissioner Mike Morath:

The George W. Brackenridge Foundation is pleased to support The Gathering Place’s application for a Generation 24 charter.

The Brackenridge Foundation focuses on offering transformative educational opportunities for students and their families in the San Antonio, Texas area. Our strategy hinges on recruiting top-performing charter school operators from across the country to San Antonio and providing philanthropic support for replication.

Last year, we diverted from that strategy and took a chance on nascent charters. That diversion paid off and led us to forge a relationship with other promising, potential charter schools like The Gathering Place. I believe The Gathering Place’s focus on the arts will fill a demand for students who wish to receive rigorous, college-prep instruction as well as the type of comprehensive arts education that most schools simply do not provide.

Please accept this letter of support for The Gathering Place and do not hesitate to reach out if I can be of service.

Sincerely,

Victoria B. Rico  
Chairwoman & Trustee
November 29, 2018

Commissioner Mike Morath
Texas Education Agency
1701 N. Congress Ave
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Commissioner Mike Morath:

It is my pleasure to write a letter supporting The Gathering Place. As the Chief Medical Officer and Southwest Texas market president for Blue Cross and Blue Shield Texas, I spend a lot of time thinking about the skills and talents our rising graduates will need to be successful, and the types of educational experiences that will best develop those skills and talents.

I was very motivated to do well in school from an early age and held many leadership roles in high school. However, when I got to college, I realized how unprepared I was. I believe schools need to focus on 21st-century professional skills like problem-solving, collaboration, and critical thinking. I also believe it is essential for schools to provide regular, high-quality arts; and yet, very few schools here in San Antonio do.

These experiences and beliefs are why I was excited to learn about The Gathering Place. Ryan and Joanna are as compelling as their school model, and I’m confident their passion, backgrounds, and vision will lead to a school that truly meets an unmet need in our community.

I fully recommend The Gathering Place for approval and am excited to see The Gathering Place continue to grow and develop.

Sincerely,

Esteban Lopez, MD, MBA
Chief Medical Officer and Market President
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas
December 3, 2018

Commissioner Mike Morath
Texas Education Agency
1701 N. Congress Ave
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Commissioner Morath:

I am writing to express my full support for The Gathering Place, a proposed new charter school in San Antonio. I had the opportunity to interview both Ryan York and Joanna Klekowicz for a local new school incubator, and I was enormously impressed with their conviction, planning and thoughtfulness.

The Gathering Place will be a new model of equity and innovation within the San Antonio ecosystem. It connects educational research and theory with the voices and stories of families and kids to create a school that will meet the unique needs of our city. The model is focused on supporting the social and emotional needs of students and responding to behavior in a way that develops children, which I believe will have significant long-term positive impacts on our community. It also intends to focus on embedded project-based learning, which will ensure relevant, inter-disciplinary and authentic learning.

Ryan and Joanna are passionate leaders who are tirelessly working tirelessly to plan and prototype their model over the last two years. They are dedicated to the premise of deeply engaging their community at every stage of the design process. I am eager to see what they accomplish over the coming years. I highly recommend The Gathering Place for authorization.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Vanessa Lacoss Hurd
Founding CEO, The DoSeum
11/20/18

Commissioner Mike Morath
Texas Education Agency
1701 N. Congress Ave
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Commissioner Mike Morath:

I am writing this letter to communicate my enthusiasm and support for The Gathering Place and its co-founders, Ryan York and Joanna Klekowicz. I have had the opportunity to speak with them multiple times, and members of my team attended their community information session in October. Through each of these experiences, The Gathering Place has demonstrated a compelling and thoughtful model that clearly is designed around the unique needs and voices of San Antonio.

I am the CEO of Assessment Intervention Management (A.I.M.). We provide special education services to schools all across the state, and as a result, I have spoken with and visited many schools in Texas. I have spoken with various leaders from large urban districts to small rural districts. I really believe The Gathering Place is filling a gap in San Antonio and I think this city will benefit from their vision.

One of the reasons I believe The Gathering Place will be successful is the passion and enthusiasm Ryan and Joanna, the organization's co-founders have. In talking with them, you can tell they have worked diligently to think through the details while staying focused on a clear mission and vision. I hope to see them approved and look forward to seeing what they accomplish.

Sincerely,

Zachary Salesman
CEO, A.I.M.
210.838.5351
December 2, 2018

Commissioner Mike Morath
Texas Education Agency
1701 N. Congress Ave
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Commissioner Mike Morath:

I am writing to share my enthusiasm and support for The Gathering Place. As the Director of Young Artist Programs at the Southwest School of Art, I see the power of the arts, and the need for strong arts education through the entire K12 continuum. Ryan and Joanna reached out and said they were applying to open a new school focused on daily creative arts. They wanted to learn about Southwest's program and how we serve K12 students through after-school and summer programming. I appreciated them taking the time to talk and learn about our program to identify how they can best contribute to the overall arts community in San Antonio.

After meeting with them, it was clear they have a strong understanding of why the arts matter so much and I believe will be able to create a great program that truly serves kids needs. They are also both passionate about what they do and have extensive leadership experience to support them in this important endeavor. I hope to see their charter approved and look forward to years of collaboration and partnership to come.

Sincerely,

Patricia Morales
Director, Young Artist Programs
Southwest School of Art
December 11, 2018

Commissioner Mike Morath
Texas Education Agency
1701 N. Congress Ave
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Commissioner Mike Morath:

I spend a lot of time listening to parents and students in San Antonio about what they are looking for in a school. Based on that information, and what I have learned about The Gathering Place, a proposed charter school, I am writing to express my support for their application.

The founders, Joanna Klekowicz and Ryan York, have experience with teaching, school leadership, and developing curriculum for project-based learning. It seems so natural for them to take what they learned from cultivating project-based learning in other schools and apply that to build their own school that enables students, even from a young age, to follow their passions while learning all the skills they need to succeed.

My family and I got to see The Gathering Place’s learning model in action during an extraordinary summer camp experience. We visited the final day of the camp, when there was a contest to judge which team of middle-grade students had cooked the best tacos and made the best taco truck business plan, including multimedia and 3D displays. We saw the excitement and joy on the students’ faces, and admired the products of their hard work. It was an auspicious start for a new school.

Ryan and Joanna have worked hard to reach families in San Antonio. Our first meeting with them was about ten months ago, when we went on a stroll around the Witte Museum and they described their dreams for The Gathering Place. I’ve seen their plans evolve as they listen and incorporate feedback from families and get to know the neighborhood where they want to build. My hope is that The Gathering Place’s application is approved, and they are ready to serve students beginning in August 2020.

Sincerely yours,

Inga Cotton
Executive Director, San Antonio Charter Moms

www.sachartermoms.com
Dear Commissioner Mike Morath:

On behalf of the more than 1,200 business members of the San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, we write to convey our support and excitement for The Gathering Place, a proposed new school applying to open in San Antonio’s Northwest side. As a leading advocate for Hispanic businesses, Hispanics in business and a strong proponent of educational attainment in San Antonio, we work with businesses and educational leaders across the city. Ryan and Joanna, the organization’s founders, have a strong plan and the experience needed to get a new school off the ground and be successful.

The Gathering Place is committed to strengthening and enhancing the San Antonio educational ecosystem. They have offered to volunteer as we work to get a new STEM community center off the ground and have attended our Education Committee meetings to connect with other educational leaders across the city. They have strong backgrounds and a vision for arts education in San Antonio and we believe they will make a great contribution to our city. We are excited to see The Gathering Place become a reality for our community.

Again, the San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce fully supports The Gathering Place and believes they will provide families and students in San Antonio with the high-quality education they deserve. We thank in advance for your consideration of The Gathering Place’s application.

Respectfully,

Rebecca Q. Cedillo
Interim President & CEO

San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
200 East Grayson Street Suite 203
San Antonio, TX 78215
Dear Commissioner Morath:

I am writing this letter to state my support for The Gathering Place, a proposed new charter school in San Antonio. Leading a museum of hands-on and experiential learning called The DoSeum in San Antonio, I value the importance of contextualized, student-driven learning. After meeting with Ryan & Joanna, co-founders of The Gathering Place, I am eager to support their school model, with its broad emphasis on creating exceptional early learning opportunities that are based on a synthesis of research evidence of best instructional practice.

Their vision for The Gathering Place aligns well with our own for The DoSeum, specifically by merging formal and informal learning through an exploratory model. Their proposition stands to enable students to simultaneously build their critical skill sets, foster creativity, and develop learners’ agency and voice. The DoSeum is known for supporting the advancement of exploratory school models such as that proposed Ryan and Joanna, and we would willingly partner in the co-creation of lesson structures, field experiences and professional development in support of the teaching and learning at The Gathering Place.

As an education authority, The DoSeum focuses on specialized training of educators in all contexts. In partnership with colleagues in formal and in higher education, our team builds capacity for the teaching of engineering as well as design and computational thinking through hands-on/minds-on models developed uniquely for young learners. Knowing Ryan and Joanna’s visions for school culture, professional learning communities, and their plans to integrate specialized forms of teacher training into their school’s model, I am optimistic for their success and keen to support this potentially transformative work in our City’s learning ecosystem.

Ryan & Joanna’s passion and vision for The Gathering Place shows true promise to strengthen and support San Antonio’s learning community. I’m pleased to offer my support and encouragement in full.

Yours sincerely,

Daniel Menelly, CEO
Dear Commissioner Mike Morath:

I am proud to submit my letter of support for The Gathering Place, a proposed new charter school in San Antonio. At an early age, I developed a love for playing trumpet. Even though I could not afford private lessons, I had a band teacher that inspired me and helped me learn. That early experience with music and human compassion is a significant part of who I am today. This story serves as one of the reasons I support The Gathering Place. They understand the role the arts can play in a young person’s life, and are committed to providing daily creative arts for all kids.

Ryan and Joanna, the co-founders of The Gathering Place also have an impressive background collectively across the arts, school leadership, and entrepreneurship. Most importantly, I have personally observed that Ryan and Joanna have an impressive work ethic, which when coupled with their educational background, will make the difference required for students to succeed in this school. As the Leader of the SA-Bexar STEM Ecosystem, an international coalition of communities leading the way in STEM education, I am familiar with the skills and dispositions needed for children to thrive in tomorrow’s world. The Gathering Place’s focus on project-based learning, problem solving, collaboration, and critical thinking, are all skills that will be necessary in the jobs of the 21st century.

The Gathering Place will be an essential element of San Antonio’s educational ecosystem, and I am happy to submit this letter of support to help ensure their success.

Sincerely,

Dr. Raul (Rudy) A. Reyna
SA-Bexar STEM/STEAM Ecosystem Lead
LEAD STEM Fellow
Co-Chair, San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Education Committee
President, American STEM Alliance
102 Mahry Drive
San Antonio, TX 78226
210.843.6486 Cell
November 25, 2018

Commissioner Mike Morath
Texas Education Agency
1701 N. Congress Ave
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Commissioner Mike Morath:

I’m writing to share my support and enthusiasm for The Gathering Place, a proposed new school in San Antonio with a robust focus on the arts. Very few schools offer comprehensive daily arts programming or even simply a value for creative learning though it is very much needed by our youth and the futures they are building.

As the program director and an alumna of SAY Si, one of the leading creative youth development organizations in San Antonio, and a national model, I know firsthand the need for high-quality arts programs in our public schools.

Little has changed from the time I was experiencing San Antonio public school as a student to today as students in our programs yearn for more opportunities to express themselves and exercise their creativity at school. They yearn for community and a way to relate to the adults guiding them – key elements of creative youth development.

Every day, I witness the transformative impact of the arts in the lives of our city’s youth. I know how needed these opportunities are for all youth, and we need more champions to bring such opportunities to our student’s hands. The Gathering Place is very mission-aligned with our organization and I believe it will make a powerful addition to our community.

I’ve also had the chance to interact with Ryan and Joanna, the organization’s co-founders. I believe their backgrounds, combined with their enthusiasm and love for education, will create an organization where kids can thrive in and out of school. I’m excited to see what they accomplish and strongly recommend them for approval.

In Community,

Nicole Amri, CNP
Program Director
November 9, 2018

Commissioner Mike Morath  
Texas Education Agency  
1701 N. Congress Ave  
Austin, TX 78701

Re: Support for The Gathering Place

Dear Commissioner Morath,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Ewing Halsell Foundation in support of The Gathering Place Charter School. We are supportive of the efforts of Joanna Klekowicz and Ryan York and the founding board of The Gathering Place in establishing a public charter school in San Antonio.

The Ewing Halsell Foundation, since 1957, has the vision "to improve the quality of life for all Texans, especially those less fortunate than ourselves." The Foundation's current season of grant making is focused on improving K-12 educational opportunities for students, families and educators in San Antonio. The Foundation has made substantial commitments to grow and scale a portfolio of unique, high performing public charter schools across the city. Demand for quality public school options is increasing across the region.

We see a clear market for the kind of opportunity The Gathering Place proposes to provide. Especially considering the approach rooted in social and emotional wellness, combined with creative arts. The founders focus on best practices in K-12 education and demonstrate a commitment to high quality education. Setting them apart from the current offerings in San Antonio is their project-based learning model combined with unparalleled opportunities to be immersed in creative arts.

The Foundation is pleased to recommend The Gathering Place for approval. We sincerely hope you see the benefit this school will bring to the families in San Antonio. San Antonio students, and the many more across Texas, deserve more quality public education options.

If I can be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me at [redacted] or call our office at (210) 223-2649.

Sincerely,  
[Signature]  
Jackie L. Moczynski  
Executive Director
November 8, 2018

Commissioner Mike Morath
Texas Education Agency
1701 N. Congress Ave
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Commissioner Mike Morath:

I would like to express my strong support for The Gathering Place, a proposed K-8th grade school in San Antonio. I am one of the Co-Directors of the High Tech High New School Creation Fellowship which supports the most innovative new school founders from across the nation.

I was compelled by the vision of The Gathering Place and the commitment of its founders, Joanna Klekowicz and Ryan York, to equity, deeper learning, and authentic community engagement. Their passion, experience, and diligence in prototyping their school model with their local community resulted in their selection for the New School Creation Fellowship. Over the next two years, Joanna and Ryan will actively engage in three weeklong residencies, monthly expert panels, and leadership mentorship. They will also travel to innovative schools around the United States and in Central and South America to continue learning and collaborating with educators.

I believe that Joanna and Ryan are thoughtful leaders who are driven by serving their community and future students and staff members. I recommend The Gathering Place for authorization, and look forward to seeing the school develop and thrive over the coming years.

Sincerely,

Stacey Lopaz
New School Creation Fellowship,
Director of Innovation & Pedagogy
High Tech High Graduate School of Education
December 28, 2018

Commissioner Mike Morath
Texas Education Agency
1701 N. Congress Ave
Austin, TX 78701

Commissioner Morath:

I am excited to be sharing my support for The Gathering Place. I currently serve as the CEO of Choose to Succeed. I spend time observing and evaluating high-performing school models across San Antonio and the country, and believe that Ryan and Joanna have merged research-backed practices with their impressive and extensive educational backgrounds to create a unique model that will result in extraordinary outcomes for kids.

As you know, Choose to Succeed has been instrumental in attracting high-quality schools of choice to San Antonio and supporting them as they grow. We are proud to support a diverse and innovative portfolio of schools. The schools in our portfolio serve students across the city of San Antonio, from the Northside to the Southside, east and west, and they reach families from a diversity of backgrounds and socioeconomic situations. We are proud to call schools like IDEA, Great Hearts, KIPP, BASIS, Compass Rose, and SST part of our portfolio because, despite their diverse programs, they all aim to provide students a game-changing educational experience. Should The Gathering Place be awarded a charter, we would be excited to welcome them to our portfolio of schools, as Ryan and Joanna have the same innovative vision for children in our city.

They have also demonstrated their commitment to the community. They spent this entire past year listening to parents, students, and community members, and they’ve adjusted and improved their model in response to dozens of conversations. As a result, The Gathering Place already has deep support from families across the city, which I predict will only continue to grow.

Ryan and Joanna are passionate and innovative leaders who will make outstanding contributions to the educational landscape in San Antonio. I am confident in their vision and in them as individuals, and highly recommend The Gathering Place for approval.

Sincerely,

Chip Haass
CEO, Choose to Succeed
Provide the Following:

I. Admissions and Enrollment Policies, should include the following:

- The period (both the beginning and the ending dates) during which the applications for admissions will be accepted including a summary of the application process. See Texas Education Code (TEC) §12.117.

- Procedures to be followed in conducting a lottery when a grade or class is oversubscribed, including any exemptions from the lottery. Include whether the charter school will exercise the right to exempt from the lottery returning students, the siblings of returning students, and/or the children of the school's founders and staff (as long as the total number of students allowed constitutes only a small percentage of the total enrollment).

- The approximate date on which a lottery will be conducted, if required.

- Policies and procedures for student waiting lists, withdrawals, re-enrollment, and transfers.

- The non-discrimination statement to be included in the proposed school's admissions policy. See TEC §12.111(a)(5).

