

# Compassion Road Academy



## Innovation Plan

December 11, 2015

To the Board of Education Members of Denver Public Schools:

Almost exactly four years ago to date I remember doing a teacher observation in the gym at Gilliam when I was the Principal there. I found myself sitting on the cold unforgiving cement steps of the gym next to a student I had come to know well because he had made his way to Gilliam a number of times. For the purposes of this letter I will call him Alejandro. Alejandro told me that he didn't want to play in the game of indoor soccer that was going on at the time. He said that he just didn't feel up to it. In a fair world, Alejandro should be a sophomore in high school that year and even though he was a B student the first semester of his freshman year at George Washington High School, such was not the case any longer. Everything fell apart for Alejandro when his older brother was shot and killed the previous February. Shortly after this tragedy, Alejandro began to self-destruct. While on suspension awaiting an expulsion hearing he was caught up in some criminal activity and he was arrested and brought to Gilliam. He became part of the "system." Alejandro honored me again that day by sharing the pain of his loss with me. I remember his suffering to this day and how frightfully confused he was. He said to me, "Ms. Ortiz, I have to stop making bad choices but I just don't know how!"

When I first wrote the Compassion Road Academy performance plan I was asked to write a "letter of introduction" for you, an overview with some sort of general rationale for seeking "Innovation Status." So as I sit in front of my computer once again as I "revamp" this plan in order to renew our school's innovation status, I am once again pondering the myriad of things I could say and words I could type. As I am thinking, I remember. How could I ever forget that amazingly beautiful albeit hurting child? Alejandro, while unique and beautiful, was unfortunately not in an uncommon situation. Alejandro is still joined by other faces and other voices reflecting pain, fear, confusion, and self-loathing. The tapestry of their experiences keeps me grounded in the vision and mission of the Compassion Road Academy. Western/American, white, predominantly middle class societal values would say to these children, "Pull yourself up by your bootstraps, get over it and figure it out!" I suppose this is a fine philosophy, one that works well in many situations unless you have NO boots, let alone boot straps.

My friends, the students are still many and the needs are still great. We cannot turn a blind eye and deny our call to service. In the coming pages you will have the opportunity to read numerous letters of support from former students, parents, teachers, community leaders and administrators for The Compassion Road Academy to receive "Innovation Status." These letters of support are still valid today. After two full years of existence I also now hold multiple testimonials in support of the miracle that is the Compassion Road Academy. You will read a variety of State, district and DCTA policy waivers and policy replacement plans. You will also have the opportunity to review the "revamped" performance application for the Compassion Road Academy.

The performance application itself had to be "revamped" this year because I am no longer overseeing the educational operations at Gilliam, and Gilliam and the Compassion Road Academy are no longer connected in the way that the original plan presented. This change was not of my doing and it has been a heartbreaking experience for me. The reason I wanted the two programs connected was rooted in my desire to provide a bridge for the students that go through Gilliam AND to provide a broader support network for the adults at Gilliam who are charged with educating the students who are ordered to be at Gilliam while they work their way through the court process. The overall mission of the Compassion Road Academy is to educate the "whole child" in order for them to be conscious, competent, self-loving and positively empowered advocates for themselves. This mission could begin while students are at Gilliam and in fact it was the beginning for many students, but no longer.

As previously mentioned, the intention was to bridge this mission across the two programs in order to support students who so often feel small and unseen to see themselves as part of something bigger. In fact, it was my original hope that the program at Gilliam be viewed as the “Gilliam Campus” of the Compassion Road Academy. Unfortunately, this vision did not hold up beyond the first year. I see two root causes of this failing. Root cause number one is that when the Compassion Road Academy school plan was approved, it was approved to be a graduating school; it was necessary therefore to have a static versus a dynamic enrollment and we were placed in a building that holds comfortably only 160 students. Gilliam has on average over 900 “original” enrollments each year and generally 400 or more “repeat” enrollments. The two dynamics don’t coincide. The victory that was won at Compassion Road however, is that we saw a 60% drop in recidivism rate between years one and two of the Compassion Road Academy. That means that 60% fewer students returned to an incarcerated setting after being enrolled at CRA! To drastically reduce the recidivism rate back into an incarcerated setting was one of our primary goals and therefore one of our primary victories!

Regardless of the number of students who are actually able to enroll at CRA because of availability, the values and beliefs that underpin the work at the Compassion Road Academy along with the mental health supports, and the training and development of the staff could have continued across both programs but it was decided by those above me that not be the case any longer. This is root cause number two of this application change. I am only one person who can be in only one place at one time. Without having support and buy-in to the CRA Way by site based leaders and staff at both sites as well as by the leadership that operates above me, there was simply no way to move this model forward by my will alone. Never the less, as with most heartache, there is a silver lining. The work became terribly painful and stressful for me because of the lack of support that I experienced my first two years. Now that I am only at the Compassion Road Academy, the stress for me is greatly reduced because I have one staff and one group of students to worry over instead of two.

The ultimate purpose of my letter to you today is to remind you of the young beautiful faces of all sizes, shapes and colors that have and continue to inspire this work. I feel that we of the Compassion Road Academy have found our niche. The Compassion Road Academy is viewed by many in the District as the “mental health school.” While it is true that we have a lot of mental health support and our mission is to provide a place of peace and healing for our most fragile and hurting children; I don’t know that I would frame it as the “mental health school.” I think that we would be most appropriately thought of as the “whole child school.” We are a school that provides refuge for our most fragile students. We provide healing for students who have been bullied for just trying to be who they are meant to be in this world and students who are suffering from developmental and/or shock traumas; who are suffering from grief and loss; anxiety and depression; chronic stress and other mental health issues that have caused barriers to learning and achievement.

It is my hope that as you read and review all that is before you, you will indeed see in these pages not only the logic and rationale for this Innovation renewal application but that you will see the heart, passion and wisdom that is driving this work for the most at-risk and emotionally fragile student population in our district. The unique and desperate challenges that our students and their families face call for a unique and transformative approach in order to build equity and equalize the playing field so that ALL really means ALL for the students of Denver. I thank you in advance for allowing me and my staff to continue to educate “the whole child” so that they may become conscious, competent, self-loving and positively empowered advocates for themselves.

Humbly,

Kimberly Ortiz Principal  
Compassion Road Academy

**Table of Contents:**

## Part I: Innovation Plan Statements

Mission Statement: Page 3

Succession Plan and Governance: Page 4

Cost Savings and NCLB Page 6

## Part II: Requested Waivers and Replacement Policies

District Policies Page 8

DCTA Policies Page 19

State Policies Page 26

Application Page 48

## Part I: Innovation Plan Statements

### Mission Statement

The mission of the Compassion Road Academy is to educate the “whole child” in order for them to be conscious, competent, self-loving and positively empowered advocates for themselves. We do this by providing a holistic, safe, nurturing and academically rigorous environment that encourages internal transformation and healing from experiences of trauma, grief and loss, chronic stress; and other issues that have caused barriers to learning, academic achievement and self-love. Students are met at the door with unconditional love and complete acceptance and will enjoy a strong sense of family and community anchored in the spirit of compassion for all.

#### *1. How will innovation status help you more fully realize your mission?*

In order to realize its mission, it is essential for the Compassion Road Academy to be granted its “Innovation” renewal status beginning in the 2016-2017 school year. The Compassion Road Academy is targeting the highest needs population in the State. Our students will be coming to us with a suitcase of pain, loss, trauma, grief, skill deficits, addictions, chronic stress, legal involvement and cognitive and emotional disabilities; to name a few. We of the Compassion Road Academy believe that our expanded programming; which includes individual, small group and family therapy, will be the answer for many of our students to achieve success and to be empowered to move into the dreams of their hearts. “Innovation” status will support us to implement our expanded programming options efficiently and as cost effectively as possible. Furthermore, it is absolutely critical that we have the right people on board to take on this work. We must have the freedom to hire and retain highly effective, culturally responsive staff who have a passion and a love for this work and more importantly for this very special group of young people. “Innovation” status will allow us to hire, retain and develop the right people to support our efforts in becoming the first 90-90-90 school (Reeves, 2007) in Denver. It will also allow us the flexibility to utilize our skilled staff in unique ways; i.e. with the Enrichment Program.

### Succession Plan

#### **Succession Plan:**

If not addressed in the school’s performance application, please provide specifics of a succession plan (or process) that will ensure consistency and stability in implementing the innovation plan in the school in the case that there are leadership changes.

#### **Succession Plan:**

Time has been spent over the course of the previous three years cross training and expanding the training and leadership capabilities from within the Compassion Road organization. In the event that Kim Ortiz is no longer able to serve as Principal, the Assistant Principal is in position to succeed her and take over the primary leadership role. Additionally, the current Dean is highly qualified and is prepared to move into the position of the

Assistant Principal. Lastly, the Intervention Coordinator has applied to become an AP intern; which will ensure a solid and thoughtful “Succession Plan” stream.

*The leadership model for Compassion Road is specified in Section III of the innovation plan. Further refinement of this model has taken place since writing of the plan and is explained in greater detail below:*

#### **Rationale:**

The Compassion Road Academy has been designed to support and transform the lives of Denver’s highest need population. Students are referred to CRA from other high schools throughout the District. Additionally, many of the students who come to CRA are coming from other Districts in the Colorado Front Range area from other high schools, incarcerated settings, residential treatment facilities and various other organizations that support child and adolescent mental health.

It is important therefore, that CRA’s staff continues to be trained in holistic approaches that will ensure the wellbeing of the **whole child**. The Compassion Road Academy IS the “whole child” school. It is our mission in fact to ensure educational equity and equal access by delivering a highly rigorous academic program in the context of an environment that is safe, supportive and nurturing; so that our students experience an internal transformation that goes well beyond an environment of “compliance” into an experience of self actualization and empowerment. It is also evident after three years that the Compassion Road Academy is being viewed as “the mental health school.” This means that we are receiving THE MOST fragile students in the District as well as getting referrals from all over the Front Range area.

#### **A. Current Leadership:**

Kimberly Ortiz will continue to serve as the Executive Director of the Compassion Road Academy in the anticipation of additional school sites for CRA being identified in the District or elsewhere in Colorado’s Front Range area to include, at some point, an ECE-8<sup>th</sup> grade model that will specifically support students who have experienced developmental/shock traumas. Kim Ortiz is supported by one Assistant Principal, two Deans, two Mental Health Coordinators who are all part of a Leadership Team that also includes, the Coordinator of Intervention and SAL, the Technology Coordinator, the Coordinator of Community Partnerships, the school’s Guidance Counselor, two lead teachers and the SPED Chair. Furthermore, CRA has a School Accountability Committee that is comprised of the Executive Director, the Executive Assistant, the Coordinator of Community Partnerships, two parents, two students, two teachers, and at least one representative from our discipline and mental health teams.

#### **B. The “Governance” of the school:**

Decisions and change come based on 1) assessed need 2) School-wide collaborative efforts and problem-solving approaches (when appropriate) 3) Leadership Team (SLT) discussion and considerations 4) Administrative Team conversation and when necessary and in the scope of authority, 5) the School Accountability Committee (SAC) (bell schedule, calendar, budget, UIP, etc)

## Cost Savings and NCLB

### A. What cost savings and/or efficiencies that are projected through attainment of innovation status?

Cost Savings: The Compassion Road Academy is budgeted based on “actuals” vs “averages.” The Compassion Road Academy is committed to providing a variety of affective and academic supports that will be unique to Compassion Road. “Innovation” status allows us to provide these services on a broad scale because of its unique “whole child” programming options; i.e. the Enrichment Program, individual, small group and family counseling; as well as the extended academic programs and initiatives. Additionally, much of the affective support is provided through partnerships developed with AA, Alanon, Judi’s House, Family Tree, etc... AND through the use of pre-service counselors and social workers. In order for us to accomplish these goals, we need to have the flexibility to hire individuals into uniquely developed positions for the Compassion Road Academy; i.e. Mental Health Coordinators, Probation and Court Advocacy and support, Taekwondo instructors, Enrichment Program Coordinator and contracted support personnel, to name a few. “Innovation” status allows us the necessary flexibility needed to do so. Furthermore, “Innovation” status provides us the opportunity to do fund raisers and participate in additional outside learning and service opportunities to support our specific programming structure.

### B. Will the school continue to comply with the Highly Qualified Teacher requirement of No Child Left Behind?

Because CRA is a Denver Public School, we expect that our teachers meet the same expectations of licensure and/or certifications required under NCLB as any other staff member working in the Denver Public Schools and fully approved by the Colorado Department of Education. To that end, the expectation of the teaching staff will be to demonstrate academic achievement and yearly growth that reflects an outstanding educational program that both addresses some foundational challenges students may carry and also reflects the rigor and relevance of the grade level experience a student deserves, as defined by the Colorado academic standards embraced by the foundation of the common core. In addition, because we want to ensure our second language learners have the access they deserve to be successful as any student in the Denver Public Schools, we will expect every teacher to have the certification indicating they are ELA-E qualified within two years of being hired.

In addition to the “traditional” pathway to receiving credit towards graduation, students will be able to receive credit towards: Participating and achieving in Enrichment courses; independent studies; APEX online credit recovery; non-traditional courses i.e. study skills plus; and service learning through CRA’s “Compassion Project.”





## **Part II: Waiver Requests and Replacement Policies**

#### Waiver Requests and Proposed Replacement Policies: Compassion Road

School Proposal	BDF-R4: Collaborative School Committees	Governance
<b>Policy</b>	<p>There shall be at each school a collaborative school committee with representation from parents, community, faculty, administrators and classified staff.</p> <p>Purposes and Scope:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to enhance student achievement and school climate by engaging the school community in collaborative efforts supporting the school and District's goals.</li> <li>- to provide strategic direction in support of the school's mission and vision as stated in the School Improvement Plan (SIP). The SIP, with the school's program design, should serve as the strategic plan for the school.</li> <li>- to be in compliance with state and federal law, regulations of the Colorado Department of Education, applicable U.S. District Court orders, the District Affirmative Action plan, the DPS/DCTA Agreement, other contracts and District mandates.</li> </ul> <p>The collaborative school committee will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- work collaboratively with the school community that includes the building principal, teachers, staff, students, parents, civic and business leaders, service and neighborhood representatives, and other community members;</li> <li>- focus on the SIP as its primary responsibility at the school;</li> <li>- use Multiple Measures and align resources to support the SIP and the school's program design;</li> <li>- provide guidance, evaluation and approval for the SIP;</li> <li>- provide guidance, evaluation, and approval for the annual school budget to insure its alignment with the SIP and the school's program design;</li> <li>- act as the School Improvement and Accountability Council (SIAC) for the building;</li> <li>- establish relationships with parents, community members, civic, service and neighborhood organizations to increase involvement in the school and provide a forum for community input;</li> <li>- provide guidance, evaluation, and approval for the use of the staffing allocations provided by the District as it relates to the SIP, school budget, and school program design, including consultation regarding adjustments that may be made due to pupil-count issues;</li> <li>- participate in the principal-selection process by interviewing candidates and recommending candidates to the superintendent;</li> <li>- participate in the principal's annual evaluation by giving input on the principal's involvement in and support of the collaborative committee process;</li> <li>- review, and when appropriate, approve discipline and safety procedures;</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- review, and when appropriate, revise the school calendar and/or schedule;</li> <li>- make recommendations regarding any changes to the school design to the District Board of Education through the building principal.</li> </ul> <p>The collaborative school committee will not:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- participate in the day-to-day operations of the school;</li> <li>- be involved in issues relating to individuals (staff, students, or parents) within the school;</li> <li>- be involved in personnel issues.</li> </ul>
<b>Replacement Policy</b>	<p>The School Collaborative Committee will be replaced with the School Accountability Committee (SAC). The SAC will comply with State Law on School Accountability Committees. The membership of the SAC will include 10-12 voting members determined through the following process.</p> <p>The SAC Committee organizer is part of the role of CRA's Coordinator of Community Partnerships. In addition, the Principal is part of this committee as is the Principal's Executive Assistant. One of two Discipline Deans will be present at the monthly meetings as will one of the two Mental Health</p>

	<p>Coordinators (LCSWs). The monthly meeting is an open meeting and therefore, any member of the school community may attend. There is a “call for volunteers” annually; which includes teachers, parents, students, community members, civic organizations and neighbors from the Golden Triangle Association. The Coordinator of Partnership Development is responsible for establishing the committee member group. If there are more than two teachers wishing to have voting rights on this committee, an election will be held.</p> <p><u>The SAC shall have the following responsibilities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Meeting at least once a month</li> <li>● Recommending 2 final candidates to DPS for the principal position (when a vacancy exists)</li> <li>● Providing advice and recommendations to the principal regarding all responsibilities of the SAC detailed in Policy BDFHR3 in addition to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Advising on the school’s annual budget</li> <li>○ Advising on the school’s master calendar and schedule</li> <li>○ Making recommendations regarding the school’s curriculum and instruction, culture and behavior, and services for special populations</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><u>The collaborative school committee will not:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Participate in the day-to-day operations of the school;</li> <li>● be involved in issues relating to individuals (staff, students, or parents) within the school;</li> <li>● be involved in personnel issues (School Personnel Committee will stand alone in the current DPS/DCTA contract).</li> </ul>	
<p><b>School Proposal</b></p>	<p><b>KHBA: Sponsorship Agreements</b></p>	<p>Budget</p>

<p><b>Replacement Policy</b></p>	<p>School will have the ability to request and secure school-based sponsorships independent of the district according to the following policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-The sponsorship must not compromise or show inconsistency with the beliefs/values of the district and school.</li> <li>– The sponsorship will not alter any district owned resources unless permission is granted by the district</li> <li>– The sponsorship does not create a real or perceived conflict of interest with school administrators or staff</li> <li>– The sponsorship agreement will be reported to the district budget office at least 30 days before an agreement is to take effect. The budget office will have the ability to refuse the arrangement only in situations where said agreement will adversely impact funding arrangements for other schools in the district more than it would benefit Compassion Road or because it would be in conflict with existing fund regulations (such as federal grants).</li> </ul> <p><b><i>- The School will establish an account with the district to manage receipt of locally raised money and will have autonomy in making deposits to and withdrawals from the account when such actions are taken to further the academic achievement and/or social-emotional well-being of students. The school account will be aligned with all fiscal requirements under local, state, and federal administrative requirements.</i></b></p>
----------------------------------	--