- Policies and procedures for the admission of students with documented history of a criminal offense, a juvenile court adjudication, or discipline problems under Subchapter A, Chapter 37. See TEC §12.111(a)(5)(A).

Enrollment deadlines and procedures. If the proposed school will specialize in performing arts, discuss whether applicants will be required to demonstrate artistic ability for admission to the school. TEC §12.111(a)(6) permits a charter school specializing in performing arts to have an admissions policy that requires a student to demonstrate artistic ability. In addition, TEC §12.1171 permits a charter school specializing in one or more performing arts to require an applicant to audition for admission to the school.

PLEASE NOTE: Attachment E1 is referenced on the Admission and Enrollment narrative page of the Finance/Operations/Governance Plans.
Admission to The Gathering Place (the "School") shall be open to all students who reside within the geographic boundaries stated in the open-enrollment charter of the School and who are eligible for admission in accordance with applicable law.

No person shall, on the basis of a person’s actual or perceived identity with regard to race, color, religion, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, ancestry, nationality, pregnancy, political or religious beliefs, national or ethnic origin, veteran status, parental status, academic, artistic, or athletic ability, any other distinguishing physical or genetic characteristics, or the district the child would otherwise attend, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying under any education program or activity including admission or enrollment at The Gathering Place.

Admissions Eligibility
To be eligible for admission, the applicant or qualifying occupant specified by Texas Education Code §25.001(b) must generally reside within the geographic boundaries of the School. The Gathering Place’s geographic boundaries include:

Primary Attendance Boundary:

- 78201
- 78213
- 78228
- 78229
- 78230

Secondary Attendance Boundary:

- Alamo Heights ISD
- East Central ISD
- Edgewood ISD
- Ft. Sam Houston ISD
- Harlandale ISD
- Judson ISD
- Lackland ISD
- Medina Valley ISD
- North East ISD
- Northside ISD
- Randolph ISD
- San Antonio ISD
- Schertz-Cibolo Universal City ISD
To be eligible for kindergarten, student must be (5) prior to September 1 of the year the student starts kindergarten.

Submission of Application Deadline

The School requires applicants to submit a completed application form in order to be considered for admission. The School's admission application period is from November 1st to March 31st.

The Gathering Place’s application will include the following:
1. Student’s name
2. Student’s birthday
3. Name and contact information of parent/guardian
4. Student’s address
5. Home school district
6. Current grade level
7. Grade level requested for admission
8. Name of siblings attending/applying for admission

If necessary, a random admissions lottery will be held within three weeks of the deadline to submit admissions applications.

Admissions Lottery
A random admissions lottery will be conducted if the total number of applicants exceeds the number of open enrollment spaces. The lottery will be conducted by assigning a unique ID number to each student in our primary attendance boundary and then using an electronic lottery management system with all numbers given an equal weight. Incomplete applications will not be eligible for the lottery. Notification will be made by telephone to all families who applied notifying them of their enrollment status. Failure of an applicant to respond within 5 days of the date of the telephone call will result in withdrawal of their position from the application process.

Secondary Boundary Admissions
If The Gathering Place receives fewer applications than the number of open seats from primary boundary applicants, the remaining seats will be filled with students from the secondary boundary applicants using the same electronic lottery system above. If there are less secondary boundary applicants than seats, the students will be assigned a seat in the order of the applications received.

If The Gathering Place receives more applications than available seats, then all primary boundary applicants will be entered into the random admissions lottery. After all primary boundary seats have been filled, all remaining primary boundary applicants and all secondary boundary applicants will be
placed on a waitlist in the order in which the remaining applications were received.

If an application is received after the application period has passed, the applicant’s name will be added to the waiting list behind the names of the applicants who timely applied.

**Lottery Exemptions**
As permitted by §100.1207(b) of Title 19 of the Texas Administrative Code and the federal guidance on charter schools, the following categories of applicants are exempted from the lottery and shall be exempted in the following order:

1. Returning students already admitted or attending the School;
2. Siblings of students already admitted to or attending the School, so long as the sibling’s grade is not oversubscribed;
3. Children of employees of the School, so long as the total number of students allowed under this exemption constitutes only a small percentage of the School’s enrollment; and
4. Children of founders of the school, so long as the total number of students allowed under this exemption constitutes only a small percentage of the School’s enrollment.

All exempted applicants must reside within the school’s primary or secondary attendance boundaries to enroll.

**Admission Notification**
Families will be notified within 72 hours of the lottery or when a seat becomes available. Families will receive a phone call and email if available informing them of their admission. If a student is going to enroll in The Gathering Place the student’s parent or guardian must accept enrollment in writing within 5 school days of receiving notice of admission.

**Enrollment**
Upon student enrollment, The Gathering Place must receive the following documents within 30 days:

1. Verification of student identity
2. Immunization Records
3. Verification of Residency (see below)
4. School Records

**Texas Records Exchange (TREx)**
The Gathering Place will request records through TREx within 10 days of student enrollment, for any student who has previously attended a Texas public school.

**Proof of Residency**
In order to ensure a student resides within the boundaries of The Gathering Place, The Gathering Place may request the following:

1. Utility bills
2. Lease or mortgage information
3. Other sources or documents demonstrating residency

The Gathering Place is committed to serving students who may be homeless or in foster care. To ensure that all homeless students or students in foster care are not stigmatized or segregated on the basis of their homeless or foster care status, The Gathering Place will adopt policies and procedures to ensure a student’s admission or current enrollment are not delayed or denied. The Gathering Place will immediately enroll a homeless or foster care student even if the student is unable to produce the records normally required for enrollment.

The Gathering Place may conduct home visits as necessary to confirm residency.

**Re-Enrollment and Transfers**
Students wishing to transfer to The Gathering Place mid-year and students previously enrolled at The Gathering Place who have withdrawn and wish to re-enroll are subject to all policies and procedures outlined in this document, including submission of a new application, the lottery, and waitlist.
Provide the Following:

The 501(c)(3) Determination Letter issued by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) or evidence of filing for tax exempt status with the IRS.

If applicant does not have 501(c)(3) determination letter at the time of application submission, include any documentation that proves an IRS Form 1023 has been submitted by January 4, 2019.

Note: Applicants submitting proof of filing with the IRS must provide to the TEA the Determination Letter issued by the IRS granting the entity nonprofit status, no later than Friday, April 5, 2019, in order to be deemed an eligible entity and scheduled for an applicant capacity interview. Failure to submit the Determination Letter will result in the applicant being removed from the application process without the opportunity to interview.

PLEASE NOTE: Attachment G1 is referenced on the Board of Directors narrative page of the Finance/Operations/Governance Plans.
TGP PUBLIC SCHOOLS
PO BOX 1144
AUSTIN TX 78767

Employer identification number: 83-0687670
Tax form: 1023
Document locator number: 17055-158-30602-8
For assistance, call: 1-877-829-5500

Dear Applicant,

We received your application for exemption from federal income tax and your user fee payment.

During the initial review process, applications for exemption are separated into two groups:

1. Those that can be processed based on information submitted
2. Those that require additional information to be processed

If your application falls in the first group you'll receive a determination letter within approximately 90 days from the date of this notice stating that you're exempt from federal income tax.

If your application falls in the second group, you'll be contacted when your application has been assigned to an Exempt Organizations specialist for review. You can expect to be contacted within approximately 180 days from the date of this notice. After 180 days, if you haven't been notified your application was assigned to a specialist, you can contact Customer Account Services Monday through Friday at the toll-free number shown above to check on its status. The individual calling on your behalf will need the following information:

* Your name
* Your employer identification number (EIN)
* The document locator number listed above and assigned to your request
* A proper power of attorney submitted with your exemption application, unless the individual calling is an officer or director and legally authorized to represent you

The IRS doesn't issue "tax-exempt numbers" or "tax-exempt certificates" for state or local sales or income taxes. If you need exemption from these taxes, contact your state or local tax offices.

Most organizations are required to file an annual information return
(Form 990, Form 990-EZ, or Form 990-PF) or electronic notice (Form 990-N, the e-Postcard) while their applications for exemption or miscellaneous determination requests are pending. If you don't file a required return or notice for three consecutive years, your exempt status will be automatically revoked. Visit www.irs.gov and type "annual exempt organization return: who must file" in the search box for information on the types of organizations that are required to file annual returns or notices.

To receive the Exempt Organizations' EO Update, an electronic newsletter with information for tax-exempt organizations and tax practitioners, go to www.irs.gov/charities and click on "Free e-Newsletter."

For tax forms, instructions, and publications, visit www.irs.gov or call 1-800-TAX-FORM (1-800-829-3676).

Sincerely yours,

Stephen A. Martin
Director, EO Rulings & Agreements
Dear Applicant:

We're pleased to tell you we determined you're exempt from federal income tax under Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 501(c)(3). Donors can deduct contributions they make to you under IRC Section 170. You're also qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfers or gifts under Section 2055, 2106, or 2522. This letter could help resolve questions on your exempt status. Please keep it for your records.

Organizations exempt under IRC Section 501(c)(3) are further classified as either public charities or private foundations. We determined you're a public charity under the IRC Section listed at the top of this letter.

You're not subject to the specific publishing requirements of Revenue Procedure 75-50, 1975-2 C.B., page 587, as long as you operate under a contract with the local government. If your method of operation changes to the extent that your charter is not approved, terminated, cancelled or not renewed, you should notify us. You'll also be required to comply with Revenue Procedure 75-50.

If we indicated at the top of this letter that you're required to file Form 990/990-EZ/990-N, our records show you're required to file an annual information return (Form 990 or Form 990-EZ) or electronic notice (Form 990-N, the e-Postcard). If you don't file a required return or notice for three consecutive years, your exempt status will be automatically revoked.

If we indicated at the top of this letter that an addendum applies, the enclosed addendum is an integral part of this letter.

For important information about your responsibilities as a tax-exempt
TGP PUBLIC SCHOOLS

organization, go to www.irs.gov/charities. Enter "4221-PC" in the search bar to view Publication 4221-PC, Compliance Guide for 501(c)(3) Public Charities, which describes your recordkeeping, reporting, and disclosure requirements.

Sincerely,

Stephen a. martin

Director, Exempt Organizations
Rulings and Agreements
Provide the Following:

The original Articles of Incorporation filed with the Texas Secretary of State, or the state of incorporation (and any restated Articles of Incorporation and Articles of Amendment).

If the sponsoring entity was incorporated after January 1, 2006, submit the Certificate of Formation and the Certificate of Filing in place of the Articles of Incorporation.

All submitted forms to the state must be dated prior to January 4, 2019.

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**Texas Certificate of Filing**

**Texas Certificate of Formation**

**PLEASE NOTE**: FOG6 is referenced on the Board of Directors narrative page of the Finance/Operations/Governance Plans.
CERTIFICATE OF FILING
OF
TGP Public Schools
File Number: 803012191

The undersigned, as Secretary of State of Texas, hereby certifies that a Certificate of Formation for the above named Domestic Nonprofit Corporation has been received in this office and has been found to conform to the applicable provisions of law.

ACCORDINGLY, the undersigned, as Secretary of State, and by virtue of the authority vested in the secretary by law, hereby issues this certificate evidencing filing effective on the date shown below.

The issuance of this certificate does not authorize the use of a name in this state in violation of the rights of another under the federal Trademark Act of 1946, the Texas trademark law, the Assumed Business or Professional Name Act, or the common law.

Dated: 05/09/2018
Effective: 05/09/2018

Rolando B. Pablos
Secretary of State
Certificate of Formation
Nonprofit Corporation

Article 1 - Corporate Name
The filing entity formed is a nonprofit corporation. The name of the entity is:

TGP Public Schools

Article 2 - Registered Agent and Registered Office
☑ A. The initial registered agent is an organization (cannot be corporation named above) by the name of:

Registered Agents Inc.

OR

☐ B. The initial registered agent is an individual resident of the state whose name is set forth below:

☐ C. The business address of the registered agent and the registered office address is:

Street Address:
700 Lavaca St., Ste 1401 Austin TX 78701

Consent of Registered Agent
☑ A. A copy of the consent of registered agent is attached. Consent to Serve as Registered Agent (1).pdf

OR

☐ B. The consent of the registered agent is maintained by the entity.

Article 3 - Management
☐ A. Management of the affairs of the corporation is to be vested solely in the members of the corporation.

OR

☑ B. Management of the affairs of the corporation is to be vested in its board of directors. The number of directors, which must be a minimum of three, that constitutes the initial board of directors and the names and addresses of the persons who are to serve as directors until the first annual meeting or until their successors are elected and qualified are set forth below.

Director 1: Joanna Klekowicz
Title: Director
Address: PO Box 1144 Austin TX, USA 78767

Director 2: Quincy Boyd
Title: Director
Address: 303 Pearl Pkwy San Antonio TX, USA 78215

Director 3: Evan York
Title: Director
Address: PO Box 1144 Austin TX, USA 78767

Article 4 - Organization Structure
☐ A. The corporation will have members.

or

☑ B. The corporation will not have members.

Article 5 - Purpose
The corporation is organized for the following purpose or purposes:

The Corporation is organized exclusively for charitable and educational purposes including for such purposes as the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or the corresponding provision of any future federal tax code.
code. In particular, the Corporation is organized to provide students in historically underserved communities a high quality education that fosters academic performance, creativity, and healthy social and emotional development.

The Corporation is organized to have and exercise all rights and powers conferred upon non-profit corporations under the laws of the State of Texas, or which may hereafter be so conferred, in order to promote charitable and educational activities.

No part of the net earnings of the Corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to, its officers, directors or other private persons, except that the Corporation, in accordance with applicable law, shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes of the Corporation set forth in these Articles herein. No substantial part of the activities of the Corporation shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the Corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements), any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office.

Notwithstanding any other provision hereof, 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 of 1986, or the corresponding provision of any future federal tax code, or (b) by any corporation, contributions to which are deductible under Section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or the corresponding provision of any future federal tax code.

Supplemental Provisions / Information

ARTICLE VI

All money and other assets owned or controlled by the corporation, wherever derived, shall be devoted for use in performing the charitable and educational functions of the corporation solely through the furthering of the primary purposes of the corporation.

Except as otherwise required by applicable state or federal law, upon dissolution or liquidation of this corporation, and after payment of all debts and satisfaction of all liabilities and obligations of the corporation (or making adequate provision therefore), and after the return, transfer, or conveyance of all assets requiring return, transfer, or conveyance thereof because of the dissolution or liquidation of the corporation, any remaining assets of this corporation shall be distributed to charitable or educational organizations that would then qualify as an organization described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or the corresponding provision of any future federal tax code, as determined by the Board of Directors of the corporation.

ARTICLE X
To the fullest extent permitted by applicable law, a director of this corporation shall not be liable to the corporation or its members for monetary damages for an act or omission in the director's capacity as a director, except that this Article does not eliminate or limit the liability of a director to the extent the director is found to be liable for:
- a breach of a director's duty of loyalty to the corporation;
- an act or omission not in good faith that constitutes a breach of duty of the director to the corporation or an act or omission that involves intentional misconduct or a knowing violation of the law;
- a transaction from which the director received an improper benefit, whether or not the benefit resulted from an action taken within the scope of the director's office; or
- an act or omission for which the liability of a director is expressly provided by applicable law.

ARTICLE XI

The corporations shall indemnify any person who (i) is or was a director, officer, employee, or agent of the corporation, or (ii) while a director, officer, employee, or agent of the corporation, is or was serving at the request of the corporation as a director, officer, trustee, employee, agent, or similar functionary of another foreign or domestic nonprofit corporation, trust, employee benefit plan, or other enterprise, to the fullest extent that a corporation may or is required to grant indemnification to a director under the Texas Business Organizations Code as now written or as hereafter amended, but only to the extent permitted for (a) a corporation exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or the corresponding provision of any future federal tax code, and (b) a corporation, contributions to which are deductible under Section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or the corresponding provision of any future federal tax code.

[The attached addendum, if any, is incorporated herein by reference.]

Effectiveness of Filing

☐ A. This document becomes effective when the document is filed by the secretary of state.

☐ B. This document becomes effective at a later date, which is not more than ninety (90) days from the date of its signing. The delayed effective date is:

Organizer

Evan Ryan York PO Box 1144, Austin, TX, 78767

Execution

The undersigned affirms that the person designated as registered agent has consented to the appointment. The undersigned signs this document subject to the penalties imposed by law for the submission of a materially false or fraudulent instrument and certifies under penalty of perjury that the undersigned is authorized under the provisions of law governing the entity to execute the filing instrument.

Evan Ryan York
Signature of organizer.
The following form may be used when the person designated as registered agent in a registered agent filing is an individual.

**Acceptance of Appointment and Consent to Serve as Registered Agent**

I acknowledge, accept and consent to my designation or appointment as registered agent in Texas for [Name of represented entity].

I am a resident of the state and understand that it will be my responsibility to receive any process, notice, or demand that is served on me as the registered agent of the represented entity; to forward such to the represented entity; and to immediately notify the represented entity and submit a statement of resignation to the Secretary of State if I resign.