<p>IC/ICA: School Year/School Calendar</p>	<p>Calendar &amp; Schedule</p>
<p>School Replacement Policy</p>	<p>By March 1<sup>st</sup> each year, <b>Compassion Road</b> shall determine the length of time during which <b>Compassion Road</b> shall be in session during the next school year. The number of days of planned teacher-student instruction and of teacher- student contact shall meet or exceed the requirements of state law and <b>the DPS Board-approved district calendar</b>.</p> <p><b>The Compassion Road calendar</b> shall include the dates for all staff in-service programs scheduled for the coming school year <b>that are not identified on the DPS Board-approved district calendar</b>.A copy of the calendar shall be provided to all parents/guardians of students enrolled in <b>Compassion Road</b>. <b>The calendar will also be published on the school's web page</b>.</p> <p>Any change in the calendar except for emergency closings or other unforeseen circumstances shall be preceded by adequate and timely notice <b>to students and parents</b> of no less than 30 days.</p>

--	--

School Proposal	IE: Organization of Instruction	Education Program
Replacement Policy:	<p>The next three years of the innovation plan, 2016-2019, will include the incorporation of AVID. AVID is an integral piece of Compassion Road's commitment to educational rigor. By adopting the district curriculum, Compassion Road employs competency based assessments that serve our diverse population with the accelerated quarter system in mind. Compassion Road's classroom instructional model includes individual learning plans, essential learning goals, standards driven instruction, and/or Understanding by Design big ideas. In addition, Compassion Road provides students with flexible credit opportunities with an emphasis on health and financial literacy. The Principal will partner with the Instructional Superintendent and the Department of Teaching and Learning to determine when flexible credit and credit recovery opportunities can be infused into a variety of instructional experiences. Students will meet all core requirements for math, English, science, social studies and academic electives. Within the other electives, students may participate in 20 hours of electives relating to Internships, Work Credit and Community Service Learning. Students may further participate in 30 hours of other electives like Anger Management, Drug &amp; Alcohol classes, Health Literacy, Financial Literacy and other concurrent credit options.</p>	
School Proposal	IGA: Curriculum Development	Educational Program

<b>Replacement Policy:</b>	<p>DPS curriculum is being followed for core credit, but our competency-based approach will ensure our students' academic needs are being addressed in context and the feedback focused on essential learning goals provides the individual roadmap to credit completion and therefore high school graduation. The competency-based approach as outlined in the replacement language for district policy IEA offers students a variety of opportunities to demonstrate proficiency with the essential learning goals identified within a given course, connected to both the common core standards and the state academic standards. CRA will be applying the hard work of the district on the essential learning goals to refine and focus our efforts to support credit recovery in context and also to provide targeted intervention when necessary to ensure all students attain the same goals. However, CRA is committed to providing the same rigor, quality, and comprehensive summary of the core curriculum of the district, because our students are part of DPS. At CRA we require teachers to develop assessment plans that support a robust body of evidence in order to ascertain competency with the content and earn credit. We have also opted out of the District interims as the interims are based on a traditional semester system.</p>	
<b>School Proposal</b>	<b>IGD: Curriculum Adoption</b>	Educational Program
<b>Replacement Policy:</b>	<p>Our competency based approach meets the diverse academic needs of our student population. The competency-based approach as outlined in the replacement language for district policy IEA grants students varied opportunities to demonstrate proficiency. With the identified essential learning goals within a given course state standards and state academic standards are addressed. Compassion Road refines and focuses efforts to support credit recovery and provided targeted intervention ensuring the success of goal attainment for all students. Moreover, Compassion Road commits to the same academic rigor and quality of the core curriculum of the District but our competency-based approach will ensure our students' academic needs are being addressed in context and the feedback focused on essential learning goals provides the individual roadmap to credit completion and therefore high school graduation.</p>	
<b>School Proposal</b>	<b>IKB: Homework</b>	Educational Program



<b>Replacement Policy</b>	Will not set minimum or maximum expectations. With extended day, allow for homework to be completed at home.
---------------------------	--

<b>School Proposal</b>	<b>IKE - Promotion, Retention, and Acceleration of Students</b>	<b>Educational Program</b>
<b>Replacement Policy</b>	DPS curriculum is being followed for core credit, but our competency-based approach will ensure our students' academic needs are being addressed in context and the feedback focused on essential learning goals provides the individual roadmap to credit completion and therefore high school graduation. However, CRA is committed to providing the same rigor, quality, and comprehensive summary of the core curriculum of the district; as our students are part of Denver Public Schools. Furthermore, students are able to accrue credit through flexible pathways including: Enrichment course offerings; independent studies; APEX online courses; Study Skills Plus classes; service learning through CRA's "Compassion Project," internships, work-study options, etc...	
<b>School Proposal</b>	<b>IKF: Graduation</b>	<b>Graduation and Promotion</b>
<b>Replacement Policy</b>	DPS curriculum is being followed for core credit as outlined in the replacement language for District policy IE, but our competency-based approach will ensure our students' academic needs are being addressed in context and the feedback focused on essential learning goals provides the individual roadmap to credit completion and therefore high school graduation. This means a student will need to demonstrate competency based upon a body of evidence that maps to the essential learning goals, standards, or big ideas and includes summative, formative, and DPS interim assessment data. CRA is committed to providing the same rigor, quality, and comprehensive summary of the core curriculum of the district, because our students are part of DPS. Furthermore, students are able to accrue credit through flexible pathways including: Enrichment course offerings; independent studies; APEX online courses; Study Skills Plus classes; service learning through CRA's "Compassion Project," internships, work-study options, etc...	

School Proposal	Article 5-4: School Leadership Teams	Leadership
Replacement Policy	<p><i>The SLT will be made up of CRAs Administrators; Coordinators (protechs); Guidance Counselor and 3 teachers representing a cross section of the school staff. If there are more than 3 teachers who want to be a part of this team, the Principal in collaboration with the school's administrators and coordinators will make the decision who will serve. The other teachers will be considered alternates.</i></p> <p>The SLT will make decisions by consensus. A consensus is either a unanimous decision or a majority decision that the entire SLT, including the dissenters, will support. If consensus cannot be reached, the matter shall be referred to the Instructional Superintendent who shall consult with the Association prior to making a decision. The SLT will meet regularly. Their responsibilities shall include:</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Review data and collaborate in the development of the School Improvement Plans;</li> <li>b. Review and collaborate on the design of and schedule for the professional development plan within the 40 hour work week. The SLT shall take into consideration other professional development and teacher obligations in scheduling this time;</li> <li>c. Review and collaborate on the implementation of the District's instructional program as it specifically applies to classrooms and grades at the school including prioritizing and sequencing activities within the teacher work week;</li> <li>d. Collaborate to identify strategies for increasing enrollment at the school;</li> <li>e. Collaborate to develop communication strategies for regularly reporting student progress to parents;</li> <li>f. Collaborate to implement best instructional practices;</li> <li>g. Perform additional duties as outlined in Article 8.</li> </ul> <p>The SLT, as part of regular practice, will involve students and parents to collaborate on the issues discussed and to present to the student council decisions that are made related to the responsibilities specified above.</p>	
<b>School Proposal</b>	<b>Article 7 Grievance Procedures</b>	

**Replacement  
Policy**

**Policy Statement:** In the interest of equitable and efficient operation of the System, all employees shall be afforded a mechanism by which grievances can be resolved at the earliest opportunity. ***Additionally, all grievances should be resolved at the most local level that is possible and escalation steps shall not be taken until an employee has allowed for the grievance process to be resolved at the most local level.***

**Scope:** This policy applies to ***all Compassion Road*** employees. Employees who are within a bargaining unit shall have the right to grieve as specified by their respective agreement ***except for employees covered by the DCTA agreement in which case the grievance process outlined in this policy will apply.*** All employees have the right to grieve violations of any of the District's nondiscrimination policies. Disability complaints shall be filed in accordance with the respective grievance procedures. Matters over which the District is without authority to act and therefore NOT grievable are: Evaluations; Dismissals, nonrenewals, reductions-in-force, suspensions, disciplinary actions; Reassignments.

7-1-1 A "grievance" shall mean a written complaint by a school staff member that there has been a violation, a misinterpretation, or inequitable application of any of the provisions of the School's Employment Contract or the School's Employee Handbook.

7-1-2 Unless provided otherwise in this Agreement, all administrative procedures, practices and written personnel policies that affect staff are grievable.

7-1-3 The term "grievance" shall not apply to any matter as to which (1) the method of review is prescribed by law, (2) the Board is without authority to act, or (3) a grievance is specifically prohibited or limited by the terms of the Employment Contract or School Handbook or School Innovation Plan.

**Grievance procedures shall be in accord with the following guidelines:**

Level 1

The employee attempts to resolve the complaint as close to the source as

NOTE: Any aggrieved employee has the right to be accompanied by another school staff during any meetings with their supervisors.

Timing. No grievance shall be recognized by the District or the School unless it is presented at the appropriate level within fifteen (15) school days after the aggrieved person knew, or should have known, of the act or condition on which the grievance is based. No grievance shall be recognized at Level Three unless it is filed with the Department of Human Resources within at least twenty (20) school days after the act or condition upon which it is based occurred. Grievances not timely presented will be considered as waived.