**Signature**

| [x:] | [Signature of registered agent] | [Printed name of registered agent] | [Date (mm/dd/yyyy)] |

The following form may be used when the person designated as registered agent in a registered agent filing is an organization.

**Acceptance of Appointment and Consent to Serve as Registered Agent**

I am authorized to act on behalf of [Registered Agents Inc.]. [Name of organization designated as registered agent] acknowledges, accepts and consents to its appointment or designation as registered agent in Texas for [TGP Public Schools].

The organization takes responsibility to receive any process, notice, or demand that is served on the organization as the registered agent of the represented entity; to forward such to the represented entity; and to immediately notify the represented entity and submit a statement of resignation to the Secretary of State if the organization resigns.

**Signature**

| [x:] | [Bill Havre] | [5/9/2018] |

| [Signature of person authorized to act on behalf of organization] | [Printed name of authorized person] | [Date (mm/dd/yyyy)] |
Provide the Following:

The original bylaws of the sponsoring entity including any and all amendments made to the original document.

PLEASE NOTE: Attachment G3 is referenced on the Board of Directors narrative page of the Finance/Operations/Governance Plans.
TGP Public Schools Bylaws

WHEREAS, the initial Board of Directors of TGP Public Schools (the “Corporation”) caused to be filed with
the Texas Secretary of State of a Certificate of Formation for the organization of the Corporation NOW,
THEREFORE:

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Directors of the Corporation, that these Bylaws will govern its affairs in
pursuit of its declared purposes.

ARTICLE I
NAME

1.01 Name
The name of this corporation shall be TGP Public Schools.

1.02 Office
The principal office of the Corporation will be determined by the Board of Directors.

1.03 Seal
The corporate seal of the Corporation, if any, will be inscribed with the Corporation name and year and
place of its incorporation.

1.04 Non-Discriminatory Policy
No person shall, on the basis of a person’s actual or perceived identity with regard to race, color,
religion, gender, age, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression,
ancestry, nationality, pregnancy, political or religious beliefs, national or ethnic origin, veteran status,
personal status, or any other distinguishing physical, or genetic characteristics, be excluded from
participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination, harassment, intimidation,
or bullying under any education program or activity or in any employment conditions or practices
conducted by the Corporation.
ARTICLE II
PURPOSES AND POWERS

2.01 Purpose
The Corporation is a non-profit corporation and shall be organized and operated exclusively for educational and charitable purposes within the meaning of Section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or the corresponding section of any future Federal tax code.

The Corporation operates by virtue of the laws of the State of Texas concerning non-profit corporations and shall have and may exercise all of the rights, powers, privileges and immunities granted to such corporations by those laws, as amended from time to time, subject to the restrictions and limitations contained in the Certificate of Formation for the Corporation filed with the Secretary of State. Regardless of any other language found in any provision of these bylaws, any time the Board of Directors (or a committee established by the Board), are dealing with matters pertaining to the operations of a charter school governed by the Board, or issues relating to or impacting the charter school, the Board or committee will meet and conduct business as required by the Texas Open Meetings Act and Public Information Act, Government Code chapters 551 and 552.

The Corporation’s purpose is to operate open enrollment public charter schools in the state of Texas that serve students PK through 12th grade. The mission of the Corporation is to operate these schools in order to develop diverse communities that cultivate each child’s inner-brilliance and harness our collective power to solve complex problems.

2.02 Powers
The Corporation shall have the power, directly or indirectly, alone or in conjunction or cooperation with others, to do any and all lawful acts which may be necessary or convenient to affect the charitable purposes, for which the Corporation is organized, and to aid or assist other organizations or persons whose activities further accomplish, foster, or attain such purposes. The powers of the Corporation may include, but not be limited to, the acceptance of contributions from the public and private sectors, whether financial or in-kind contributions.

2.03 Distribution upon Dissolution
The Corporation’s assets are irrevocably dedicated to public benefit purposes. No part of the net earnings, properties, or assets of the Corporation, on dissolution or otherwise, shall inure to the benefit of any private person or individual, or to any Director or officer of the Corporation. On liquidation or dissolution, all properties and assets remaining after payment, or provision for payment, of all debts and liabilities of the Corporation shall be distributed to a nonprofit fund, foundation, or corporation that is organized and operated exclusively for charitable purposes and that has established its exempt status under Internal Revenue Code section 501(c)3.
The organization to receive the assets of the Corporation hereunder shall be selected in the discretion of a majority of the managing body of the Corporation or as may be required under Section 4.16 below (Fundamental Transaction), the Education Code or other applicable law.

In the event that the court shall find that this section is applicable but that there is no qualifying organization known to it which has a charitable purpose, which, at least generally, includes a purpose similar to the Corporation, then the court shall direct the distribution of its assets lawfully available for distribution to the Treasurer of the State of Texas to be added to the general fund.

ARTICLE III
MEMBERSHIP

3.01 Membership
The Corporation shall have no members.

ARTICLE IV
MEETINGS AND RECORDS

4.01 Regular Meetings, Frequency and Place
Regular meetings of the Board of Directors shall be held on at least a quarterly basis at such places and at such times as the Board may determine.

4.02 Annual Meeting
The Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors shall be held on the occasion of its First (1st) Quarterly meeting each and every fiscal year, or as otherwise determined by the Board.

4.03 Special Meetings
Special meetings of the Board of Directors may be called by the Chair, Vice Chair, or by any one or more Board members with the consent of the Chair, which consent will not be unreasonably withheld, for any purpose not otherwise prescribed by law, grant or loan condition on the Articles of Incorporation, to transact any business described in the call for the special meetings.

MEETINGS RELATING TO CHARTER SCHOOLS

4.04 Charter School Meetings
When conducting business relating in any way to the operations or affairs of any of the Corporation’s open-enrollment charter schools, meetings of the Board or any Board Committee shall be conducted in accordance with provisions of the Texas Education Code and Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code, and the Board of Directors shall be subject to the requirements of the Texas Open Meetings Act, including the following provisions: At no time shall a quorum of the full Board meet to deliberate any
issue or business of the Corporation without posting notice of a meeting as set forth below. Directors shall normally attend all meetings in person, but may attend by alternate means only if circumstances warrant and expressly in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act.

a) Closed Meetings: The Board may meet in a meeting closed to the public to deliberate on those matters specified in the Texas Open Meetings Act as proper for closed meetings, including but not limited to consultation with attorney, real estate, prospective gifts or donations, personnel matters, security personnel or devices, discipline of a student and complaints against an employee unless the student or employee respectively requests an open meeting.

b) Emergency Meetings: In the event of an emergency as defined in the Texas Open Meetings Act, a meeting may be conducted by telephone conference call. If a meeting involves telephonic participation, the telephonic participation must be by conference call in which all persons participating can be heard by all other participants and the public.

c) Video Conferencing: Meetings may also be conducted by video conference call, where both audio and video is simultaneously available to the participants and the public, and all other prerequisites and requirements of the Texas Open Meetings Act are satisfied.

4.05 Notice for Charter School Meetings
When conducting business related to the operations or affairs of the Corporation's open-enrollment charter schools, the following shall apply: Notice of all meetings of the Board of Directors, except as otherwise provided by state law, regulation, will be delivered by first-class mail, email or by telephone to each Director at least 72 hours before the time of the meeting.

a) Posting of Notice: In addition, notice to the public of any meeting shall be posted at the administrative offices of the Corporation in a location convenient to the public at least 72 hours before the time of such meeting.

b) Emergency Notice: Emergency meetings as allowed under the Texas Open Meetings Act may be posted and sent to members of the Board up to two hours before such meeting and subject to other prerequisites under the Act.

c) Internet Posting: Notice and the agenda of all meetings of the Board of Directors shall also be posted on the Corporation's Internet website for the charter schools, if any, concurrently with the notice posted at the administrative offices, or as otherwise required and authorized by the Texas Open Meetings Act.

d) Closed Meetings: The agenda shall clearly state whether the Board intends to convene in a closed meeting and shall identify separately each matter to be deliberated by the Board in the closed meeting and whether the Board may take action on any such matter upon returning to the open meeting. The Secretary shall note the times in the open meeting that the Board convenes to and adjourns from the closed meeting.

4.06 Charter School Meeting Order of Business
When conducting business related to the operations or affairs of the Corporation's open-enrollment charter schools, the following shall apply: At regular meetings of the Board, the order of business shall be established in an Agenda approved by the Chair and as presented in the notice of the meetings. However, the Chair may modify the order of business. The agenda shall identify all matters to be
presented to and considered by the Board. Matters not disclosed in the agenda and meeting notice available to the public shall not be deliberated or be considered by the Board, except as permitted by the Texas Open Meetings Act.

CORPORATE BOARD MEETINGS NOT RELATING TO CHARTER SCHOOLS

4.07 Non-Charter Meetings
When conducting any other Corporate business not related, in any way, to the operations or affairs of the Corporation's open-enrollment charter schools, or prior to award and execution of a charter contract, Board meetings shall be conducted in accordance with provisions of Chapter 22 of the Texas Business Organizations Code, the Certificate of Formation and these bylaws. The Secretary shall cause to be mailed at least forty-eight hours in advance, or sent by email at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance to every Director at their address (email address) of record with the Corporation, a notice stating the time and place of every meeting. Notice of such meetings shall state the reasons that such meeting has been called and the business to be transacted at such meeting.

4.08 Board Action By Unanimous Written Consent
When conducting any Corporate business not related, in any way, to the operations or affairs of the Corporation's open enrollment charter schools, or prior to award and execution of a charter contract, the Board may take any action required or permitted to be taken at a meeting of the Board of Directors of committee of the Corporation, without an actual meeting if a consent, in writing, setting forth the action to be taken, is signed by all Directors or committee members entitled to vote (unanimous written consent) subject to all requirements of applicable law. The unanimous written consent for any such action by the Board or committee must state the date of each Director's or committee member's signature and memorialize the action to be taken. The written consent of each of the Directors or committee members must be delivered to the Corporation no later than the tenth (10th) day after the earliest date of consent, and must be delivered to the Chair or Secretary of the Board. Delivery must be by hand delivery or by certified or registered mail, return receipt requested.

MEETINGS & RECORDS GENERALLY

4.09 Corporate Records
The Corporation will maintain at its principal office all financial books and records of account, all minutes of the Board meetings and committee meetings, the list of Directors, and copies of all other material Corporate records, books, documents and contracts as required by Texas law. All such records will be made available for inspection at any reasonable time during usual business hours for any lawful purpose to any officer, Director, or person authorized by law or the Board to inspect such records, and the Corporation's records will also be available to the extent required by the Texas Public Information Act where applicable for public inspection and copying as promptly as possible as required by such act. Upon leaving office, each Director, officer or agent of the Corporation will turn over to the Chair in good order any Corporation monies, books, records, minutes, lists, documents, contracts or other property of the Corporation in their custody or control.
4.10 Quorum
The presence of a majority of the directors shall constitute a quorum and shall be necessary to conduct
the business of the Corporation except as otherwise provided in Article 4.16 herein. Any Board vacancies
shall not be counted in determining a majority called for by these Bylaws.

4.11 Order of Business
Board meetings shall generally proceed with the following order of business:
   a) Roll Call and Establishment of a Quorum
   b) Reading and Approval of Minutes of Preceding Meeting(s)
   c) Public Comments
   d) Reports of Officers
   e) Reports of Committees
   f) Reports of CEO(s)
   g) Old and Unfinished Business
   h) New Business
   i) Future Business
   j) Adjournments
The Board of Directors may, by majority vote, adopt a different agenda order.

4.12 Record of Board Action
All motions and resolutions of the Board will be written or recorded in the minutes of the Board and
certified copies will be placed in a journal of proceedings of the Board. Such records shall be maintained
in accordance with state law and Article 4.09 herein.

4.13 Voting
All matters at any meeting of the Board of Directors or any of its designated committees, except as
otherwise provided in these Bylaws, the Certificate of Formation, or as permitted by law, will be decided
by a vote of a majority of the Directors present at or lawfully participating in the meeting as permitted
by the Texas Open Meetings Act. If a quorum of the Board is present or lawfully participating in the
meeting, the affirmative vote of a majority of the Board of Directors will be the act of the body
corporate, unless the vote of a greater number is required by statute, regulation, the Certificate of
Formation, or these Bylaws. Any Director may request a roll call vote on any motion or resolution.
Directors may not vote by proxy or secret ballot.

4.14 Hung Vote
On the occasion that Directors of the Board are unable to make a decision based on a tied number of
votes, the Chair, in the order of presence shall have the power to swing the vote based on their
discretion.

4.15 Informal Action By The Board of Directors
Any action required or permitted to be taken by the Board of Directors at a meeting may be taken
without a meeting if consent in writing, setting forth the action so taken, shall be agreed by the
consensus of a quorum. For purposes of this section an email transmission from an email address on
record constitutes a valid writing. The intent of this provision is to allow the Board of Directors to use email to approve actions, as long as a quorum of Board members gives consent.

4.16 Fundamental Actions
In accordance with Section 22.164 of the Texas Business Organization Code, the following actions of the Board of Directors are fundamental actions that shall require the affirmative vote of the majority of Directors then serving on the Board:

a) Amendment of a certificate of formation [or articles of incorporation];
b) Voluntary winding up under Chapter 11;
c) A revocation of a voluntary decision to wind up under Chapter 11;
d) A cancellation of an event requiring winding up under Chapter 11;
e) A reinstatement under Section 11.202;
f) A distribution plan under Section 22.305;
g) A plan of merger under Subchapter F;
h) A sale of all or substantially all of the assets of the Corporation;
i) A plan of conversion under Subchapter F; or
j) A plan of exchange under Subchapter F.

4.17 Compensation
Except as provided in this section, no Director will receive directly or indirectly any salary, compensation or gift from the Corporation, except as authorized by state law for their service as a Director. No Director will be entitled to any dividend or any part of the income or principal of the Corporation, or to share in the distribution of the assets upon dissolution of the Corporation. The Board of Directors may authorize the payment by the Corporation of the reasonable, documented and allowable expenses incurred by a Director in performance of their duties in accordance with state and federal law.

4.18 Parliamentary Procedure
For all matters of parliamentary procedures, the Board and any committees established by the Board, shall be guided by Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised, 11th ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Perseus Publishing, 2011)

ARTICLE V
Board Of Directors

5.01 Management
The activities, affairs, property and powers of the Corporation will be managed, directed, controlled or exercised by and vested in the Board of Directors.

5.02 Number of Directors
The Corporation shall have a Board of Directors consisting of at least 3 and no more than 15 Directors. Within these limits, the Board may increase or decrease the number of Directors serving on the Board, including for the purpose of staggering the terms of Directors.

5.03 Powers
All corporate powers shall be exercised by or under the authority of the Board and the affairs of the Corporation shall be managed under the direction of the Board, except as otherwise provided by law.

5.04 Terms
a) All Directors shall be elected to serve a one or two year term, however the term may be extended until a successor has been elected.

b) Director terms shall be staggered upon the Board’s formation so that approximately half the number of Directors will end their terms in any given year.

c) Directors may serve unlimited terms in succession.

5.05 Qualifications and Election of Directors
In order to be eligible to serve as a Director on the Board of Directors, the individual must be 18 years of age. Directors may be elected at any Board meeting by the majority vote of the existing Board of Directors.

5.06 Vacancies
The Board of Directors may fill vacancies due to the expiration of a Director’s term of office, resignation, death, or removal of a Director or may appoint new Directors to fill a previously unfilled Board position following the procedures from 5.05, subject to the maximum number of Directors under these Bylaws. Any appointed Board member to fill a vacancy will serve out the remainder of the previous member’s term.

5.07 Resignation
Any Director or officer may resign from the Corporation by delivering a written letter of resignation to the Chair of the Board.

5.08 Removal of Directors
A Director may be removed by majority vote of the Board of Directors then in office, if:

a) the Director is absent and unexcused from two or more meetings of the Board of Directors in a twelve month period. The Board Chair is empowered to excuse Directors from attendance for a reason deemed adequate by the Board Chair. The Chair shall not have the power to excuse themself from the Board meeting attendance and in that case, the Board Vice Chair shall excuse the Chair; or

b) for cause or no cause.

ARTICLE VI
COMMITTEES

6.01 Committees
The Board of Directors may, by the resolution adopted by a majority of the Directors then in office, designate one or more committees, each consisting of three or more Directors, to serve at the pleasure of the Board. Any committee, to the extent provided in the resolution of the Board, shall have all the authority of the Board, except that no committee, regardless of Board resolution, may:
   a) take any final action on matters which also requires Board members’ approval or approval of a majority of all members;
   b) fill vacancies on the Board;
   c) amend or repeal Bylaws or adopt new Bylaws;
   d) amend or repeal any resolution of the Board of Directors which by its express terms is not so amendable or repealable;
   e) appoint any other committees of the Board of Directors or the members of these committees;
   f) approve any transaction;
      i) to which the Corporation is a party and one or more Directors have a material financial interest; or
      ii) between the Corporation and one or more of its Directors or between the Corporation or any person in which one or more of its Directors have a material financial interest.