7.3.1: Level One

If an employee's supervisor is not the principal, the employee notifies his/her supervisor (in writing or otherwise) as to the substance of the grievance and states the remedy sought. Discussion should be held between the employee and any other relevant party. This level will usually be informal, but either party may request written statements and agreements. If the employee's supervisor is the Principal, this immediately moves to Level 2.

7.3.2: Level Two

If the employee is unsatisfied with the results at Level 1 the employee may submit a written grievance to the principal of the school. There shall be review of the written grievance by the principal. The principal shall issue a written decision and provide a copy to the employee and his/her supervisor(when applicable).

7.3.3: Level Three

If the employee is unsatisfied with the results at Level **2**, the employee may submit a written grievance to the Human Resources Director and send a copy to ***the school principal***. There shall be review of the written grievance by the Executive Director of the Department and/or their designee. The Executive Director and/or his/her designee shall issue a written decision and provide copy to the employee and his/her supervisor.

\* If an employee ever believes the issue of grievance is perceived to be or is an issue of safety for them or for others, then the employee is encouraged to engage the level of administration or supervisory personnel appropriate to respond to the issue at hand.

School Proposal	Article 8-1 Contract Year, and 8-2 – Forty (40) Hour Work Week, 8-5 – Teaching Loads	Personnel
Replacement Policy	<p>The Compassion Road Academy will be operating an extended day program. Depending upon student need for credit bearing classes, teachers may be required to work days that exceed the traditional 8 hour workday.</p> <p>Teachers will be compensated through compensatory time off /extra duty pay. This will be communicated in advance through CRAs alternative school calendar/schedule.</p> <p>The Compassion Road Academy will start a week later in the fall and end a week later in June than other traditional high schools in the District.</p>	

1. **Lunch Periods.** Teachers at Compassion Road will need to supervise a daily advisement that occurs opposite one of the scheduled student lunches. The period of the advisement and of the lunchtime is 25 minutes (not including the student passing periods). Teachers will have a 25-minute lunch period after or before their advisement duties UNLESS the teacher is assigned supervisory duty during this lunchtime. This duty will be limited to no more than twice per week.

2. **Operations and professional time** will include but not be limited to faculty meetings or school-related committee meetings, interdisciplinary teams, vertical teaming, department meetings, planning with a facilitator / instructional specialist, staff development or data analysis.

***The Compassion Road Academy will not be encumbered by maximum time limits on meetings/professional development. In order to move our students forward, we will need to look at student achievement data weekly and participate in ongoing differentiated and whole group professional development opportunities and collaborative conversations concerning student achievement and instructional practice. Teachers will be required to attend Data Team meetings 1-2 times per week generally during the 55 minute student Enrichment time. When not in meetings, this time may be used for planning/lunch.***

**8-5 Teaching Loads.** The range of teaching loads, number of preparations and number of pupil contacts required should provide for effective instruction and meaningful teacher-student interaction.

8-5-1 Secondary Teaching Load. Unless altered by the SLT process, ~~the normal teaching load for secondary school teachers shall be five (5) teaching periods per day, or the equivalent thereof if block scheduling is used. A teacher may request to teach a sixth period.~~ ***The normal teaching load for secondary teachers at CRA will consist of 1200 instructional minutes week.***

**Replacement  
Policy**

The school will implement the District's evaluation system (LEAP) as described in this Innovation Plan

**Orientation:** Teachers will receive a thorough overview of the LEAP Evaluation process, which includes the rubric, the criteria and the standards by which they will be evaluated. If the teacher is hired after the District's evaluation orientation has taken place, Compassion Road provides them with an adequate and similar introduction to the evaluation process. The introduction focuses on the comprehensive performance ratings given to teachers in alignment with updated LEAP Framework and methodology.

\_Teachers are informed in advance about the purpose and nature of the evaluation process, the elements of the evaluation, the procedure for conducting the evaluation and the responsibilities of the individuals involved. An individual or group meeting may be used to explain the evaluation process. A teacher who is not assigned to a home school will attend a departmental meeting devoted to explaining the evaluation process. This meeting will be held within the first 60 days of the teachers' school year.



Comprehensive performance ratings will be given to teachers consistent with the LEAP framework. As the LEAP framework is adjusted and improved each year, Compassion Road will continue to calculate ratings based upon the framework methodology.

The Compassion Road Academy has the authority to adopt its own remediation plan to support non-probationary teachers who may be struggling with job performance and the implementation of the Innovation Plan. Unless changed by the SLT, the following will constitute the remediation plan for teachers at the Compassion Road Academy:

Comprehensive performance ratings will be given to teachers consistent with the LEAP framework. If a teacher receives an unsatisfactory rating in accordance with the LEAP framework, the teacher will be put on a remediation plan:

The teacher will have a minimum of 30 days to improve performance.

The teacher will establish a “plan for improvement” with Principal or his/her designee.

The plan will identify specific outcomes and goals for improvement.

The plan will include a collaboratively developed professional development plan to support the teacher to grow in his/her practice and in accordance with the school’s innovation plan.

The teacher will be observed multiple times during this 30 day period, no less than two walk-throughs; two partial observations and one formal observation will occur during this 30 day period. ALL of the observations will be unscheduled. At the end of the remediation plan, the evaluator will review the data and determine whether the teacher met the goals and objectives of the plan.

If the teacher did not meet the goals and objectives of the plan, the teacher will be informed that he/she is being recommended for dismissal for cause.

If the teacher met the goals and objectives of the plan, it still may be determined that the teacher is not an appropriate fit for the Compassion Road Academy.

School Proposal	Article 13-8	Personnel Committee
Replacement Policy	<p>The Compassion Road Academy will have a “dynamic” versus “static” personnel committee(s) – with the following adaptations and protocol: In year one of CRA and beyond, each new teacher hire will be as follows:</p> <p>A committee will be formed through Principal request of teacher volunteers (note: If the interview process goes beyond a regular school day, participating teachers will be accommodated with an appropriate hourly wage for their time.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Principal/his or her designee and at least one teacher representative will review the available resumes/applications in order to create an interview list.</li> <li>● Each interview committee will consist minimally of one administrator,</li> </ul>	

	<p>two teachers and one student. Whenever possible at least one teacher already working in the designated content area shall participate on the committee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The interview committee will select 2 or 3 candidates to move onto the second phase of the interview, “guest-teaching.” Each of the top candidates will provide a 20-minute lesson to a group of students. The students will complete a written evaluation form and participate in a post lesson discussion with the Principal/designee and teacher representative(s) if possible.</li> <li>● After careful consideration of teacher and student feedback, the Principal will make the final hiring decision. The Principal may request a third interview if necessary in order to make the best decision possible.</li> </ul>	
School Proposal	Article 14 – Summer school and evening school	Summer and Evening Programs

<b>Replacement Policy</b>	<p>14-1 <u>Summer School and Evening School.</u> Summer school will be provided through District resources. Depending on funding availability, CRA will provide summer school opportunities on a first come first serve basis. However, CRA students will be given preference for enrollment.</p> <p>14-1-1 <u>Staffing:</u> The current staff will be working their contracted days as required under the contract, which may or may not include days into the summer. In addition, teachers will not exceed the amount of instructional hours required by the contract, but they may be assigned to serve students in the day schedule or the afternoon/evening schedule. If teachers exceed their number of contract days (because of extenuating circumstances) they will receive extra duty pay or have the option to accrue “trade time” to be used later in that calendar year.</p> <p>14-1-1-1 <u>Extended Day:</u> CRA will provide an extended day program for students in need of accruing additional credits as well as continuing social emotional supports.</p> <p>14-1-2 <u>Compensation.</u> Teachers will receive extra duty pay at the established rate for hours/days that exceed their contract. Additionally, teachers will have the option to accrue “trade time” to be used later in that calendar year. However, teachers who are working in the evening may be on a staggered schedule in which case their workday will be the same; so in case such as this, there would be no additional compensation.</p>
-------------------------------	---

<b>School Proposal</b>	<b>Article 20</b>	<b>Reduction in Force (RIF)</b>
----------------------------	-------------------	---------------------------------

Replacement Policy	<p>The Compassion Road Academy will adhere to the guidelines under Article 20 with the following exceptions:</p> <p>20-1 In addition to the definition of Reduction in Force provided in Article 20-1, the Principal in collaboration with CRA's Leadership Team will have the authority to make any and all programming changes on behalf of CRA's students and their families that may or may not affect the employment of staff.</p> <p>20-1-4 Upon final decision that a reduction of force will occur, the District's Human Resource Representative for CRA will be notified and the District shall provide the Association with data relative to the status of each bargaining unit employee whose job will be reduced. Such data shall include the name, certification and endorsement, and hiring date.</p> <p>20-1-6 Upon the written request of the teacher identified for job reduction, the administration shall investigate all possible assignments for which the teacher is eligible. <b>However, the Principal is under NO obligation to place the affected teacher into another position at CRA.</b></p> <p>20-2 When hiring the Principal will consider candidates who have been displaced as a result of a RIF/RIB elsewhere in the District. However, the Principal is under NO obligation to hire said teacher and the Principal has the authority to hire other district teachers and/or outside candidates for any vacancy at the Compassion Road Academy regardless of whether there are teachers in the District whose contracts have been cancelled due to RIFs/RIBs, etc.</p>	
Policy	Article 25 – Job Sharing and Half Time	Job Sharing and Half-Time
Replacement Policy	<p>The Compassion Road Academy will adhere to Article 25 with the following exceptions:</p> <p>25-1 Any teacher may request to Job share or to convert from a full time employee to a half-time employee. CRAs Leadership Team in collaboration with the school's SAC will grant permission for such a change based on the feasibility of the request and the needs of students.</p> <p>25-1-1 Application for a job sharing or half time position must be made in writing to the Principal if this change is going to affect the programming of CRA.</p> <p>25-2 There will be NO "direct placements" of teachers at the Compassion Road Academy.</p>	