6.02 Meetings and Action of Committees
Meetings and action of the committees shall be governed by and held and taken in accordance with, the provisions of Article IV of these Bylaws concerning meetings of the Directors, with such changes in the context of those Bylaws as are necessary to substitute the committee and its members for the Board of Directors and its members, except that the time for regular meetings of committees may be determined either by resolution of the Board of Directors or by resolution of the committee. Special meetings of the committee may also be called by resolution of the Board of Directors. Notice of special meetings of committees shall also be given to any and all alternate members, who shall have the right to attend all meetings of the committee. Minutes shall be kept of each meeting of any committee and shall be filed with the corporate records. The Board of Directors may adopt rules for the governing of the committee not inconsistent with the provision of these Bylaws.

ARTICLE VII
OFFICERS

7.01 Board Officers
The officers of the Corporation shall be a Board Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer, all of whom shall be chosen by, and serve at the pleasure of, the Board of Directors. Each Board officer shall have the authority and shall perform the duties set forth in these Bylaws or by resolution of the Board or by direction of an officer authorized by the Board to prescribe the duties and authority of other officers. The Board may also appoint additional Vice Chairs and such other officers as it deems expedient for the
proper conduct of the business of the Corporation, each of whom shall have such authority and shall perform such duties as the Board of Directors may determine. One person may hold two or more Board offices except that of Chair and Secretary, but no Board officer may act in more than one capacity where action of two or more officers is required.

7.02 Board Chair
The Board Chair shall be the chief volunteer officer of the Corporation. The Board Chair shall lead the Board of Directors in performing its duties and responsibilities, including, if present, presiding at all meetings of the Board of Directors, and shall perform all other duties incident to the office or properly required by the Board of Directors.

7.03 Vice Chair
In the absence or disability of the Board Chair, the ranking Vice Chair or Vice Chair designated by the Board of Directors shall perform the duties of the Board Chair. When so acting, the Vice Chair shall have all the powers of and be subject to all the restrictions upon the Board Chair. The Vice Chair shall have such other powers and perform such other duties prescribed for them by the Board of Directors or the Board Chair. The Vice Chair shall normally accede to the office of Board Chair upon the completion of the Board Chair’s term of office.

7.04 Secretary
The Secretary shall keep or cause to be kept a book of minutes of all meetings and actions of Directors and committees of Directors. The minutes of each meeting shall state the time and place that it was held and such other information as shall be necessary to determine the actions taken and whether the meeting was held in accordance with the law and these Bylaws. The Secretary shall cause notice to be given of all meetings of Directors and committees as required by the Bylaws. The Secretary shall have such other powers and perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board of Directors or the Board Chair. The Secretary may appoint, with approval of the Board, a Director to assist in performance of all or part of the duties of the Secretary.

7.05 Treasurer
The Treasurer shall be the lead Director for oversight of the financial condition and affairs of the Corporation. The Treasurer shall oversee and keep the Board informed of the financial condition of the Corporation and of audit or financial review results. In conjunction with other Directors or officers, the Treasurer shall oversee budget preparation and shall ensure that appropriate financial reports, including an account of major transactions and the financial condition of the Corporation, are made available to the Board of Directors on a timely basis or as may be required by the Board of Directors. The Treasurer shall perform all duties properly required by the Board of Directors or the Board Chair. The Treasurer may appoint, with approval of the Board a qualified fiscal agent or member of the staff to assist in performance of all or part of the duties of the Treasurer.

7.06 Non-Director Officers
The Board of Directors may designate additional officer positions of the Corporation and may appoint and assign duties to other non-Director officers of the Corporation.
ARTICLE VIII
CONTRACTS, CHECKS, LOANS, INDEMNIFICATION AND RELATED MATTERS

8.01 Contracts and other Writings
Except as otherwise provided by resolution of the Board or Board policy, all contracts, deeds, leases, mortgages, grants, and other agreements of the Corporation shall be executed on its behalf by the Treasurer or other persons to whom the Corporation has delegated authority to execute such documents in accordance with policies approved by the Board.

8.02 Checks, Drafts
All checks, drafts, or other orders for payment of money, notes, or other evidence of indebtedness issued in the name of the Corporation, shall be signed by such officer or officers, agent or agents, of the Corporation and in such manner as shall from time to time be determined by resolution of the Board.

8.03 Deposits
All funds of the Corporation not otherwise employed shall be deposited from time to time to the credit of the Corporation in such banks, trust companies, or other depository as the Board or a designated committee of the Board may select and in accordance with state law.

8.04 Loans
No loans shall be contracted on behalf of the Corporation and no evidence of indebtedness shall be issued in its name unless authorized by resolution of the Board or agents of the Board. Such authority may be general or confined to specific instances.

8.05 Liability
A Director or committee member will not be required to furnish any bond or surety for his services as a Director or committee member, and will not be liable for the act or omission of any other Director. No Director shall be personally liable for the debts, liabilities, or other obligations of this corporation.

8.06 Indemnification
Any person made or threatened to be made a party to any action in court or other proceeding because they are or were a Director or committee member will be indemnified by the Corporation against any and all liability and the reasonable expenses, including attorney’s fees, incurred in connection with the defense or settlement of the action, except where it is adjudged that the Director or committee member is liable for gross negligence, bad faith, or willful misconduct in performing their duties. The right of indemnification will not exclude any other right of the Director or committee member. INDEMNIFICATION UNDER THIS SECTION IS SUBJECT TO ANY AND ALL PROHIBITIONS, RESTRICTIONS AND LIMITATIONS IMPOSED BY LAW.

8.07 Advance for Expenses
Expenses incurred 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

a) a written affirmation from the Director, officer, employee or agent of their good faith belief that they are entitled to indemnification as authorized in this article; and

b) an undertaking by or on behalf of the Director, officer, employee or agent to repay such amount, unless it shall ultimately be determined that they are entitled to be indemnified by the Corporation in these Bylaws.

ARTICLE IX
MISCELLANEOUS

9.01 Fiscal Year
The fiscal year of the Corporation shall be from July 1st - June 30th.

9.02 Conflict of Interest
The Board shall adopt and periodically review a conflict of interest policy to protect the Corporation's interest when it is contemplating any transaction or arrangement which may benefit any Director, officer, employee, affiliate, or member of a committee with Board-delegated powers.

9.03 Bylaw Amendment
These Bylaws may be amended, altered, repealed, or restated by a vote of 2/3rds of the Board of Directors then in office at a meeting of the Board, provided, however,

a) that no amendment shall be made to these Bylaws which would cause the Corporation to cease to qualify as an exempt corporation under Section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or the corresponding section of any future Federal tax code;

b) that an amendment does not affect the voting rights of Directors. An amendment that does affect the voting rights of Directors further requires ratification by a two-thirds vote of a quorum of Directors at a Board meeting; and

c) that all amendments be consistent with the Certificate of Formation and Texas State Law.

ARTICLE X
AMENDMENT OF CERTIFICATE OF FORMATION

10.01 Amendment
Any amendment to the Certificate of Formation may be adopted by approval of two-thirds (2/3) of the Board of Directors.

CERTIFICATE OF ADOPTION OF BYLAWS
I do hereby certify that the above stated Bylaws of the Corporation were approved by the Corporation Board of Directors and constitute a complete copy of the Bylaws of the Corporation.

Secretary: [Signature]

Date: 12/14/2018
Provide the Following:

Using the template provided at http://tea.texas.gov/charterapp.aspx, submit a notarized, Board Member Biographical Affidavit completed by each member of the proposed school's governing board.

All prompts and response boxes shall be completed. If a prompt does not apply to the member, enter a response of N/A followed by a brief explanation of why the prompt does not apply. Ensure that the anticipated role to be filled at the proposed charter is identified.

NOTE: Substantial repetition among and between affidavit responses will be subject to this application's Plagiarism Policy, and may be removed from consideration. Applicants must ensure that each Board Member individually provides their own personal response(s).

PLEASE NOTE: Attachment G4 is referenced on the Board of Directors narrative page of the Finance/Operations/Governance Plans.
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of Sponsoring Entity: TGP Public Schools

BACKGROUND

Full Legal Name: Quincy Raquel Boyd

Home Mailing Address: 2039 Hardee Pass, San Antonio, TX 78253

Phone Number: (210) 854-5335

E-mail Address: 

Business Name: Families Empowered

Business Mailing Address: PO Box 128976, San Antonio, TX 78212

Business Phone Number: (210) 347-2972

E-Mail Address: 

Indicate whether you currently or have previously served on a board of a school district, another charter school, a non-public school or any not-for-profit corporation.

☐ Yes ☐ No, does not apply to me

If Yes, state the name of the entity:

1. What was your motivation to serve on the board of the proposed charter school?

   I am a proud native of San Antonio with a career dedicated to making an impact on education and my community. I’m currently the Regional Director at Families Empowered where we encourage families to engage in the marketplace of schools. With thousands of families waitlisted in San Antonio, I often ask them what they’re looking for in a school. Eighty percent of them name innovation as one reason they’ve decided to leave their current school or district. Parents are looking for a school environment that uniquely fits their child. When I was introduced to The Gathering Place (TGP) as a new innovative option for San Antonio families, I jumped on the opportunity to join the board. TGP’s project-based model is innovative and unique. This summer I had the opportunity to witness the impact TGP is already having on kids at The Great Food Truck Showcase. Students created their own businesses from scratch and presented to friends, family and the community. The presentations were fantastic, but what resonated most was a simple response that I overheard. "I didn’t know learning could be so much fun, I loved it." That reaffirmed why I joined the board and why it is so important for me to be a part of proposing TGP in San Antonio. I am excited for the prospect of bringing a new approach to K12 education in San Antonio and I can’t wait to watch kids light up when they discover how fun learning can be.
2. What is your understanding of the appropriate role of a public charter school board member?

First and foremost, a board member strongly believes in the mission and vision. As such, I understand his/her role to be one that provides guidance and oversight related to academics, human capital, budget and evaluations. He/she works with the administration to ensure the overall success of the charter school.

3. 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.

While I do not have experience serving on a school board, I have served on an advisory board for a college access non-profit in Boston, MA. I also serve on the advisory board for the School of Science and Technology here in San Antonio. Finally, in my own work, I have been a part of establishing a board as the Regional Director of Families Empowered.

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

I am organized, reliable and trustworthy, important traits for a board member. In addition, I am a native of San Antonio and product of its public schools. As a parent, now raising my own two girls and looking for public school options for them, I believe I bring two things: 1) historical knowledge about education in San Antonio and 2) a pulse and working knowledge of what parents want. I believe community voice is important for decision-making. This will be helpful as TGP finds its much-needed fit in our community.

SCHOOL MISSION AND PROGRAM

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

The school mission is to nurture the freedom and inner-brilliance of each child. TGP believes differences are to be recognized and celebrated as strengths that are built upon through an innovative project-based curriculum where a child's love for themselves and others is fostered.

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

The Gathering Place has three pillars:
- To nurture children's social and emotional development, supported by restorative practices
- Daily creative arts as a way of communication, expression and self-identification
- Student-driven projects that involve student's interests and passions.

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

A successful school is led by a passionate team of leaders and teachers that care deeply about each child's education and ensures students are performing to their full potential. The teachers and leaders should be highly qualified and diverse so that the school's environment is one where students not only learn and grow academically, but also personally.
4. How will you know that the school is succeeding (or not) in its mission?

As a board, we will set annual goals and metrics that are aligned to our strategic vision and we will measure and track our success. We will also make frequent visits to the campus at which point we will talk and engage with teachers and students as a way to measure our progress. Ultimately, meeting the academic and financial goals are strong indicators for the overall success.

GOVERNANCE

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

The board will provide oversight of the school’s academic success and financial well-being, but will not be involved in the daily operations. The board will also listen to the community and respond to any concerns and ideas.

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

At the end of year one, we will know the school is successful if we are meeting or exceeding our academic and financial indicators of success. Additionally, high staff and student retention as well as positive survey data, will let us know we have delivered on our mission.

3. How will you know at the end of four years if the school is successful?

In year four, the school will be successful if we have continued to meet or exceed our academic and financial indicators of success—this includes our performance on STAAR and continual philanthropic/grant support. We will also measure our success in year four by whether or not we’ve hit our enrollment and attendance targets and by having a growing waitlist.

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

It is important for the board to have strong recruitment and onboarding processes to ensure members remain committed to the organization and its families. The board will also need to hold trainings and retreats to ensure the board members fully understand their roles and responsibilities.

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 interest of the school?

Unethical behavior will be taken seriously and addressed promptly. If I believe someone is acting unethically, I will follow the code of conduct which outlines responsibilities and appropriate behavior. Depending on the specific issue, I will address it with the person, the board chair and/or bring it to the whole board.
DISCLOSURES

1. Indicate whether you (or your spouse) knows the other prospective board members for the proposed school.
   - Yes ○ No, I/we do not know these individuals
     If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.

2. Indicate whether you (or your spouse) knows any person who is, or has been in the last two years, a school employee.
   - Yes ○ No, I/we do not know any such employees
     If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.
     My husband, Gerald J. Boyd, is a Principal at IDEA Public Schools.

3. Indicate whether you (or your spouse) knows anyone who is doing, or plans to do, business with the charter school (whether as an individual or as a director, officer, employee or agent of an entity).
   - Yes ○ No, I/we do not know any such persons
     If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship and the nature of the business that such person(s) or entity is transacting or will be transacting with the school.

4. If the school intends to contract with an education service provider or management organization, indicate whether you or your spouse knows any employees, officers, owner, directors, or agents of that provider.
   - Yes ○ No, I/we do not know any such persons
     If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.

   Not applicable because the school does not intend to contract with an education service provider or school management organization.

5. If the school intends to contract with an education service provider, indicate if you, your spouse or other immediate family member anticipate conducting, or are conducting, any business with the provider.
   - Yes ○ No, I/we or my family do not anticipate conducting any such business.

     If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.
6. Indicate whether you, your spouse, or other immediate family members are a director, officer, employee, partner or member of, or are otherwise associated with, any organization that is partnering with the charter school. To the extent you have provided this information in response to prior items, you may so indicate.

- Yes  (c) Does not apply to me, my spouse, or family.

If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.

7. List all business or organizations of which you are a partner or in which you have a majority interest.

N/A

8. List all previous experience with charter schools. Include open-enrollment schools and/or campus or program charters including dates, charter schools/charter holders, addresses and positions held.

KIPP Sunnyside High School (College Counselor and Teacher July 2012-October 2013)
11000 Scott St, Houston, TX 77047

BASIS Medical Center (Director of Academic Programs June 2016-July 2017)
8519 Floyd Curl Dr, San Antonio, TX 78240

9. Will you be employed by or contract with the sponsoring entity, the charter school, or the managements company of the school?

- Yes  (c) Does not apply to me.

If yes, state the compensation you expect to receive.

10. Is any relative within the third degree of consanguinity (i.e., your parent, grandparent, great-grandparent, child, grandchild, great-grandchild, sibling, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew) or with the third degree of affinity (i.e., your spouse or your spouse’s parent, grandparent, great-grandparent, child, grandchild, great-grandchild, sibling, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew) a member of the governing body of the sponsoring entity or of the governing body of the charter school?

- Yes  (c) Does not apply to me.

If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.
11. Will any relative(s) within the third degree of consanguinity or affinity (See definition in question 11.) be employed by or receive any compensation or remuneration from the sponsoring entity, charter school, or the management company of the charter school?  

- Yes  ☐ Does not apply to me.  

If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.  

☐  

12. Have you ever been convicted of a misdemeanor involving moral turpitude; a felony; an offence listed in TEC § 37.007(a); or an offence listed in Article 62.01(5) Code of Criminal Procedure?  

- Yes  ☐ Does not apply to me.  

If yes, provide information relating to the matter(s).  

☐  

CERTIFICATION

I, Quincy R. Boyd, certify to the best of my knowledge and ability that the information I am providing to the Texas Education Agency as a board member is true and correct in every respect.

Signature  

Date 12/18/18

Verification

State of Texas

County of Bexar

On this day, Quincy R. Boyd (name of affiant) appeared before me the undersigned notary public and deposed that he/she executed the above instrument and that the statements and answers contained therein are true and correct to the best of his/her knowledge and belief.

Subscribed and sworn to before 18 day of December, 2018.

(Notary Public) Myrna Marin  

My commission expires 01-24-2021
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of Sponsoring Entity: TGP Public Schools

**BACKGROUND**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Full Legal Name:</th>
<th>Jon Hinojosa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Home Mailing Address:</td>
<td>4223 Vantage View Dr, San Antonio, Texas 78228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone Number:</td>
<td>210-273-6366</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail Address:</td>
<td>[redacted]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Name:</td>
<td>SAY SI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Mailing Address:</td>
<td>1518 S Alamo, San Antonio, Texas 78204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Phone Number:</td>
<td>210-212-8666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-Mail Address:</td>
<td>[redacted]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Indicate whether you currently or have previously served on a board of a school district, another charter school, a non-public school or any not-for-profit corporation.

- [ ] Yes
- [x] No, does not apply to me

If Yes, state the name of the entity: Henry Ford Academy Alameda School

1. What was your motivation to serve on the board of the proposed charter school?

The proposed charter school, The Gathering Place’s mission and focus and SAY SI, the non-profit arts OST organization that I am the Executive Director for have alignments in many areas:

- A focus on the urban core and economically disadvantaged students and families.
- Opportunities for students to be immersed in the arts to express creativity and emotion.
- A commitment to Social Emotional Learning.
- Utilizing Project Based Learning as tool to reach a diverse group of learners.
- Recognizing restorative practices support youths development and growth.

In addition, a large part of my motivation is to continue to contribute to, and expand opportunities to the youth of San Antonio.
2. What is your understanding of the appropriate role of a public charter school board member?

Public charter school board members are the first tier of leadership for the organization and will be fiscally responsible for the schools health and growth by providing oversight of academics and finances. Additionally, the board must and will work as a team with the school leadership, teachers, parents and students to best serve the organization's mission and vision.

3. 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.

While I have not served on a charter school board, I have served on local, regional and national boards. In addition to serving, I have chaired various committees including membership and governance. One of the most important aspects of my service on Boards is understanding the commitment and work it takes to be an active member.

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

As mentioned, I have served in various roles on boards. My knowledge and experience is derived from the work I do as the Executive Director of a non-profit: to build meaningful relationships with a diverse community; have depth and understanding of budgets and spreadsheets; recognize the importance of organization staff to support the mission; keenly value the value and culture of community, etc.

SCHOOL MISSION AND PROGRAM

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

Every child has the freedom to learn and that each person's inner brilliance when nurtured and connected leads to a diverse gathering place of people with limited collective potential. Children are free to learn through social-emotional development, a restorative school culture, daily arts and student projects.

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

That it is inclusive and was designed both with past practical experience from the founders but also with research and learning models and pilots with our local community that have shown impact and success. The program includes art, restorative practices, and learning through projects.

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

Student centered with a commitment to understanding that students learn in different ways. Opportunities that provide equity and inclusion in both the pedagogical approach, and in the community it serves. That it takes many communities including those outside the facility to make impact and a positive change in our students' educational lives.
4. How will you know that the school is succeeding (or not) in its mission?

The success or struggle would be based on reviewing our strategic priorities and assessment measures for impact and seeing that indicators are met, in addition to the relationships we are newly building with staff, students, parents, and community.

GOVERNANCE

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

Board members are the fiduciaries who steer the organization towards a sustainable future. The focus, like most boards, is to adopt sound, ethical, and legal governance and financial management policies. In addition to making sure that the school has adequate resources to advance its mission. The Gathering Place board members should provide foresight, oversight, and insight and be partners with the directors, staff, students and community.

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

Please see the answer to question 4.

3. How will you know at the end of four years if the school is successful?

In addition to reviewing our strategic plan and assessment measures and community impact, I would feel that the school is successful based on the growth of our student population, advancements of new grades added to the school allowable in its charter and the existence of a waitlist.

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

1. Listen
2. Communicate
3. Review progress
4. Advance success and restructure challenges

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 interest of the school?

It is the responsibility of board members to be transparent, lawful and honest, if a board member is acting unethical, I would be very comfortable to bring the issues to a committee or the full board for discussion and resolution.
DISCLOSURES

1. Indicate whether you (or your spouse) knows the other prospective board members for the proposed school.
   - Yes ☐ No, I/we do not know these individuals
     If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.

2. Indicate whether you (or your spouse) knows any person who is, or has been in the last two years, a school employee.
   - Yes ☐ No, I/we do not know any such employees
     If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.

3. Indicate whether you (or your spouse) knows anyone who is doing, or plans to do, business with the charter school (whether as an individual or as a director, officer, employee or agent of an entity).
   - Yes ☐ No, I/we do not know any such persons
     If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship and the nature of the business that such person(s) or entity is transacting or will be transacting with the school.

4. If the school intends to contract with an education service provider or management organization, indicate whether you or your spouse knows any employees, officers, owner, directors, or agents of that provider.
   - Yes ☐ No, I/we do not know any such persons
     If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.

   Not applicable because the school does not intend to contract with an education service provider or school management organization.

5. If the school intends to contract with an education service provider, indicate if you, your spouse or other immediate family member anticipate conducting, or are conducting, any business with the provider.
   - Yes ☐ No, I/we or my family do not anticipate conducting any such business.
     If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.
6. Indicate whether you, your spouse, or other immediate family members are a director, officer, employee, partner or member of, or are otherwise associated with, any organization that is partnering with the charter school. To the extent you have provided this information in response to prior items, you may so indicate.

   ( ) Yes ( ) Does not apply to me, my spouse, or family.
   If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.

7. List all business or organizations of which you are a partner or in which you have a majority interest.

   None

8. List all previous experience with charter schools. Include open-enrollment schools and/or campus or program charters including dates, charter schools/charter holders, addresses and positions held.

   None

9. Will you be employed by or contract with the sponsoring entity, the charter school, or the managements company of the school?

   ( ) Yes ( ) Does not apply to me.
   If yes, state the compensation you expect to receive.

10. Is any relative within the third degree of consanguinity (i.e., your parent, grandparent, great-grandparent, child, grandchild, great-grandchild, sibling, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew) or with the third degree of affinity (i.e., your spouse or your spouse's parent, grandparent, great-grandparent, child, grandchild, great-grandchild, sibling, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew) a member of the governing body of the sponsoring entity or of the governing body of the charter school?

    ( ) Yes ( ) Does not apply to me.
    If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.
11. Will any relative(s) within the third degree of consanguinity or affinity (See definition in question 11) be employed by or receive any compensation or remuneration from the sponsoring entity, charter school, or the management company of the charter school? (☐ Yes ☐ Does not apply to me.

If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.

12. Have you ever been convicted of a misdemeanor involving moral turpitude; a felony; an offence listed in TEC § 37.007(a); or an offence listed in Article 62.01(5) Code of Criminal Procedure? (☐ Yes ☐ Does not apply to me.

If yes, provide information relating to the matter(s).

CERTIFICATION

[Signature] 12/19/2018

Verification

State of Texas

County of Bexar

On this day, John Hinojosa (name of affiant) appeared before me the undersigned notary public and deposed that he/she executed the above instrument and that the statements and answers contained therein are true and correct to the best of his/her knowledge and belief.

Subscribed and sworn to before 19th day of December 2018.

(Notary Public) (Seal)

My commission expires 06-01-2022
Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of Sponsoring Entity: TGP Public Schools

BACKGROUND

Full Legal Name: Janet H. Young

Home Mailing Address: 8418 Chesham, San Antonio, TX 78254

Phone Number: 210-573-0047

E-mail Address: [redacted]

Business Name: Parallon

Business Mailing Address: 6000 Northwest Parkway Suite 124, San Antonio, TX 78249

Business Phone Number: 210-581-4181

E-Mail Address: [redacted]

Indicate whether you currently or have previously served on a board of a school district, another charter school, a non-public school or any not-for-profit corporation.

- Yes  - No, does not apply to me

If Yes, state the name of the entity: Grace First Baptist Church and Healthy Futures of Texas

1. What was your motivation to serve on the board of the proposed charter school?

The Gathering Place mission and vision reflects what I have experienced personally and believe professionally. I grew up in a disadvantage community on the east-side of Knoxville Tennessee. Personally experienced the benefit of school choice and creative teaching techniques allowed me to grow and reach my full potential as a student. I recall from my past, a special teacher in my elementary school that identified reasons why I was underachieving and acting out in class. She became my mentor and used creative methods to help me understand basic concepts, outside of the regular school setting. This teacher and mentor was instrumental in helping shape my middle school and high school experience. One specific example, for some reason I had trouble learning the right and left concept. In order for me to really grasp this concept she took me driving for hours in her car, taking a right or left turn, as I directed my way home. Relating this concept to something meaningful to me helped me master this one basic skill. This teacher also convinced my mom to move me to another school district with better teachers and an open class environment. This was my first introduction to school choice. When I was approached by the founders of The Gathering Place, I immediately reflected back on what made me a successful student in school and the importance of having a nurturing environment to grow and learn. The Gathering Place resonated with me and I enthusiastically joined the founding board.
2. What is your understanding of the appropriate role of a public charter school board member?

From past experience my understanding is that the board is there to govern, and not manage. The board helps support the mission and vision. The board ensures that the organization is fiscally responsible and has resources to carry out its mission. Other duties include the safekeeping of public records, adopting policies governing operations and approving audits. The board is a part of any escalating grievance process.

3. 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.

For 10 years I was a member of Grace First Baptist Church Board of Directors and acted as Chair for three of those 10 years. From 2015-17, I was a member of Healthy Futures of Texas Board Directors. I acted as the treasurer for two years and sat on both the personnel and finance committee. I am a COO of a large hospital cooperation and manage over 100 employees.

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

I bring many years of executive leadership experience both in personnel management and operational oversight. I am skilled in strategic planning and organizational accountability. I am an active member of my community and a skilled communicator with the ability to interact with parents, educators and other external governance organizations.

SCHOOL MISSION AND PROGRAM

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

To create an environment where students have an opportunity to be nurtured and celebrated. Students will have the freedom to grow and unlock theirinner-brilliance through project based learning. The Gathering Place believes that each child has strengths and assets and the school's curriculum should start with those and build outward.

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

The purpose of the school is to execute an educational program using core pillars of excellence. The pillars of excellence include: nurturing children’s social and emotional development, supported by restorative practices, having daily arts programming, and learning through projects that involve student’s interests and passions. Each child will have the ability to grow holistically both socially and academically.

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

I believe that a successful school is one in which a child can feel safe to grow and learn in a loving and free environment. The teachers believe that every child has inner-brilliance and are open to celebrate with the students and parents. Students are transformed into a productive citizen emotionally and academically.
4. How will you know that the school is succeeding (or not) in its mission?

Benchmarks will be used to measure success: 1. Defined academic and financial indicators 2. Tracking against annual goals set by the board that are aligned to the school’s strategic vision 3. the board will visit the school to ensure indicators are being met 4. The board will evaluate how much time and resources are going into mission-aligned priorities and activities.

GOVERNANCE

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

The board will oversee measurement of academic success and financial well-being of the school against performance indicators. The board will have oversight of the Superintendent and work to set annual goals. The board will visit with teachers and students to listen to their needs.

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

- All academic and financial indicators are met
- Systems and operations have been established that mitigate fraud and waste
- Student retention is high
- Families communicate high satisfaction on surveys

3. How will you know at the end of four years if the school is successful?

- All academic and financial indicators are met
- Systems and operations continue to mitigate fraud and waste
- Student and staff retention is high
- Families communicate high satisfaction on surveys
- School is fully enrolled with high daily attendance

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

Board training will be critical and will include an annual retreat. Also, the board and its committees will regularly meet to track progress against academic and financial indicators of success at regular intervals.

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 interest of the school?

I would bring it to the attention of the Board Chair and the board so that the situation could be resolved. The board member(s) would also be held accountable for their actions.
6. Indicate whether you, your spouse, or other immediate family members are a director, officer, employee, partner or member of, or are otherwise associated with, any organization that is partnering with the charter school. To the extent you have provided this information in response to prior items, you may so indicate.

☐ Yes  ☐ Does not apply to me, my spouse, or family.

If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.

7. List all business or organizations of which you are a partner or in which you have a majority interest.

JyJy LLC.

8. List all previous experience with charter schools. Include open-enrollment schools and/or campus or program charters including dates, charter schools/charter holders, addresses and positions held.

none

9. Will you be employed by or contract with the sponsoring entity, the charter school, or the management company of the school?

☐ Yes  ☐ Does not apply to me.

If yes, state the compensation you expect to receive.

10. Is any relative within the third degree of consanguinity (i.e., your parent, grandparent, great-grandparent, child, grandchild, great-grandchild, sibling, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew) or with the third degree of affinity (i.e., your spouse or your spouse’s parent, grandparent, great-grandparent, child, grandchild, great-grandchild, sibling, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew) a member of the governing body of the sponsoring entity or of the governing body of the charter school?

☐ Yes  ☐ Does not apply to me.

If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.
DISCLOSURES

1. Indicate whether you (or your spouse) knows the other prospective board members for the proposed school.
   - Yes ○ No, I/we do not know these individuals
   If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.

2. Indicate whether you (or your spouse) knows any person who is, or has been in the last two years, a school employee.
   - Yes ○ No, I/we do not know any such employees
   If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.

3. Indicate whether you (or your spouse) knows anyone who is doing, or plans to do, business with the charter school (whether as an individual or as a director, officer, employee or agent of an entity).
   - Yes ○ No, I/we do not know any such persons
   If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship and the nature of the business that such person(s) or entity is transacting or will be transacting with the school.

4. If the school intends to contract with an education service provider or management organization, indicate whether you or your spouse knows any employees, officers, owner, directors, or agents of that provider.
   - Yes ○ No, I/we do not know any such persons
   If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.

   Not applicable because the school does not intend to contract with an education service provider or school management organization.

5. If the school intends to contract with an education service provider, indicate if you, your spouse or other immediate family member anticipate conducting, or are conducting, any business with the provider.
   - Yes ○ No, I/we or my family do not anticipate conducting any such business.
   If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.
11. Will any relative(s) within the third degree of consanguinity or affinity (See definition in question 11.) be employed by or receive any compensation or remuneration from the sponsoring entity, charter school, or the management company of the charter school?

- Yes
- Does not apply to me.

If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.

12. Have you ever been convicted of a misdemeanor involving moral turpitude; a felony; an offence listed in TEC § 37.007(a); or an offence listed in Article 62.01(5) Code of Criminal Procedure?

- Yes
- Does not apply to me.

If yes, provide information relating to the matter(s).

**CERTIFICATION**

I, **Janet Young**, certify to the best of my knowledge and ability that the information I am providing to the Texas Education Agency as a board member is true and correct in every respect.

Signature: [Signature]

Date: **12-21-18**

**Verification**

State of: **Texas**

County of: **Bexar**

On this day, **Janet Young** (name of affiant) appeared before me the undersigned notary public and deposed that he/she executed the above instrument and that the statements and answers contained therein are true and correct to the best of his/her knowledge and belief.

Subscribed and sworn to before **21st** day of **December**, 2018.

(Notary Public) [Signature]

My commission expires **5/1/2020**.
Name of Proposed Charter School: **The Gathering Place**

Name of Sponsoring Entity: **TGP Public Schools**

**BACKGROUND**

Full Legal Name: **Diego Sebastian Capeletti**

Home Mailing Address: [Redacted]

Phone Number: [Redacted]

E-mail Address: [Redacted]

Business Name: [Redacted]

Business Mailing Address: [Redacted]

Business Phone Number: [Redacted]

E-Mail Address: [Redacted]

Indicate whether you currently or have previously served on a board of a school district, another charter school, a non-public school or any not-for-profit corporation.

- [ ] Yes  
- [ ] No, does not apply to me

If Yes, state the name of the entity: [Redacted]

1. What was your motivation to serve on the board of the proposed charter school?

I joined The Gathering Place (TGP) because I really believe that this new and innovative school will have a great impact on the children of San Antonio. I have been working with experiential learning programs for students startups at [Redacted] and have experienced first hand the benefits of these type of activities. Students learn significantly more when working on a real problem and/or project with a team than working on hypothetical cases. I came [Redacted] and I fully understand the importance and significance of other people being interested in learning more about your culture, your traditions, your past. It makes you feel included and it also makes you want to learn more about the American culture and history which has also made me incorporate some of its traditions. San Antonio is a multicultural city and The Gathering place will be a great option for students and families to embrace their culture and learn from others. And finally, I [Redacted] It is an honor for me to be part of TGP board and I am very excited about helping create a new high-quality education option on the Near-Northwest side of San Antonio.
2. What is your understanding of the appropriate role of a public charter school board member?

It is my understanding that a school board member provides strategic guidance and direction to the school administration, and it also provides fiscal, ethics, and academic oversight to make sure the school is achieving its goals and mission. In addition, the board, as a group, is also responsible for hiring, evaluating, and overseeing the head of the school. Finally, a board member supports and promotes the school vision.

3. 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.

I do not have experience serving on a charter school board, however, I currently serve as a board member for the [redacted]. I am also a mentor for the organization and have mentored several startups teams in the past four years.

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

I will assist the school with my financial and accounting expertise in matters related to budgeting, forecasting, and financial analysis. For the past six years I have been helping startups develop sound financial projections, budgets, and business models. I worked in public accounting for more than five years back in my [redacted] and I have developed financial statements and other financial reports for a non-profit here in the US.

SCHOOL MISSION AND PROGRAM

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

The school mission is to bring high-quality K-8 education to undeserved neighborhoods focusing on nurturing and developing each child's freedom, culture, and inner-brilliance. The guiding beliefs are that each child is different and has different strengths and assets. The project-based art curriculum will be focused on nurturing those assets as well as developing social-emotional skills to understand and value other people's differences.