School Proposal	Article 32 – Extra Duty Compensation	Extra Duty Compensation
Replacement Policy	<p>The Compassion Road Academy will adhere to Article 32 with regards to “extra duty pay.” CRA has an extended day program. Consequently, any “extra duty pay” as a result of working longer days/working on regularly scheduled days off, will be the result of a written and signed agreement between the Principal/designee and the teacher/staff member. Furthermore, a timesheet will need to be completed and signed by the staff member in question. Additionally, teachers/staff members will be afforded the option of “trade time” in place of “extra duty pay” to be taken within the same calendar year. If the teacher/staff member decides to choose this option, the time will be documented in writing.</p>	

School Proposal	Section 22-32-109(1)(f): Local Board Duties Concerning Selection of Personnel and Pay	Human Resource Management: Staff Hiring, Compensation
Replacement Policy	The principal, in consultation with the SAC, will select teaching staff directly and rates of pay will be based on the district schedule.	
School Proposal	Section 22-32-109(1)(n)(I): Schedule and Calendar	Calendar and Schedule
Replacement Policy	The school leader, in consultation with the SAC, will determine prior to the end of a school year, the length of time which the school shall be in session during the next following school year, but in no event shall Compassion Road have fewer than the minimum hours set by the district and state for public instruction.	
School Proposal	Section 22-32-109 (1)(n)(II)(A): Actual Hours of Teacher-Pupil Instruction and Contact	Calendar and Schedule

<b>Replacement Policy</b>	The school leader, in consultation with the SAC, will determine prior to the end of a school year, the length of time which the school shall be in session during the next following school year, but in no event shall Compassion Road have fewer than the minimum hours set by the district and state for public instruction.	
<b>School Proposal</b>	<b>Section 22-32-109 (1)(n)(II)(B): School Calendar</b>	Calendar and Schedule
<b>Replacement Policy</b>	<p>The school leader, in consultation with the SAC, will determine prior to the end of a school year, the length of time which the school shall be in session during the next following school year, but in no event shall Compassion Road have fewer than the minimum hours set by the district and state for public instruction.</p> <p>The school calendar will replace the school's need to follow the district calendar.</p>	
<b>School Proposal</b>	<b>Section 22-32-109(1)(jj): Identify Areas in which the Principal/s Require Training or Development</b>	Human Resource Management: Professional Development
<b>Replacement Policy</b>	District will establish a supervisory role with the school principal and as part of this role, will jointly develop a professional development plan that will be followed by the school principal. This relationship, through the waiver, will be such that a personalized PD plan that can be developed to allow for greater autonomy of the school leader.	
<b>School Proposal</b>	<b>22-32-110(1)(h): Local Board Powers Concerning Employment Termination of School Personnel</b>	Human Resource Management: Professional Development

Policy	<p>(1) In addition to any other power granted to a board of education of a school district by law, each board of education of a school district shall have the following specific powers, to be exercised in its judgment:</p> <p>(h) To discharge or otherwise terminate the employment of any personnel. A board of a district of innovation, as defined in <a href="#">section 22-32.5-103 (2)</a>, may delegate the power specified in this paragraph (h) to an innovation school, as defined in <a href="#">section 22-32.5-103 (3)</a>, or to a school in an innovation school zone, as defined in <a href="#">section 22-32.5-103 (4)</a>.</p>
Replacement Policy	<p>In accordance with the innovation plan, the DPS board delegates the power specified in statute to the school leader. All processes for dismissal must meet the minimum standards established in District Policy GDQD and GDQD-R</p>

School Proposal	<b>22-32-126: Employment and authority of principals</b>	Leadership: Management
Policy	<p>22-32-126.</p> <p>(1) The board of education may employ through written contract public school principals who shall hold valid principal licenses or authorizations and who shall supervise the operation and management of the school and such property as the board shall determine necessary.</p> <p>(2) The principal shall assume the administrative responsibility and instructional leadership, under the supervision of the superintendent and in accordance with the rules and regulations of the board of education, for the planning, management, operation, and evaluation of the educational program of the schools to which he is assigned.</p> <p>(3) The principal shall submit recommendations to the superintendent regarding the appointment, assignment, promotion, transfer, and dismissal of all personnel assigned to the school under his supervision.</p> <p>(4) The principal shall perform such other duties as may be assigned by the superintendent pursuant to the rules and regulations of the board of education.</p> <p>(5) (a) The principal or the principal's designee shall communicate discipline information concerning any student enrolled in the school to any teacher who has direct contact with the student in the classroom and to any counselor who has direct contact with the student. Any teacher or counselor who receives information under this subsection (5) shall maintain the confidentiality of the information and does not have authority to communicate the information to any other person.</p> <p>(b) Each school district shall include in its discipline code adopted in accordance with <a href="#">section 22-32-110 (2)</a> procedures to inform the student and the student's parent or guardian when disciplinary information is communicated and to provide a copy of the disciplinary information to the student and the student's parent or guardian. The discipline code shall also establish procedures to allow the student and the student's parent or guardian to challenge the accuracy of the disciplinary information.</p>	



<p>School's Replacement Policy</p>	<p>In the event of a change in leadership, the priority is maintaining building leadership that supports the mission and vision of the school and ensures that student achievement is supported. Members of the school community, including staff, parents and community members will be involved in the principal hiring process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principal candidates are provided to the CSC and superintendent or his/her designee from the district's principal hiring pool using the LEAD in Denver evaluation process.</li> <li>• The district superintendent or his/her designee will manage the principal selection process and collaborate with the CSC in recommending at least three final candidates to the superintendent for hiring.</li> <li>• The superintendent (or his/her representative) may redirect the CSC and his/her designee to continue the search for better qualified candidates should none of the proposed candidates meets his/her approval.</li> <li>• In the event that the principal position is vacant, the superintendent (or his/her representative) may appoint an interim principal until such a time that the above described hiring process results in a principal candidate that is agreeable to the CSC and the Superintendent or his/her designee.</li> </ul> <p>Interviews and selection follow the DPS Human Resource hiring procedures.</p>
--	---

**Replacement  
Policy**

(c.5) (I) The general assembly finds that, for the fair evaluation of a principal based on the demonstrated effectiveness of his or her teachers, the principal needs the ability to select teachers who have demonstrated effectiveness and have demonstrated qualifications and teaching experience that support the instructional practices of his or her school. **There will be no direct placements/assignments at the Compassion Road Academy.**

(II) (A) Any active nonprobationary teacher who, during the prior school year, was deemed satisfactory, or was deemed effective in a district that has implemented a multi-tiered evaluation system and has identified ratings equivalent to effective, and has not secured a position through school-based hiring shall be a member of a priority hiring pool, which priority hiring pool shall ensure the nonprobationary teacher a first opportunity to interview for available positions for which he or she is qualified in a school district ***except that the teacher will not be guaranteed a first opportunity to interview for positions at Compassion Road School.***

(III) (A) Any active nonprobationary teacher who was deemed effective during the prior school year and has not secured a mutual consent placement shall be a member of a priority hiring pool, which priority hiring pool shall ensure the nonprobationary teacher a first opportunity to interview for a reasonable number of available positions for which he or she is qualified in the school district ***except that the teacher will not be guaranteed a first opportunity to interview for positions at Compassion Road School.***

(V) Nothing in this section shall limit the ability of a school district to place a teacher in a twelve-month assignment or other limited-term assignments, including, but not limited to, a teaching assignment, substitute assignment, or instructional support role during the period in which the teacher is attempting to secure an assignment through school-based hiring. Such an assignment shall not constitute an assignment through school-based hiring and shall not be deemed to interrupt the period in which the teacher is required to secure an assignment through school-based hiring before the district shall place the teacher on unpaid leave. ***Such assignment will not be made at Compassion Road School without the approval of the school principal in consultation with the school's CSC.***

<b>School Proposal</b>	<b>Teacher Employment, Compensation and Dismissal Act of 1990 Section 22- 63-203, C.R.S.: Probationary Teachers – Renewal and Nonrenewal of Employment Contract</b>	Human Resource Management: Dismissals
<b>Replacement Policy</b>	Compassion Road will replace probationary and non-probationary status of teachers while at Compassion Road consistent with replacement policies for 22- 63-301 and 22-63-302.	
<b>School Proposal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Teacher Employment, Compensation and Dismissal Act of 1990 Section 22-63-206, C.R.S.: Transfer of Teachers – Compensation</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Human Resource Management: Direct Placement of Teachers</li> </ul>
<b>Replacement Policy</b>	<p>Compassion Road will have the authority to decide whether to accept transfers of any staff from the district on a case-by-case basis. In such situations where transfers occur, the school principal has the authority to determine the appropriate years of experience on the salary schedule.</p> <p>Additionally, a teacher may be transferred upon the recommendation of the school principal from one school, position, or grade level to another if such transfer is mutually agreed upon and does not result in the assignment to a position of employment for which he or she is not qualified. If so assigned, the teacher will also receive a salary corresponding to the position</p>	
<b>School Proposal</b>	<b>Teacher Employment, Compensation and Dismissal Act of 1990 Section 22- 63- 301: Grounds for Dismissal</b>	Human Resource Management: Dismissals

<b>Replacement Policy</b>	<p>As it relates to non-probationary consideration, these teachers will retain any accrued years of effective teaching service accumulated prior to joining SCHOOL should they choose to apply for other district teaching positions, however, these effective teacher years accumulated while at SCHOOL will not count towards obtaining non-probationary status with the district (per district policy).</p> <p>Formal teaching evaluations using DPS systems will be tracked and monitored by the school and will be a portable part of a teacher's file.</p> <p>Specifically:</p> <p>All teachers are hired on annual contracts. Annual contracts shall be maintained as long as the teacher continues to receive effective or distinguished ratings.</p> <p>Teachers on annual contracts may be dismissed mid-year for cause. Mid-year termination of teachers will follow the dismissal procedures outlined in the DPS policy GDQD and GDQD-R.</p> <p>All contracts will be in writing. The school will provide contract language to the district HR office for feedback before any initial employment contracts are signed.</p> <p>Mutual terminations will be negotiated between the teacher and the school principal. If a teacher on an annual contract intends to terminate a contract after the beginning of the academic year, the employee shall give written notice of his or her intent at least thirty days prior to the date that he or she intends to stop performing the services required by the employment contract.</p> <p>The school will not provide first opportunity to interview rights to priority hiring pool candidates, but will consider them for employment.</p> <p>The school will not contribute teachers to the district hiring pool. The school has the right to refuse direct assignments or mandatory transfers of teachers from the district</p>
-------------------------------	---

<b>School Proposal</b>	<b>Teacher Employment, Compensation and Dismissal Act of 1990 Section 22- 63- 302: Procedures for Dismissal of Teachers and Judicial Review</b>	Human Resource Management: Dismissals
<b>Replacement Policy</b>	<p>If it is necessary to terminate a teacher’s employment during the school year, the teacher shall be entitled to the dismissal procedures outlined in policy GDQD and regulation GDQD-R.</p> <p>i.</p>	

<b>School Proposal</b>	<b>Teacher Employment, Compensation and Dismissal Act of 1990 Section 22- 63- 401: Teachers Subject to Adopted Salary Schedule</b>	Human Resource Management: Compensation
<b>Replacement Policy</b>	The school will use the district salary schedule for determining pay for teachers and staff; however, they will have discretion on how the budget is impacted for paying staff (actuals vs. averages). The school principal reserves the right to develop a supplemental compensation system to reimburse employees for extra duty pay as it may arise for activities that may include, but not necessarily be limited to coaching, tutoring, external professional development or for performance incentive pay.	

Part IV: School Design from Performance School Application

Executive Summary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*This section in its entirety will be provided to the Board of Education of Denver Public Schools and will be posted online for the public to review, immediately upon submission of this application.*

[NOTE: The growth projections below are not possible in our existing building site due to size limitations. That being said once we are in a new building the best enrollment size for us is 250 students. This will allow us to serve the most students without losing a loss of services.]

Essential Information Form

Name of Proposed School		The Compassion Road Academy	
School Type (Select One)	Charter	School <u>X</u> --- Performance School	Grade Configuration 9 <sup>th</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup>
		Model or Focus (e.g., Arts, College Prep, etc)	

Ensuring Our Most At---Risk Youth Receive Their High School Diploma or Equivalent to Accomplish the Dreams of Their Hearts through Educational Attainment

Proposed Region for School North East Quadrant – Serving All Quadrants Primary Contact Person Kimberly Ortiz,  
Current Principal of Gilliam

Detention Center

**Enrollment Projections:**

GRADE	2013---14	2014---15	2015---16	2016---17	2017---18
9	75	75	75	75	100
10	50	50	75	75	75
11	25	50	50	75	75
12	25	25	25	50	50
<b>Total # students</b>	175	200	225	275	300

	FRL %	SPED %	ELL %
Proposed Demographics	75% or More/ McKinney---Vento Eligible Students Too	30-%	25%



## I. Culture

The mission of the Compassion Road Academy is to educate the “whole child” in order for them to be conscious, competent, self-loving and positively empowered advocates for themselves. We do this by providing a holistic, safe, nurturing and academically rigorous environment that encourages internal transformation and healing from experiences of trauma, grief and loss, chronic stress; and other issues that have caused barriers to learning, academic achievement and self-love. Students are met at the door with unconditional love and complete acceptance and will enjoy a strong sense of family and community anchored in the spirit of compassion for all.

Because we understand that poverty and social oppression are not overcome with a traditional “one size fits all” solution, we offer a comprehensive arena of services to ensure our students are prepared for the twenty-first century environments that await them. We believe that equity is not equal treatment. Rather, equity is providing the appropriate level of support needed for any student to attain the highest standards and rigor offered to their peers.

The Compassion Road Academy will provide a variety of extra supports; i.e. for teen parents, students on probation, students who are designated as homeless via McKinney-Vento, etc. We have an intervention learning lab that addresses foundational and developmental understandings critical for the success of any reader, writer, and mathematician, which includes brain-based instructional strategies and interventions to support the development of the students’ executive functioning skills. Further the school will provide family therapy support systems, empathy training, partnerships with students’ probation officers ensuring a tighter connection between the courts and the student restitution plan, community service opportunities that connect to meaningful careers providing credit recovery that also address any probationary requirements, cultural competence training for students and adults to address the role of bias in educational attainment and advocacy.

### I. Leadership

Our leadership will ensure that every staff member is given the support and freedom necessary to accomplish amazing things for students. Our non-negotiables are clear. First, we believe that all students can be successful with grade-level content, so the expectation is that our instruction and learning objectives need to be connected to content that is meaningful, engaging, and rigorous. Second, we believe that all students are inherently valuable, and that we need to define a student by whom they are rather than by their behavior. All behavior has meaning, so it is our job to not react but better understand the needs of the student through their behavior and then respond appropriately. Third, we believe that every student should have the right to attend college when they have completed their high school degree or equivalent. It is not that we limit a student’s success to college admission. Rather, we believe that by preparing every student for the rigors of college, we are equally preparing them for any post-secondary option of their choosing.

We also believe students need and deserve to have a voice in decisions made for the school, because it is ultimately their school. To do anything less would be to ensure that privilege and bias continue to act as a barrier in key decision-making, so we must ensure that our school leadership team reflects the voices of the people we serve.

## II. Education Plan

Utilizing Brian Cambourne’s Teaching/Learning Cycle of assessment, evaluation, planning, and teaching, we will ensure that teaching and learning is a flexible interaction always based on the most current and informative student data. This instructional design allows on-going adjustment and flexibility to meet the unique learning needs of each of the students we serve, because it’s recursive and responsive to student

data. We believe summative data; which includes standardized test scores as well as a body of evidence from classroom summative assessments provides a comprehensive academic picture of a student, whereas formative data assists you in making targeted instructional decisions to impact that larger picture. We also believe that daily monitoring allows a teacher to adjust their instructional support to ensure learning occurs. For the 2016-2017 school year, the Compassion Road Academy will begin a school-wide implementation of the AVID program. This will provide the needed structure and consistency from classroom to classroom; which will protect our students from cognitive overload and support them to be more fully and consistently engaged in each of their classes throughout the day.

### III. Teaching

The LEAP Framework is the tool we have used and will continue to use to identify instructional strengths and next steps for every educator in the academy. By incorporating multiple classroom visitations by administrators, coaches and fellow teachers we will see teachers grow in their practice and our students will benefit. Additionally we have ongoing student achievement meetings with every teacher. We always use student data to assess if learning actually occurred. We also create the environment that allows and encourages teachers to be reflective of their practice and to see our profession of teaching as a lifelong commitment to personal improvement and growth. The LEAP Framework provides us with a strong foundation to evaluate the instructional strengths and barriers we observe in classrooms, and then this allows us to effectively plan professional learning for teachers that is both individualized when a unique barrier exists in a classroom or to effectively address whole group professional learning when a pattern is observed in multiple classrooms.

By grounding our teaching in a common planning tool called the teaching/ learning cycle developed by Cambourne and defining clearly what we expect to see in every classroom, we create a clear instructional approach that allows us to increase the likelihood and fidelity that a student will receive effective and engaging instruction. The model schools research has demonstrated time and time again (Haycock, 2008) that students perform better in schools when the learning objectives are clear and connected to grade-level expectations, when students receive additional time and opportunity to gain proficiency against those objectives, and finally when students see the inherent value in their learning everyday rather than having learning always be future-oriented or tied to career development. Learning must have value on it's own, and be engaging, meaningful, and personal so that each learner can find their own intrinsic value in the journey.