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

The Gathering Place's proposed education program includes:
- Social-emotional development in all students
- Daily arts for all students
- Project-based learning that is driven by students.

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

A successful school must have a strong administration focused on providing high-quality education and dedicated to the success of each and every student. It should also have well-trained teachers that are fully committed and believe in the school vision and mission. Finally, it should also have a diverse board that is involved, proactive, and holds the school administration accountable.
4. How will you know that the school is succeeding (or not) in its mission?

The school will set academic and financial goals, metrics and key performance indicators, that will be tracked throughout the year, that will allow the board and administration to analyze how well (or not) the school is doing towards fulfilling their mission. Finally, tracking the progress of the students who graduate in 8th grade will also provide important information in this regard.

GOVERNANCE

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

The board will set annual strategic goals and priorities but will not be involved in the day-to-day operations. The board will have an oversight role of the head of the school, of the academic success of their programs, and of the financial well-being of the institution and will ensure the school is meeting its academic and financial as well as fulfilling its mission.

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

We will know if the school is successful at the end of the first year by meeting all academic and financial indicators, looking at student and staff retention rates, as well as meeting enrollment targets for the 2nd year. Another way will be to analyze the overall satisfaction of parents and kids with the school curriculum, teachers, and administration.

3. How will you know at the end of four years if the school is successful?

At the end of four years, we will have STAAR results for tested grades, which will help show that the school has been successful academically. We will also work to meet all financial indicators, including % in financial reserves, and all academic indicators.

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

To ensure the success of the school, the board will create strong committees to oversee academic and financial indicators and activities on a regular basis, have frequent communications with school administration, and selecting a strong Superintendent that will be able carry on the school mission. Additionally, the board will support the school with fundraising and increasing awareness of the school within the community.

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 interest of the school?

I will follow the appropriate steps outlined in the code of conduct and school bylaws for cases of unethical behaviors. Should I believe someone was acting unethically, I would gather all available information regarding the situation and will report it to the board chair. Unethical behavior will not be tolerated and we will take the proper steps to ensure the issue is investigated correctly and completely, holding all board members accountable.
DISCLOSURES

1. Indicate whether you (or your spouse) knows the other prospective board members for the proposed school.
   - Yes  
   - No, I/we do not know these individuals
   If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.

2. Indicate whether you (or your spouse) knows any person who is, or has been in the last two years, a school employee.
   - Yes  
   - No, I/we do not know any such employees
   If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.

3. Indicate whether you (or your spouse) knows anyone who is doing, or plans to do, business with the charter school (whether as an individual or as a director, officer, employee or agent of an entity).
   - Yes  
   - No, I/we do not know any such persons
   If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship and the nature of the business that such person(s) or entity is transacting or will be transacting with the school.

4. If the school intends to contract with an education service provider or management organization, indicate whether you or your spouse knows any employees, officers, owner, directors, or agents of that provider.
   - Yes  
   - No, I/we do not know any such persons
   If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.

   Not applicable because the school does not intend to contract with an education service provider or school management organization.

5. If the school intends to contract with an education service provider, indicate if you, your spouse or other immediate family member anticipate conducting, or are conducting, any business with the provider.
   - Yes  
   - No, I/we or my family do not anticipate conducting any such business.
   If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.
6. Indicate whether you, your spouse, or other immediate family members are a director, officer, employee, partner or member of, or are otherwise associated with, any organization that is partnering with the charter school. To the extent you have provided this information in response to prior items, you may so indicate.

[ ] Yes [ ] Does not apply to me, my spouse, or family.

If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.

7. List all business or organizations of which you are a partner or in which you have a majority interest.

None.

8. List all previous experience with charter schools. Include open-enrollment schools and/or campus or program charters including dates, charter schools/charter holders, addresses and positions held.

None.

9. Will you be employed by or contract with the sponsoring entity, the charter school, or the managements company of the school?

[ ] Yes [ ] Does not apply to me.

If yes, state the compensation you expect to receive.

10. Is any relative within the third degree of consanguinity (i.e., your parent, grandparent, great-grandparent, child, grandchild, great-grandchild, sibling, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew) or with the third degree of affinity (i.e., your spouse or your spouse’s parent, grandparent, great-grandparent, child, grandchild, great-grandchild, sibling, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew) a member of the governing body of the sponsoring entity or of the governing body of the charter school?

[ ] Yes [ ] Does not apply to me.

If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.
11. Will any relative(s) within the third degree of consanguinity or affinity (See definition in question 11.) be employed by or receive any compensation or remuneration from the sponsoring entity, charter school, or the management company of the charter school?  

☐ Yes ☐ Does not apply to me.

If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.


12. Have you ever been convicted of a misdemeanor involving moral turpitude; a felony; an offence listed in TEC § 37.007(a); or an offence listed in Article 62.01(5) Code of Criminal Procedure?  

☐ Yes ☐ Does not apply to me.

If yes, provide information relating to the matter(s).


CERTIFICATION

I, Diego Sebastian Capeletti, certify to the best of my knowledge and ability that the information I am providing to the Texas Education Agency as a board member is true and correct in every respect.

Signature ___________________________ Date 12/18/18

Verification

State of Texas

County of _________________

On this day, Diego Sebastian Capeletti (name of affiant) appeared before me the undersigned notary public and deposed that he/she executed the above instrument and that the statements and answers contained therein are true and correct to the best of his/her knowledge and belief.

Subscribed and sworn to before ___________________________ (Seal)

(Notary Public) ___________________________ My commission expires 01-24-2021
**Name of Proposed Charter School:** The Gathering Place

**Name of Sponsoring Entity:** TGP Public Schools

## BACKGROUND

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Full Legal Name:</strong></th>
<th>Jennifer Maestas</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Home Mailing Address:</strong></td>
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Indicate whether you currently or have previously served on a board of a school district, another charter school, a non-public school or any not-for-profit corporation.

- [ ] Yes
- [x] No, does not apply to me

If Yes, state the name of the entity:

1. What was your motivation to serve on the board of the proposed charter school?

I was [Redacted]. From an early age, my grandparents spoke to me about the challenges they overcame through education. Specifically, my maternal grandfather was a migrant worker in his youth. He and his mother traveled the country following the crops. He spoke to us about what hard and arduous work picking cotton was and how, as a teenager, he knew he would finish school and join the military to change the trajectory of his life. In the Air Force, he took advantage of all the education they offered him and became a commissioned officer at a young age. After retiring from the military he and my grandmother insisted that their six children earn college degrees. My mother was a first generation college graduate and as I grew up, her and my father made sure education was our highest priority. When it was time for me to go to college, I knew I’d be an educator. Today I am the [Redacted]. My [Redacted] I have an absolute love [Redacted] and its potential impact to influence positive change in the lives of students. My experiences in and out of the classroom have taught me that education is the great equalizer and ought to be on the hearts and minds of the whole community. [Redacted] that every child is uniquely gifted and deserves the absolute best educators and best educational experiences. I believe that this is the mission of The Gathering Place.
2. What is your understanding of the appropriate role of a public charter school board member?

I believe the appropriate role of a public charter school board member is to govern, not manage. The board members work together to assess needs and to ensure that there is understanding of mission and vision. The board members help to ensure that the mission and vision of the school are carried out in lawful and effective ways. They serve as guides and offer expertise. Board members play a pivotal role in monitoring and reviewing the implementation and progress of the school’s initiatives.

3. 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.

4. 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?

TGP hopes to nurture and celebrate each child’s freedom and inner-brilliance by recognizing that each child is uniquely gifted and that the arts should be a means for expressing their gifts. A campus culture that nurtures expression will activate self-confidence and foster an appreciation for each others’ differences.

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

TGP will nurture children’s social and emotional development through restorative practices. Daily arts will be incorporated throughout the curriculum. Teachers and staff will ensure that projects are student-driven and involve student’s interests and passions.

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

Successful schools accomplish student achievement while providing relevancy and skill sets that extend beyond academia. Grit, creativity, perseverance, tolerance are often called the “hidden curriculum”. I think that bringing them to the forefront, as TGP, plans will ensure students are prepared for success outside of school as well as in. Incorporating the arts allows students to master their own story and, by doing so, allows space for them to listen to everyone else’s story as well. Nothing is more relevant than telling your story.
GOVERNANCE

1. Describe the role that the board will play in the school’s operation.
- oversight of academic success
- oversight of financial well-being
- oversight of Superintendent
- set annual goals and priorities for the organization
- listen to the community and respond to concerns and ideas

2. How will you know if the school is successful at the end of the first year of operation?
- Meet or exceed academic indicators of success
- Meet or exceed financial indicators of success
- Student retention
- Staff retention
- Quality of student work at showcases
- School community feedback on surveys

3. How will you know at the end of four years if the school is successful?
- Meet or exceed academic indicators, including STAAR performance
- Meet or exceed financial indicators of success
- Meet all enrollment targets and have a wait list
- Meet all attendance targets
- School community feedback on surveys

4. What specific steps do you think the charter school board will need to take to ensure that the school is successful?
- Have a comprehensive board member sourcing and onboarding process to ensure members remain committed to the organization and its families.
- Have a finance, academic, and governance committee
- Hold retreats and board training
- Have a strong and positive relationship with the co-founders

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 interest of the school?
- All board members sign a code of ethics that outlines responsibilities and appropriate behavior. We also have a non-discrimination clause in our bylaws and will have a whistleblower policy to encourage honesty.
- I would bring it to the Board Chair and board to be investigated correctly and completely, and to hold those members accountable
DISCLOSURES

1. Indicate whether you (or your spouse) knows the other prospective board members for the proposed school.
   - Yes ☐ No ☐ I/we do not know these individuals
   If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.

2. Indicate whether you (or your spouse) knows any person who is, or has been in the last two years, a school employee.
   - Yes ☐ No ☐ I/we do not know any such employees
   If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.

3. Indicate whether you (or your spouse) knows anyone who is doing, or plans to do, business with the charter school (whether as an individual or as a director, officer, employee or agent of an entity).
   - Yes ☐ No ☐ I/we do not know any such persons
   If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship and the nature of the business that such person(s) or entity is transacting or will be transacting with the school.

4. If the school intends to contract with an education service provider or management organization, indicate whether you or your spouse knows any employees, officers, owner, directors, or agents of that provider.
   - Yes ☐ No ☐ I/we do not know any such persons
   If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.

Not applicable because the school does not intend to contract with an education service provider or school management organization.

5. If the school intends to contract with an education service provider, indicate if you, your spouse or other immediate family member anticipate conducting, or are conducting, any business with the provider.
   - Yes ☐ No ☐ I/we or my family do not anticipate conducting any such business.
   If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.

Not applicable
6. Indicate whether you, your spouse, or other immediate family members are a director, officer, employee, partner or member of, or are otherwise associated with, any organization that is partnering with the charter school. To the extent you have provided this information in response to prior items, you may so indicate.

   □ Yes  □ Does not apply to me, my spouse, or family.

   If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.

7. List all business or organizations of which you are a partner or in which you have a majority interest.

8. List all previous experience with charter schools. Include open-enrollment schools and/or campus or program charters including dates, charter schools/charter holders, addresses and positions held.

   None

9. Will you be employed by or contract with the sponsoring entity, the charter school, or the managements company of the school?

   □ Yes □ Does not apply to me.

   If yes, state the compensation you expect to receive.

10. Is any relative within the third degree of consanguinity (i.e., your parent, grandparent, great-grandparent, child, grandchild, great-grandchild, sibling, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew) or with the third degree of affinity (i.e., your spouse or your spouse's parent, grandparent, great-grandparent, child, grandchild, great-grandchild, sibling, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew) a member of the governing body of the sponsoring entity or of the governing body of the charter school?

   □ Yes □ Does not apply to me.

   If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.
11. Will any relative(s) within the third degree of consanguinity or affinity (See definition in question 11.) be employed by or receive any compensation or remuneration from the sponsoring entity, charter school, or the management company of the charter school?

☐ Yes ☐ Does not apply to me.

If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.


12. Have you ever been convicted of a misdemeanor involving moral turpitude; a felony; an offence listed in TEC § 37.007(a); or an offence listed in Article 62.01(5) Code of Criminal Procedure?

☐ Yes ☐ Does not apply to me.

If yes, provide information relating to the matter(s).


CERTIFICATION

I, Jennifer Maestas, certify to the best of my knowledge and ability that the information I am providing to the Texas Education Agency as a board member is true and correct in every respect.

Signature Jennifer Maestas Date 12/18/18

Verification

State of Texas

County of ____________

On this day, Jennifer Maestas (name of affiant) appeared before me the undersigned notary public and deposed that he/she executed the above instrument and that the statements and answers contained therein are true and correct to the best of his/her knowledge and belief.

Subscribed and sworn to before ______ day of ______, 2018.

(Notary Public) ____________________________ (Seal)

My commission expires ____________

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Name of Proposed Charter School: The Gathering Place

Name of Sponsoring Entity: TGP Public Schools

BACKGROUND

Full Legal Name: Evan Ryan York

Home Mailing Address: 512 East Quincy St, Apt 5, San Antonio, TX 78215

Phone Number: 615-631-0479

E-mail Address: 

Business Name: The Gathering Place

Business Mailing Address: 512 East Quincy St, Apt 5, San Antonio, TX 78215

Business Phone Number: 210-444-2028

E-Mail Address: 

Indicate whether you currently or have previously served on a board of a school district, another charter school, a non-public school or any not-for-profit corporation.

☐ Yes ☐ No, does not apply to me

If Yes, state the name of the entity:

1. What was your motivation to serve on the board of the proposed charter school?

I started my career teaching kids through an after-school music and arts program in Tennessee. Inspired by the impact our program had and disappointed by the experiences many of my students would share about school, I decided to leave the after-school space and become a teacher. I taught music at a private school for one year, and then transitioned to teaching middle school math and science at a public district Title I school in Nashville. During that time, I learned the power of positive relationships on learning and the limitless potential in kids when they are working on things that matter to them. As a result of my students’ strong test scores and the amazing work they were accomplishing in class, I became an instructional coach and then ultimately a principal. During my time as a school leader I worked with a local charter network to design a project-based curriculum. The program was designed for the charter networks 6 schools; however, after receiving national recognition and awards schools across the country began using it. I had the opportunity to travel with Joanna Klekowicz, my fellow co-founder of The Gathering Place, learning from inspirational models and teachers across the county. My experiences as a school leader combined with my discoveries while learning from teachers and leaders across the country came together to start the vision for The Gathering Place. I believe every child has an inner-brilliance that when nurtured and celebrated, leads to a fulfilled life with limitless potential. My motivation to co-found and serve on The Gathering Place’s board is to bring that belief to life through our school.
2. What is your understanding of the appropriate role of a public charter school board member?

The primary role of a charter school board member is to ensure actions and decisions are aligned to the school's mission while also providing strong financial and academic oversight. Board members also directly manage the organization's superintendent and in compliance with TAC 100.1017 and 100.1033(c)(7) charter school board members are responsible for their non-delegable duties.

3. 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.

I have been the executive director of a nonprofit music and arts organization, served as a teacher or educational leader for 10 years, and have experience serving on multiple charter school senior leadership teams and managing school leaders.

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

My experiences as a board member are specific to developing the vision and model for The Gathering Place. If our charter is approved I will roll off the board to apply to serve as the organization's superintendent.

SCHOOL MISSION AND PROGRAM

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

The Gathering Place's mission is to nurture and celebrate the inner-brilliance of every child. We believe that all children bring assets and abilities into the school that should be understood, shared, and built upon to develop students with a deep sense of belonging and passion.

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

The Gathering Place's design principles are 1) the freedom to be through restorative practices and social-emotional learning; 2) the freedom of expression through daily creative arts; and 3) the freedom to explore interests and passions through student-driven projects.

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

A successful school ensures all children have a deep sense of belonging, find causes and ideas that they become passionate about, and have the freedom to explore their interests and identities. A successful school is also responsible for the academic and nonacademic skills and abilities that are necessary to successfully navigate the world.
4. How will you know that the school is succeeding (or not) in its mission?

The board of directors will establish annual goals and metrics that will be aligned to the organization's mission and strategic priorities. Those goals and metrics will also include key academic and financial indicators outlined in the charter application and will be reviewed at all board meetings to determine whether the school is succeeding in its goals and mission.

GOVERNANCE

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

The board will have an academic and finance committee that will review specific goals and metrics related to the organization’s operations. The board will also be responsible for overseeing and evaluating the superintendent. Lastly, the board will be responsible for the non-delegable duties outlined in TAC 100.1017 and 100.1033(c)(7).

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

Aside from the organization’s academic and financial indicators, the board will evaluate enrollment, staff retention, and feedback from students, staff, and families while evaluating the organization’s success.

3. How will you know at the end of four years if the school is successful?

In addition to the indicators outlined in the question above, in year four the board will also be evaluating performance on the STAAR exam, financial reserves, and student wait-list data.