# Compassion Road Academy



## Section I. CULTURE

*(7 page limit)*

### A. . Rationale

#### 1. The Compassion Road Academy

*Everybody tells me it's 'bout time that I moved on  
And I need to learn to lighten up and learn how to be young  
But my heart is a valley, it's so shallow and man made  
I'm scared to death if I let you in that you'll see I'm just a fake  
Sometimes I feel lonely in the arms of your touch  
But I know that's just me cause nothing ever is enough  
When I was a child I grew up by the River Lea*

*There was something in the water, now that something's in me  
Oh I can't go back, but the reeds are growing out of my fingertips I can't go  
back to the river  
But it's in my roots, in my veins - It's in my blood and I stain every heart that I  
use to heal the pain...*

*- River Lea by Adelle*

*"Developmental trauma may well be one of the most important public health issues in the world today. It is estimated that in the United States alone it affects nearly three million children yearly. Because PTSD does not factor in developmental issues, and because developmental trauma is not a recognized diagnosis, children are often misdiagnosed with ADHD and bipolar disorder. Large populations of children who could benefit from treatment are missed, mislabeled, or treated incorrectly based on an inaccurate diagnosis. (Heller, p. 119)"*

As the keys jangle on the hips of employees at Gilliam, five doors must be unlocked to access the school within the detention facility. You learn quickly that this setting is different than a traditional school, and you also learn that the stories these students carry are courageous ones always highlighted by unbelievable loss and trauma. This tapestry of tales weighs heavily on the conscience of any educator who has entered this work to create a path of equity for all kids to attain the dreams of their hearts. What does that mean for students in detention, students living on the streets, students who only belong to a gang family, students who walk with hunger every day, and finally students who have experienced untold abuse and neglect beyond comprehension?

When someone is suffering from trauma; whether from shock trauma or developmental trauma, their behavior can be quite negative, hurtful and oftentimes detrimental to those around them; even more so with adolescents because their brains are not fully developed. These children often end up committing crimes in the community, getting arrested and entering into "the system." Furthermore, these children are more often than not labeled as "bad kids." What's also true is that these children tend to be in agreement with those who stand in judgment of them. They wear their histories on their shoulders and they experience great shame and self-loathing as a result. But we of the Compassion Road Academy always strive to see the child behind the behavior. We believe that all behavior has meaning and that our greater work is to help our students heal from their trauma so that they may experience an internal transformation and see themselves as we see them; as competent, gifted, amazingly beautiful human-beings.

The Compassion Road Academy was established to serve the students of Denver Public Schools who are largely "unseen." Many of these students end up in places like Gilliam and I could no longer standby and watch as the system charged with creating change actually reinforces the notion of social separation extinguishing any opportunity for resilience and redemption. A student we will call Jonas was recently in court after successfully growing four grade levels as a reader and passing three parts of the GED. The judge knew this student well, because this student has been in the system since the age of twelve. Having watched his father get shot to death and losing his mother to drug addiction two years later, he then belonged to the only family he knows, a gang. The judge then ordered this student to serve two years in prison, because there was not a program available to meet his needs in the community, even though this student excelled at Gilliam and was an outstanding model of leadership.

The idea and proposal for this school was born on the journeys of the students who travelled through the locked doors of Gilliam.

While at Gilliam my staff and I had the privilege of being a light in the forest of their journey and providing some measure of hope and compassion. Even when we saw students grow and excel as readers, writers, and mathematicians in this setting, too often, we saw students leave Gilliam and again experience the pathway of disengaging from school to focus on survival, disconnected resources, a probation system requiring students to comply with regulations and restitution many adults would not be able to follow, and finally a lack of integration and belonging to a community. The Compassion Road Academy acts not only as a bridge for students leaving detention but also acts as a proactive support system wholly dedicated to ensuring students in these situations of poverty, neglect, abuse, and sometimes a complete and utter disconnect from any family, including extended family, will have a home. Our plan is not only meant to serve the students released from Gilliam but to also accommodate the students who have not found a school home either with their neighborhood or other intensive pathway schools.

Our approach is holistic, because it is required of us to make the type of difference these students need and deserve. The Compassion Road Academy stands as a unique opportunity for our students, because we focus on the whole family system and creating a school community with open doors from morning to night. Because we understand that poverty and social oppression are not overcome with a traditional “one size fits all” solution, we offer a comprehensive arena of services to ensure our students are prepared for the twenty-first century environments that await them. We believe that equity is not equal treatment. Rather, equity is providing the appropriate level of support needed for any student to attain the highest standards and rigor offered to their peers. This means also that we ensure students on probation or involved with the judicial system will be able to complete their community service time in the context of school while earning credit, probation officers and other court appointed officials will be able to do their meetings with students at school, and finally, we also provide specific affective skills regarding court appearances and advocacy skills pertinent to the justice system.

## B. Mission Statement

The mission of the Compassion Road Academy is to educate the “whole child” so that they can become conscious, competent, self-loving and positively empowered advocates for themselves. We do this by providing a holistic, safe, nurturing and academically rigorous environment that encourages internal transformation and healing from experiences of trauma, grief and loss, chronic stress; and other issues that have caused barriers to learning, academic achievement and self-love. Students are met at the door with unconditional love and complete acceptance and will enjoy a strong sense of family and community anchored in the spirit of compassion for all.

## C. Targeted Student Population

1. Identify the region you are proposing to serve as described in the Call for New Quality Schools.

The Compassion Road Academy would prefer to be located in or near the Golden Triangle area. This would provide easy access by bus from anywhere in the City and County of Denver and it would also mean that we would be within walking distance of the courthouse and the Denver Juvenile Probation offices.

2. Identify the grade levels and ages you propose to serve.

Initially, The Compassion Road Academy will target high school level students with an emphasis on reengaging students in their own personal possibilities and dreams by ensuring that any student matriculate successfully from high school or receive an equivalent diploma to open the door to multiple post-secondary options to create a bridge and a new possibility for overcoming poverty and social isolation. In addition, it is our goal to expand our program model to the ECE-8<sup>th</sup> grade population. The research on the growing epidemic of “developmental trauma” clearly indicates the need to support the healing of our children BEFORE the behavior that is born from their pain serves as a barrier to their future success.

3. Targeted Demographics

We recognize that for The Compassion Road Academy to be effective, we must know our mission and ensure we are targeting students that align with our vision and mission. We have identified a population of students with significant needs in multiple arenas and students most at-risk for dropping out or engaging in behaviors that will either recommit them in the justice system or cause them to pick up a charge. Because of our focus on the “whole child” and because of our strong mental health emphasis we serve a variety of students who are suffering from trauma, grief and loss, depression, anxiety, chronic stress, and other mental health issues. We plan to serve students at a 75% or higher free

and reduced lunch number, and we also plan to target McKinney-Vento students who are unaccompanied to provide a bridge for these students. New federal regulations and requirements for students experiencing homelessness for post-secondary institutions have opened the door more widely than ever to this population of students, so we will use current federal law to advocate and use available resources to ensure these students receive exactly what they deserve. Finally, we will be able to integrate students who are second language learners, but we will be targeting students who will be able to benefit from language development strategies focused on building academic language and English vernacular to build a bridge between their content knowledge in their L3 to English.

However, we will limit students to twenty to thirty percent (20-30%) of ELL at a level of L3-L6 on ACCESS. We will refer students to another school to support a student who is lower on the ACCESS and

then provide a bridge for the student when their language skills is generally 25-30%. Our learning lab model takes this into account, because a special education teacher is always integrated into all intervention planning and also provides direct intervention alongside other learning specialists. In addition, we ensure that every learning specialist, including the special education teacher, co-teaches one classroom in their content area of expertise daily to ensure the intervention directly impacts the student's success and access to grade-level content.

#### 4. The Compassion Road Academy – Alignment with DPS Vision

We believe that the district focus on lowering our dropout rate is a noble one and the most important focus we can have for our students. A student who is already at-risk for a variety of factors including recidivism (CO. Department of Youth Corrections - 60% of students who come to Gilliam more than once will enter the penitentiary system as adults), will only have their future outcomes more negatively impacted by not having a high school diploma. A high school diploma could actually be the deciding factor in a student having a life of their choosing or a life of poverty, incarceration or even death. To this end, The Compassion Road Academy will focus on the high school level students and provide a comprehensive array of services and support systems to ensure these students have the environment and systems of support necessary to walk this path of personal redemption, resilience, and educational equity and access. Paulo Freire describes in the text "Pedagogy of the Oppressed" the process of educating a student being the greatest act of social justice, because we provide the opportunity for the student to find their voice. We do not view these students as broken. Rather, we want to provide the context for students to see their experiences as an example of leadership and use this wisdom and experience to serve them in their educational success. Compassion Road Academy serves a critical need and ensures that our integrity with our mission to ensure the success of all children is in place for our most needy students.

#### School Culture

The culture of the school can best be described as safe, loving and nurturing; where every person's voice is heard and valued. Leadership decisions are distributed and students have a voice in every major decision that impacts them. We truly have a model of parent and family engagement rather than limited involvement models. The school acts as a community center and location for engagement and discourse that ensures that all of our students and their families have a place at the educational table.