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

The board will need to ensure it is meeting all legal requirements and operating in accordance with the organization’s bylaws, code of conduct, and conflict of interest and nepotism policies. The board will also need to ensure it is actively recruiting and on-boarding new board members that are aligned to the organization’s mission and bring expertise related to the needs of The Gathering Place. Lastly, board members will need to be engaged and present during meetings organizational discussions.

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 interest of the school?

All board members of The Gathering Place must sign a code of conduct policies that outlines behaviors that are unethical and/or not in the school’s best interest. If a board member believes a fellow member is not following those expectations, the concern should be raised with the Board Chair.
## DISCLOSURES

1. Indicate whether you (or your spouse) knows the other prospective board members for the proposed school.

   - **Yes** ☐ **No**, I/we do not know these individuals

   If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.
   
   Joanna Klekowicz and I are the co-founders of The Gathering Place

2. Indicate whether you (or your spouse) knows any person who is, or has been in the last two years, a school employee.

   - **Yes** ☐ **No**, I/we do not know any such employees

   If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.

   Both Joanna and I have worked in schools for many years and have worked with many school staff members through those experiences.

3. Indicate whether you (or your spouse) knows anyone who is doing, or plans to do, business with the charter school (whether as an individual or as a director, officer, employee or agent of an entity).

   - **Yes** ☐ **No**, I/we do not know any such persons

   If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship and the nature of the business that such person(s) or entity is transacting or will be transacting with the school.

   Joanna and I plan to apply to become employees of the charter school if it is approved.

4. If the school intends to contract with an education service provider or management organization, indicate whether you or your spouse knows any employees, officers, owner, directors, or agents of that provider.

   - **Yes** ☐ **No**, I/we do not know any such persons

   Not applicable because the school does not intend to contract with an education service provider or school management organization.

5. If the school intends to contract with an education service provider, indicate if you, your spouse or other immediate family member anticipate conducting, or are conducting, any business with the provider.

   - **Yes** ☐ **No**, I/we or my family do not anticipate conducting any such business.

   If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.

   Not applicable
6. Indicate whether you, your spouse, or other immediate family members are a director, officer, employee, partner or member of, or are otherwise associated with, any organization that is partnering with the charter school. To the extent you have provided this information in response to prior items, you may so indicate.

☐ Yes  ☐ Does not apply to me, my spouse, or family.

If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.

7. List all business or organizations of which you are a partner or in which you have a majority interest.

None

8. List all previous experience with charter schools. Include open-enrollment schools and/or campus or program charters including dates, charter schools/charter holders, addresses and positions held.

RePublic Schools: Chief Information Officer and Principal, 2014 - 2017, 3307 Brick Church Pike Nashville TN 37207

Caliber Schools: Director of Academics, 2017 - 2018, 500 Oregon St, Vallejo, CA 94590

9. Will you be employed by or contract with the sponsoring entity, the charter school, or the management company of the school?

☐ Yes  ☐ Does not apply to me.

If yes, state the compensation you expect to receive.

$70,000 (I am the proposed superintendent and will be stepping down from the board)

10. Is any relative within the third degree of consanguinity (i.e., your parent, grandparent, great-grandparent, child, grandchild, great-grandchild, sibling, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew) or with the third degree of affinity (i.e., your spouse or your spouse's parent, grandparent, great-grandparent, child, grandchild, great-grandchild, sibling, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew) a member of the governing body of the sponsoring entity or of the governing body of the charter school?

☐ Yes  ☐ Does not apply to me.

If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.

Page 29
11. Will any relative(s) within the third degree of consanguinity or affinity (See definition in question 11.)
be employed by or receive any compensation or remuneration from the sponsoring entity, charter
school, or the management company of the charter school?

( ) Yes  ( ) Does not apply to me.

If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.

12. Have you ever been convicted of a misdemeanor involving moral turpitude; a felony; an offence
listed in TEC § 37.007(a); or an offence listed in Article 62.01(5) Code of Criminal Procedure?

( ) Yes  ( ) Does not apply to me.

If yes, provide information relating to the matter(s).

CERTIFICATION

I, __________________________________________, certify to the best of my knowledge and
ability that the information I am providing to the Texas Education Agency as a board member is true
and correct in every respect.

Signature _________________________________ Date 12-18-18

Verification

State of Texas

County of Bexar

On this day, __________________________________________ (name of affiant) appeared before me the
undersigned notary public and deposed that he/she executed the above instrument and that the
statements and answers contained therein are true and correct to the best of his/her knowledge
and belief.

Subscribed and sworn to before _______ day of December, 2018.

(Notary Public) ________________________________ (Seal)

My commission expires _______.
**Name of Proposed Charter School:** The Gathering Place

**Name of Sponsoring Entity:** TGP Public Schools

## BACKGROUND

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Full Legal Name:</th>
<th>Joanna Karen Klekowicz</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Home Mailing Address:</td>
<td>6306 Maverick Oak Dr, San Antonio, TX 78240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone Number:</td>
<td>773-387-4486</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail Address:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Name:</td>
<td>The Gathering Place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Mailing Address:</td>
<td>512 East Quincy St, Apt 5, San Antonio, TX 78215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Phone Number:</td>
<td>210-444-2028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-Mail Address:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Indicate whether you currently or have previously served on a board of a school district, another charter school, a non-public school or any not-for-profit corporation.

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No, does not apply to me

If Yes, state the name of the entity:

1. **What was your motivation to serve on the board of the proposed charter school?**

I was born into a family of Polish immigrants. My parents always emphasized the importance of education and its impact on opportunities in life. While studying neuroscience and sociology, I began to tutor at a local prison in Boston. Inmates often shared that when they had been in school, they had not fit - their identities and passions had not been affirmed. After witnessing the injustice of the school-to-prison pipeline, I joined the movement for educational equity in order to help contribute to building educational ecosystems where every student belongs. As a classroom teacher and later an instructional coach, I saw the brilliance within each child. I believe that through its mission and vision, The Gathering Place will be a diverse gathering place of people and ideas with limitless collective potential that nurture and celebrate each child's inner-brilliance.
2. What is your understanding of the appropriate role of a public charter school board member?

The appropriate role of a charter school board member is to execute its non-delegable duties at the highest level of execution, which include: final authority to decide certain grievances; adopt/amend the budget; direct the safekeeping of public records; adopt policies governing operations; approve audits; and employ, evaluate, terminate, set compensation for the CEO. They also oversee the academic and financial health of the public charter school.

3. 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.

I have not previously served on a board, however, as a classroom teacher, I have led students to achieve over two years of growth, ranking in the highest levels in the state of Tennessee and as an instructional coach, I have developed over 35 elementary, middle, and high school educators. I have also worked as an Investment Consultant in the financial field, where I learned critical skills in finances, business operations, and fiduciary oversight. I have also been involved in developing the mission/vision of TGP since the beginning.

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

In the past year, I served as the Entrepreneur-in-Residence at a new-start, public charter school in Washington DC. I supported all start up endeavors during its planning year, learning the skills that it takes to successfully launch a new school, which are directly applicable to The Gathering Place (if approved). I also scaled an educational program from serving 250 students to serving 10,000+ students in public schools throughout the south - learning how to best adapt programming to the unique needs of each community.

SCHOOL MISSION AND PROGRAM

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

The mission of The Gathering Place is to celebrate and nurture each child's inner-brilliance, in order to live out its vision to be a diverse gathering place of people and ideas with limitless collective potential. These guiding beliefs have shaped a proposed school model that recognizes each child's inner-brilliance and nurtures their freedom to belong, their freedom of expression, and their freedom to explore their passions.

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

The school's proposed educational program includes three main components: (1) restorative practices, which include robust social-emotional skill development, (2) daily creative arts, and (3) learning through interdisciplinary student-driven projects.

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

A successful school is characterized by: an equitable and restorative school environment, continued student growth and progress, high student and staff retention, high and positive results on all student, family, and staff surveys, strong fiscal sustainability, and compliance with all local and federal laws that ensure that all students are served fully in their least restrictive environments and are able to lead fulfilled lives.
4. How will you know that the school is succeeding (or not) in its mission?

The following will indicate if the school is succeeding in its mission: (1) progress against all academic and financial indicators, (2) survey results from students, staff, and families, (3) progress against annual strategic goals and metrics that will be set annually by the board, (4) student and staff retention year-over-year and (5) compliance with all state and federal laws.

GOVERNANCE

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

The board will oversee the academic success and financial well-being of The Gathering Place. Additionally, the board will execute to the highest caliber its non-delegable duties (outlined earlier).

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

By the end of the first year, the school will be successful if it has met or exceeded its academic and financial indicators; if survey results from students, staff, and families have been positive; and if the quality of student work at all showcases is high.

3. How will you know at the end of four years if the school is successful?

By the end of four years, the school will be successful if it has met or exceeded its academic and financial indicators (which by year four will include STAAR results and an increasing amount in financial reserves); high student and staff retention; high survey results from students, staff, and families; and continued excellence through student work at all showcases.

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

Specific steps to ensure success will include: (1) annual board training by all board members, (2) regular board meetings where academic and financial indicators are reviewed, and opportunities for growth are identified, (3) regular committee meetings of the academic committee, finance committee, and governance committee who bring additional details to the attention of the board, and (4) commitment to the code of ethics.

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 interest of the school?

All members will sign and abide by a code of ethics. If a breach is suspected, it will be reviewed by the Board Chair and all board members, and if a breach is identified, proper actions will be taken to remove the accountable board member and resolve the situation.
DISCLOSURES

1. Indicate whether you (or your spouse) knows the other prospective board members for the proposed school.
   - Yes ☐ No ☐ I/we do not know these individuals

   If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.
   Ryan York (proposed Superintendent and current Board Secretary) and I have worked together previously at RePublic Schools in Nashville, TN.

2. Indicate whether you (or your spouse) knows any person who is, or has been in the last two years, a school employee.
   - Yes ☐ No ☐ I/we do not know any such employees

   If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.
   I have spent the last two years employed by two school networks: RePublic Schools and Digital Pioneers Academy, and have interacted with multiple school employees.

3. Indicate whether you (or your spouse) knows anyone who is doing, or plans to do, business with the charter school (whether as an individual or as a director, officer, employee or agent of an entity).
   - Yes ☐ No ☐ I/we do not know any such persons

   If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship and the nature of the business that such person(s) or entity is transacting or will be transacting with the school.
   If approved, Ryan and I plan to roll off the board and apply to become employees of The Gathering Place.

4. If the school intends to contract with an education service provider or management organization, indicate whether you or your spouse knows any employees, officers, owner, directors, or agents of that provider.
   - Yes ☐ No ☐ I/we do not know any such persons

   If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.
   Not applicable because the school does not intend to contract with an education service provider or school management organization.

5. If the school intends to contract with an education service provider, indicate if you, your spouse or other immediate family member anticipate conducting, or are conducting, any business with the provider.
   - Yes ☐ No ☐ I/we or my family do not anticipate conducting any such business.

   If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.
6. Indicate whether you, your spouse, or other immediate family members are a director, officer, employee, partner or member of, or are otherwise associated with, any organization that is partnering with the charter school. To the extent you have provided this information in response to prior items, you may so indicate.

☐ Yes ☐ Does not apply to me, my spouse, or family.

If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.

7. List all business or organizations of which you are a partner or in which you have a majority interest.

Not applicable.

8. List all previous experience with charter schools. Include open-enrollment schools and/or campus or program charters including dates, charter schools/charter holders, addresses and positions held.

Digital Pioneers Academy, Entrepreneur-in-Residence, 2017-2018, 2220 Branch Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20020

RePublic Schools, Director of Computer Science Expansion, 2015-2017, 3307 Brick Church Pike, Nashville, TN 37207

9. Will you be employed by or contract with the sponsoring entity, the charter school, or the managements company of the school?

☐ Yes ☐ Does not apply to me.

If yes, state the compensation you expect to receive.

I will be applying for employment as the Principal which has an anticipated salary of $70,000.

10. Is any relative within the third degree of consanguinity (i.e., your parent, grandparent, great-grandparent, child, grandchild, great-grandchild, sibling, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew) or with the third degree of affinity (i.e., your spouse or your spouse's parent, grandparent, great-grandparent, child, grandchild, great-grandchild, sibling, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew) a member of the governing body of the sponsoring entity or of the governing body of the charter school?

☐ Yes ☐ Does not apply to me.

If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.
11. Will any relative(s) within the third degree of consanguinity or affinity (See definition in question 11.) be employed by or receive any compensation or remuneration from the sponsoring entity, charter school, or the management company of the charter school?  

(Yes ) (Does not apply to me.)

If yes, describe the precise nature of your relationship.

______________________________

12. Have you ever been convicted of a misdemeanor involving moral turpitude; a felony; an offence listed in TEC § 37.007(a); or an offence listed in Article 62.01(5) Code of Criminal Procedure?  

(Yes ) (Does not apply to me.)

If yes, provide information relating to the matter(s).

______________________________

CERTIFICATION

I, ______________, certify to the best of my knowledge and ability that the information I am providing to the Texas Education Agency as a board member is true and correct in every respect.

Signature ___________________ Date ______________

Verification

State of ______________

County of ______________

On this day, ______________(name of affiant) appeared before me the undersigned notary public and deposed that he/she executed the above instrument and that the statements and answers contained therein are true and correct to the best of his/her knowledge and belief.

Subscribed and sworn to before ______________day of ______________, 20___.

(Notary Public) ______________ (Seal)

My commission expires ______________.

KEVIN LOPEZ
Notary Public, State of Texas
Comm. Expires 06-01-2022
Notary ID 131590376
Provide the Following:

I. The governing board’s proposed Code of Ethics; and

II. The governing board’s proposed Conflict of Interest policy.

III. Identify any existing relationships that could pose actual or perceived conflicts if the application is approved; discussing specific steps that the Board will take to avoid any actual conflicts and to mitigate perceived conflicts.

PLEASE NOTE: Attachment G5 is referenced on the Board of Directors narrative page of the Finance/Operations/Governance Plans.
COPYRIGHT MATERIAL

25 pages have been withheld

PLEASE NOTE: The responsive information contains copyrighted information that can only be made available to you for viewing in person. Because the information indicates that it is protected by copyright, you may review this information in person during normal business hours at TEA. If you are interested in reviewing the copyrighted information, please send an email to CharterSchools@tea.texas.gov to schedule an appointment.
Provide the Following:

Using the template provided at http://tea.texas.gov/charterapp.aspx, complete the Financial Plan Workbook.

Once complete, applicants are instructed to submit this attachment as follows:

**Hard Copy** — print and provide only the Financial Plan Workbook Summary. This is the RED TAB in the Financial Plan Workbook;

AND

**Electronic Submission**—The entire Financial Plan Workbook, will be submitted electronically as an MS Excel file.

It is important to budget conservatively and to consider that charter schools often have lower than anticipated attendance rates in the first five years of operation. Therefore, a reasonable planning estimate of $5,920 per student, which accounts for a daily attendance rate of 80%, should be used when planning and developing the budget.

Note: When using a school district as a baseline for supplemental HR forms, make sure the ISD used has the same or close to anticipated average daily attendance (ADA) that the proposed charter is projecting.

Applicants should be aware that the fiscal year of the charter school should end on August 31. Through a grant application process, federal funds may be available for up to 12 months of post-award planning and up to two years of implementation. However, start-up funds are available for no more than three years.

Actual funding depends on the number of eligible charters, the completion of a successful competitive charter grant application, and the continuation of funds from the United States Department of Education. **Start-up funding is NOT to be used for budget purposes and, if awarded, will not be available to the sponsoring entity until the contract for charter has been executed, a county-district number has been assigned, and a grant application has been completed and negotiated.**

The federal funds may then only be accessed after a request for reimbursement has been submitted. Generally, the federal funds may not be received until after the charter holder has demonstrated that it has incurred an expenditure that represents an allowable cost pursuant to the requirements of the federal award.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Attachment F1 is referenced on the Budget narrative page of the Finance/Operations/Governance Plans.
## FINANCIAL PLAN WORKBOOK SUMMARY

### The Gathering Place

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>2021</td>
<td>2022</td>
<td>2023</td>
<td>2024</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>REVENUE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total State Revenue</td>
<td>$3,178,419</td>
<td>$4,540,689</td>
<td>$6,129,930</td>
<td>$8,173,036</td>
<td>$9,535,481</td>
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<td>Total Federal Revenue</td>
<td>$348,769</td>
<td>$498,251</td>
<td>$672,639</td>
<td>$896,830</td>
<td>$1,046,332</td>
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<td>Total Local and Other Revenue</td>
<td>$425,000</td>
<td>$27,039</td>
<td>$38,628</td>
<td>$52,148</td>
<td>$69,529</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL REVENUE</strong></td>
<td>$425,000</td>
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<td>$5,077,568</td>
<td>$6,854,717</td>
<td>$9,139,395</td>
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<td><strong>EXPENSES</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Administrative Staff Personnel Costs</td>
<td>$166,250</td>
<td>$477,500</td>
<td>$635,796</td>
<td>$794,970</td>
<td>$1,070,865</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Instructional Personnel Costs</td>
<td>$1,489,000</td>
<td>$2,221,560</td>
<td>$3,145,649</td>
<td>$4,124,385</td>
<td>$4,810,329</td>
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<td>Total Non-Instructional Personnel Costs</td>
<td>$71,600</td>
<td>$119,748</td>
<td>$190,801</td>
<td>$221,792</td>
<td>$282,082</td>
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<td>Total Payroll Taxes and Benefits</td>
<td>$27,500</td>
<td>$305,307</td>
<td>$446,263</td>
<td>$618,857</td>
<td>$810,931</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL PERSONNEL, PAYROLL TAXES AND BENEFITS EXPENSES</strong></td>
<td>$213,750</td>
<td>$2,343,407</td>
<td>$3,423,337</td>
<td>$4,750,077</td>
<td>$6,227,974</td>
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<td>Total Contracted Services</td>
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<td>$349,862</td>
<td>$488,662</td>
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<td>Total School Operations</td>
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<td>$383,070</td>
<td>$395,945</td>
<td>$536,130</td>
<td>$691,838</td>
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<td>Total Facilities Operations and Maintenance</td>
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<td>$406,188</td>
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<td>$813,068</td>
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<td>Reserves and/or Contingency</td>
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<td>$52,238</td>
<td>$73,875</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL EXPENSES</strong></td>
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<td><strong>NET OPERATING INCOME (before depreciation)</strong></td>
<td>$72,520</td>
<td>$19,427</td>
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### STUDENT ENROLLMENT

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Projected Student Enrollment</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>729</td>
<td>972</td>
<td>1,134</td>
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<tr>
<td>Revenue Per Pupil</td>
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<td>$9,403</td>
<td>$9,403</td>
<td>$9,403</td>
<td>$9,403</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expenses Per Pupil</td>
<td>$9,351</td>
<td>$9,258</td>
<td>$9,397</td>
<td>$9,224</td>
<td>$9,380</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Provide the Following:


For organizations less than one year old or established organizations with no financial activity to date: If an audit report is not available, provide an unaudited financial report that includes from inception to date:
1. a statement of financial position,
2. a statement of activity, and
3. a cash flow statement.

PLEASE NOTE: Attachment F2 is referenced on the Budget narrative page of the Finance/Operations/Governance Plans.
### The Gathering Place

**Statement of Financial Position**

**From Inception through January 4th 2019**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assets</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current Assets</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cash and cash equivalents</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounts receivable</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepaid expenses</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Current Assets</strong></td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Property and Equipment, net</strong></td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Assets</strong></td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Liabilities and Net Assets</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current Liabilities</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Accounts payable</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accrued liabilities</td>
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<td>$</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deferred revenue</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
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<tr>
<td>Current portion of long-term debt</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total current liabilities</strong></td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Long-Term Debt</strong></td>
<td>$</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Liabilities</strong></td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Net Assets</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Unrestricted</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
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<tr>
<td>Temporarily restricted</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Net Assets</strong></td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
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**Total Liabilities and Net Assets**

$ - $
The Gathering Place  
Statement of Activities  
From Inception through January 4th 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revenues</th>
<th>Unrestricted</th>
<th>Temporarily Restricted</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributions</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fund-raising activities</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest and other income</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total local support</strong></td>
<td><strong>$</strong></td>
<td><strong>-</strong></td>
<td><strong>$</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>State program revenues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation School Program</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other State Aid</td>
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<td>$</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total state program revenues</strong></td>
<td><strong>$</strong></td>
<td><strong>-</strong></td>
<td><strong>$</strong></td>
<td><strong>-</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal program revenues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESEA Title I Part A</td>
<td>$</td>
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<td>$</td>
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<tr>
<td>ESEA Title X</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child Nutrition</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total federal program revenues</strong></td>
<td><strong>$</strong></td>
<td><strong>-</strong></td>
<td><strong>$</strong></td>
<td><strong>-</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net assets released from restrictions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restrictions satisfied by payments</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Revenues</strong></td>
<td><strong>$</strong></td>
<td><strong>-</strong></td>
<td><strong>$</strong></td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Expenses</th>
<th>Unrestricted</th>
<th>Temporarily Restricted</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program Services</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruction and Instruction-Related Services</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional and School Leadership</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Support Services</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ancillary Services</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Services: Non-Student Based</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Services: Student</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
<td><strong>$</strong></td>
<td><strong>-</strong></td>
<td><strong>$</strong></td>
<td><strong>-</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Change in Net Assets | $ | - | $ | - | $ | - |
| Net Assets, beginning of year | $ | - | $ | - | $ | - |
| Net Assets, ending of year | $ | - | $ | - | $ | - |
The Gathering Place  
Statement of Cash Flows  
From Inception through January 4th 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cash flows from operating activities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation School Program payments</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant payments</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributions and fund-raising activities</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous sources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payments to vendors for goods and services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest payments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net cash provided by operating activities</strong></td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Cash flows from investing activities**   |      |      |
| Purchase of land and building           | $    | $    |
| Purchase of equipment                   | $    | $    |
| **Net cash provided by investing activities** | $    | $    |

| **Cash flows from financing activities**  |      |      |
| Issuance of long-term debt              | $    | $    |
| Principal payments on long-term debt    | $    | $    |
| **Net cash provided by financing activities** | $    | $    |

| **Net increase in cash**                 | $    | $    |
| Cash at beginning of year                | $    | $    |
| Cash at ending of year                   | $    | $    |

| **Reconciliation of change in net assets to net cash provided by operating activities** |      |      |
| Change in net assets                     | $    | $    |
| Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash provided by operating activities | $    | $    |
| Depreciation                             | $    | $    |
| Accounts receivable                      | $    | $    |
| Accounts payable                         | $    | $    |
| Accrued liabilities                      | $    | $    |
| **Net cash provided by operating activities** | $    | $    |
Provide the Following:

A credit report of the sponsoring entity. If the entity was incorporated prior to January 1, 2017, but has no credit history, a response from one of the credit rating bureaus (Equifax, Experian, TransUnion) must be attached indicating the entity has no credit history.

If the sponsoring entity was incorporated after January 1, 2016, you are not required to provide a credit report but must instead provide a statement attesting, “No documents are being provided because the sponsoring entity was incorporated after January 1, 2017.”

PLEASE NOTE: Attachment F3 is referenced on the Budget narrative page of the Finance/Operations/Governance Plans.
Credit Report

No documents are being provided because the sponsoring entity was incorporated after January 1, 2018.
Provide the Following:

The sponsoring entity's most recently filed (IRS) Form 990, Form 990-N, or Form 990-EZ. For an organization less than one year old, or if a Form 990 is not available, provide a statement that explains why a form 990 is not available.

PLEASE NOTE: Attachment F4 is referenced on the Budget narrative page of the Finance/Operations/Governance Plans.
No documents are being provided for FOG 13 because the sponsoring entity was incorporated after January 1, 2018 and is therefore less than one year old.
Provide the Following:

Evidence of financial support from intended community partners such as:

(i) letters of intent/commitment;
(ii) memoranda of understanding; and/or
(iii) contracts.

Applicants having no responsive documents to this attachment shall provide the statement, “The applicant has no documents in response to this attachment.”

PLEASE NOTE: Attachment F5 is referenced on the Budget narrative page of the Finance/Operations/Governance Plans.
December 10, 2018

The Texas Education Agency
Generation Twenty-Four
1701 N. Congress Avenue
Austin, TX 78701

Re: Commitment of Start-Up Funds to the Gathering Place

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is to share that The Gathering Place has been awarded a school-start up grant from City Education Partners in the value of $325,000 for the 19-20 school year. This grant will serve to support the school’s start up needs for launch of their first campus, which will occur in August of 2021.

Relevant grant restrictions include:

1) The Gathering Place must be authorized with a charter from the Texas Education Agency;
2) The Gathering Place must maintain its 501c3 status; and
3) Funds may not be used for any political campaign purposes, to carry on propaganda or otherwise attempt to influence in any manner legislation of any governmental body, to influence the outcome of any public election, to carry on directly or indirectly, any voter registration drive, or to make any payment or use of grant funds for any purpose other than charitable purposes described in section 170(c)(2)(B).

Thank you for your consideration of The Gathering Place. We are eager for our San Antonio families to gain access to another high-quality school choice option with a model that is well-supported through community co-design.

Sincerely,

Joel Harris
Executive Director
December 1, 2018

The Texas Education Agency
Generation Twenty-Four
1701 N. Congress Avenue
Austin, TX 78701

Re: Commitment of Start-Up Funds to The Gathering Place

To Whom It May Concern:

The George W. Brackenridge Foundation is pleased to pledge a one-time grant of $50,000 to The Gathering Place to meet the needs of their 2019-2020 start-up year, which precedes the opening of their first campus in San Antonio in August 2020.

Relevant grant restrictions are:

1) The Gathering Place must maintain its 501c3 status;
2) This grant is contingent on securing a Texas charter; and
3) Funds may not be used for any political campaign purposes, to carry on propaganda or otherwise attempt to influence in any manner legislation of any governmental body, to influence the outcome of any public election, to carry on directly or indirectly, any voter registration drive, or to make any payment or use of grant funds for any purpose other than charitable purposes described in section 170(c)(2)(B).

Thank you for your consideration The Gathering Place. We expect it to be a valuable addition to San Antonio’s educational options.

Sincerely,

Victoria B. Rico
Chairwoman & Trustee

cc: Randy J. Boatright, Trustee
David H.O. Roth, Trustee
December 13, 2018

Choose to Succeed

Re: Commitment of Start-Up Funds to The Gathering Place

To Whom It May Concern:

Choose to Succeed is pleased to commit start up funds in the amount of $50,000 to The Gathering Place. These funds will be provided for needs in the start up year 2019-2020 as they work towards opening their first campus in San Antonio in August 2020.

Relevant grant restrictions are:

1) The Gathering Place must maintain its 501c3 status;

2) This grant is contingent on securing a Texas charter; and

3) Funds may not be used for any political campaign purposes, to carry on propaganda or otherwise attempt to influence in any manner legislation of any governmental body, to influence the outcome of any public election, to carry on directly or indirectly, any voter registration drive, or to make any payment or use of grant funds for any purpose other than charitable purposes described in section 170(c)(2)(B).

Thank you for your consideration of The Gathering Place. We expect it to be a valuable addition to San Antonio's educational options.

Sincerely,

Chip Haass, CEO

cc: Steve C. Lewis, Chairman
OPEN-ENROLLMENT CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION  
Generation Twenty-Four  
Special Assurances Document

Sponsoring Entity:  
TGP Public Schools

Proposed Charter School Name:  
The Gathering Place

The Board Chair of the proposed sponsoring entity shall initial each and all assurances within this document to confirm awareness and understanding of responsibilities established herein.

I. Open Meetings Requirements

The proposed charter holder assures that all meetings in which charter school business is discussed will be posted to provide public notice, held in an open public forum, and any action items voted upon in a public forum as required by the Open Meetings Act in Government Code, Chapter 551.

Furthermore, the proposed charter holder assures that all of the following will be discussed in open meetings and only acted upon with approval of the charter holder board:
- The annual budget and all amendments to the budget,
- Any changes to job descriptions from those submitted in the application for charter, and
- Any changes in compensation from compensation as submitted in the application for charter.

II. Public Information Requirements

The proposed charter holder assures that information, that is considered public, requested by anyone will be provided in accordance with Government Code, Chapter 552.

III. Criminal History Check Requirements

The proposed charter holder assures that criminal history checks will be completed in accordance with law and that no person will serve as a member of the governing body of a charter holder, as a member of the governing body of the charter school, or as an officer or employee of an charter school if the person has been convicted of a misdemeanor involving moral turpitude, a felony, an offense listed in TEC 37.007(a) or an offense listed in Article 62.01(5) Code of Criminal Procedure.

IV. Annual Training Requirements

The proposed charter holder assures that all annual training requirements for board members and school administrators will be completed in accordance with law and commissioner rules.

V. Residential Facilities Monitoring (RFM) System

The proposed charter holder assures that it understands that, pursuant to 19 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §97.1072, there is a specific system for monitoring school districts and charter schools that serve students with disabilities who reside in RFs. The charter holder further assures that it understands that it will be required to report data related to students with disabilities residing in RFs in TEA's data collection system known as RF Tracker and that it may be subject to RFM intervention activities and on-site visits based upon a review of the data it reports or on random or other means of selection.

VI. Special RF Training

The proposed charter holder assures that all personnel involved with serving students with disabilities residing in an RF and personnel involved with reporting data in RF Tracker will receive training on the RFM system.
VII. Admission and Enrollment

The proposed charter holder assures that parents or prospective students will not be required to attend an interview or meeting of any kind prior to admitting and/or enrolling a student, or during the time in which the student is enrolled.

The proposed charter holder assures that volunteer hours, or payment in lieu of volunteer hours, will not be required of the parent or guardian as a requirement for student admission or enrollment.

The proposed charter holder assures that there will be no specified days designated for enrollment and/or admission. If space is available, a student will be enrolled and admitted on any day at any time of day and must be counted as and considered a charter student immediately. State law does not allow for a trial enrollment period at a public school.

The proposed charter holder assures that no student auditions will be required prior to enrollment and admission at the charter school unless the charter is originally approved by the commissioner of education as a performing arts school with an audition component or the charter is amended by the commissioner of education to designate the school a performing arts school with an audition component.

The proposed charter holder understands that a student may be ineligible for enrollment at a charter school based on a history of a criminal offense, a juvenile court adjudication, or discipline problems under Texas Education Code (TEC), Chapter 37, Subchapter A, only if the enrollment prohibition is specifically approved by the commissioner of education when the charter is awarded, or if the charter is amended by the commissioner of education to allow this enrollment prohibition. It must be noted that the enrollment prohibition is not allowed for any other discipline problems, but only those specified in TEC, Chapter 37, Subchapter A.

VIII. Public Meeting(s)

The proposed charter holder assures that a public meeting will be held, in accordance with the requirements outlined in Attachment A2 of this application, for each approved campus opened after Year 1, at least 6 months prior to opening that campus. The proposed charter holder further assures that such meetings will be held within the city of the proposed campus address.

IX. Withdrawal and Expulsion

The proposed charter holder assures that it understands that only the parent or guardian may withdraw a student from the charter school, and the only time charter administrators may withdraw a student and use administrative withdrawal as the leaver code is in the rare instances when:

- a student is withdrawn by the charter school because the charter school discovers, when verifying enrollment information, that the student was not a resident of the district at the time of enrollment;
- the charter school discovers that the student has falsified enrollment information;
- proof of identification is not provided; or
- Immunization records are not provided within 30 days of enrollment.

The proposed charter holder understands that a student who fails to comply with the charter school's student code of conduct may not be administratively withdrawn. If a student commits an expellable offense, as outlined in the student code of conduct, the charter holder further understands that charter administrators may expel the student only after due process has been afforded the student, and the charter holder board has determined that expulsion is the appropriate consequence.
Sponsoring Entity: TG P Public Schools

Proposed Charter School Name: The Gathering Place

The proposed charter holder understands that it has an obligation to notify the school district in which the student resides within three business days of any action expelling or withdrawing a student from the charter school. See 19 TAC §100.1211 (c).

The proposed charter holder assures that each campus granted through the initial charter contract and all subsequent renewal, expansion, and re-designations shall establish and maintain gun-free campus policies. The charter shall also expel a student who brings a firearm, as defined by 18 U.S.C. Section 921, to school. See TEC §37.007(e).

X. Ready to Open Check-List

The proposed charter holder understands, upon any subsequent approval and award of charter, that a ready-to-open check list may be required to complete prior to final approval for the opening of any campus.

XI. Postponement of Opening

The proposed charter holder understands that any request for the postponement of opening shall be denied if the founding Board no longer constitutes the governing Board at the time of the request.

XII. Federal and State Funding

The proposed charter holder understands that any request for assistance from the Texas Education Agency that is to be provided from Every Student Succeeds Act funds, as granted by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, must comply with the The Guns-Free Schools Act. See 20 U.S. Code § 7151.

The proposed charter holder understands that any Every Student Succeeds Act funds that are applied towards campus(es) operated on the premises of a public university or college may be effected by new open-carry handgun legislation on public university and college campuses. See Senate Bill 11, as approved by the 84th Legislature, 2015.

The proposed charter holder understands that upon receipt of its first federally funded grant from TEA, "specific conditions" will be imposed upon it, including requirement to participate in training and technical assistance provided by the Department of Grants and Federal Fiscal Compliance. The training and technical assistance is designed to help new charter schools ensure that federal grant funds are used in accordance with applicable statutes, regulations, and requirements. TEA is authorized to impose specific conditions by Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), 200.331 (c) and 200.207.

XIII. Required Disclosure

The proposed charter holder assures that all information subject to a required disclosure of fact(s) has been expressly provided within the Charter School Application to the extent authorized by all controlling law.
I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the governing body of the charter holder has authorized me to provide these assurances as noted by my initials on this and all previous pages.

Joanna Klekowicz
Printed Name of Sponsoring Entity Board Chair

Signature of Sponsoring Entity Board Chair  

Date 11/4/2019