This culture of inclusion and compassion begins with our staff, because we know that parallel process is critical here. If we have a healthy culture for the adult educators to work and thrive, we ensure this can and will occur for our students. We cannot have an expectation for our students that we do not model in our leadership approach. This is ensured through mutual decision-making through a school-based leadership team composed of teachers, students, and parents. Student achievement meetings occur to inspire our teachers to engage in their own

<sup>1</sup> Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. Herder and Herder: New York.

professional growth and to have a system and structure to ensure we are always reflecting on our practice using authentic student data.

Lastly, administrators are present in the classroom daily and offer support to educators that do this incredible work every day. There is an environment of respect and a common belief that every person is doing the very best they can with what they know, and use this positive presupposition to approach coaching, mentoring, and instructional dialogue.

Our approach to serving students with special needs is unique as a model of instructional delivery. We have an engaging learning lab where any student is supported to grow in their developmental challenges while also receiving support to be successful with grade-level content.

Our approach is to ensure that our learning specialists carry wisdom and knowledge about how to assess, evaluate, and plan instructional intervention for our students struggling in any content discipline. For example, if a student is struggling with mathematics, the mathematics teacher and the specialist team would work together to identify the greatest instructional barriers and strengths the student carries. Then, a plan will be developed to ensure the student is successful during the grade-level content block and also may be identified for intervention lab if the assessment data supports this decision. In mathematics, for example, we utilize a one on one interview that evaluates what level of proficiency a student carries in their critical learning phases (Kamii, C., 2005) in whole numbers, rational numbers, and irrational numbers. We develop effective support plans together for a student, and during the learning lab time, the appropriate specialist or team of specialists will then implement their plan and collect weekly progress monitoring data to ensure the plan is truly accelerating the student both developmentally and ensuring greater access and approximation of grade-level concepts.

#### D. Parent and Community Involvement

##### 1. Parent and Community Engagement

We have discovered over the years that less than fifty percent of the parents still have parental rights in making educational decisions, which, means a majority of our students are considered unaccompanied homeless youth according to The McKinney-Vento Federal Act for Supporting Homeless Students (2008). Due to this barrier, we have had to seek out parents directly in our regular weekly meetings where a team of professionals determine a recommendation to offer a judge in regards to whether or not a student should be committed, sent to a group home, or finally enter the community with either their primary parents or an extended family member. More often than not, the committee, including parents and officers from multiple community agencies, often state that there are not good strong community educational placements. They are often fearful to have the student return to the home school, because they have seen time and time again that the level of support and personalization doesn't often ensure the student will be successful. In addition, students are often told that if they enter high school during the middle of a semester, their time won't count for credit. These multiple barriers almost ensure that our students disengage from the school community and become invisible again. In fact, we have identified that the majority of our students have had at least three months of disrupted schooling, and many students have had two years or more of disrupted schooling.

1. Kamii, C. (2005). *Basing teaching on Piaget's constructivism*. Association for International Early Childhood Education.



We have collected letters from students, staff members from The Department of Youth Corrections, and finally community agencies to affirm the need and value of this extension school. These are located in Appendix F.

Currently CRA is located at 1000 Cherokee Street; which is in the heart of the Golden Triangle area. At our earliest point, I had a meet and greet with several leaders of the Golden Triangle Association. We are now members ourselves of the Golden Triangle Association (GTA) and we have been fully embraced by this community. We have participated in several neighborhood outreach opportunities and we have worked arm and arm with the residents and business owners of the GTA.

We have a variety of community partners and continue to seek others to ensure our unaccompanied homeless youth have the assistance they need to stabilize both their housing and emotional needs, to partner with a local university to provide pre-service teachers and teachers prepared to complete their teaching internship a meaningful setting to grow in their professional understandings, to partner with a local university to ensure we have a strong mental health lab component (Because we have licensed marriage family therapists and other licensed mental health professionals, we can provide clinical supervision required for any counseling candidate to become licensed.), and finally to bridge our students from their high school diploma or equivalent to college or another meaningful post-secondary option.

More specifically, The Compassion Road Academy has partnered with The Learning Source, The Colorado Coalition for the Homeless, the University of Colorado at Denver to support the development of pre-service teachers, Regis University and Metropolitan State University for the development of pre-service counseling students, the Anti-Defamation League to develop our school as a culturally competent “No Place for Hate” site, Judi’s House to provide grief and loss groups focused on death loss, AA, Alateen, Alanon, and support from the Arapahoe House for students and families suffering from the disease of alcohol and drug addiction, Project G.R.A.S.P. for gang violence intervention; and the Fatherhood Coalition, to name a few. We have also establish clear cooperative agreements, memorandums of understanding, and clearly stated goals to ensure that these partnership are successful and meet the target need.

( Appendix F – Evidence of Support f rom Parents, Teachers & Pupils – no page limit )

## 2. Parent Leadership/ Authentic Engagement

Once The Compassion Road Academy expands to include ECE-8<sup>th</sup> grade students, will seek to engage our parents and families in a strategy that addresses their educational needs too. We will be implementing a research-based family literacy model ([www.ncfl.org](http://www.ncfl.org)), which has demonstrated over time that a parent’s participation has a significant impact on a student’s overall academic achievement (Prins et. al., 2012). This strategy will not only improve the outcome and societal possibilities for parents by supporting their language development when needed and also ensuring they receive their GED. The four components of family literacy are: 1) Parenting skills – focused on developing parenting skills that are proactive and also support educational growth, 2) Adult Learning – focused solely on the academic development needs of the participating parent using the Test of Adult Basic Education assessment

as a tool to plan both whole and <sup>3</sup> individualized instruction, 3) PACT (parent and Child Together Time) Time – focused on providing an opportunity for parents to practice supporting their students academically during an actual content course, and 4) Early Childhood Education – focused on serving the educational needs of children below school age. These four components have proven over time to be incredibly effective at impacting the overall educational attainment of the entire family. This program can also serve our teen parents in both providing a measure of childcare support and also in ensuring these non-school age children have the educational foundation necessary to enter kindergarten ready and prepared for the academic rigor that awaits them.

In addition, we will also ensure through this vehicle that we have parents and students actively participate in all of the major decision-making within the school. Because we understand that white privilege and bias can impact decision making when the school staff lacks diversity, we are committed to ensuring diverse voices are heard when making key decisions. We believe the community we are serving knows the best way to support their development and growth. So, we empower our families in a sincere and on-going way. This type of decision-making will also include weekly classroom visits alongside the principal after parent coffees to highlight an instructional approach the school is utilizing.

### 3. Accountability Committee – Vehicle for Empowerment

Our School Accountability Committee meets monthly. Members are recruited from the student body, parents, educators in the building, and finally community agencies with whom we partner. The common role for any participant will be use our on-going data wall that reflects both summative and formative data to make the very best decisions we can on how to target our resources to make the greatest benefit for students. We will also use this committee to meet the federal requirements connected with Title-I delinquent and Title I, Part A school-wide funds.

### E. Parent Satisfaction

Our goal on the DPS survey our first year was to have over eighty percent satisfaction. We exceeded this goal our first year and even though we saw a drop with the parent satisfaction survey during year two, we see it as a learning opportunity and for year three and beyond we have an expectation of a 90% or higher parent satisfaction rating. One of the core methods to accomplish this goal is to ensure we provide multiple ways for parents to provide feedback throughout the year, including a comment/suggestion box, parent coffees (Donuts for Dads), survey-monkey, accountability meetings, monthly newsletter, and finally having an open door policy and encouraging feedback. We will continue to use the feedback that we receive from students and parents to make changes or adjustments to our parent engagement plan. In addition, changes and adjustments will be made for our Title I planning to reflect the greatest possibility that our parent engagement plans reflect the adjustments based on the feedback.

In addition to formative methods, such as asking for feedback regularly at meetings, having an open door policy, suggestions/comments box, and other informal methods, we will also collect quarterly satisfaction data through a Survey Monkey website offered at the school site or available on their home computer if available. This will be well advertised in our monthly newsletter, and we will utilize this data on our data wall as another indicator to track to ensure we are meeting the needs of the community we serve.

Prins, E. (2012). *Poor women's involvement in community-based adult education: Consequences for social networks, social support, and mental health*: Goodling Institute.

If there are any concerns regarding the satisfaction survey for parents, we are open and transparent about the data, including it in our newsletter. In addition, if appropriate and necessary, we will pull focus groups of parents together to ensure we have a strong diversity of voices providing input to establish some specific and strategic measures to improve the culture. We stand by the core belief that our role is to facilitate the voice of every parent and student we serve.

## F. Student Engagement

We have an attendance committee made up of our Guidance Counselor, Probation/Youth Court Advocate, Mental Health Coordinator(s), and Coordinator of Intervention Services. This committee meets weekly to address attendance issues as they occur and to determine the necessary individual and school-wide interventions to improve overall attendance. Furthermore, the attendance committee meets weekly with the Principal to provide an updated status report on student needs and ongoing interventions. We view attendance issues as formative data that the school community may not be effectively meeting the needs of the student in question. So, it is also an opportunity to address how the school community can enhance our customer service and support for individual students. From there, we will use a systemic model to evaluate barriers and supports the student has in their life to support them to attend school regularly.

We do regular home visits to identify possible solutions to the current barriers a student is experiencing. On a monthly basis the school staff pairs up and goes out on a Friday afternoon to complete home visits. To the extent possible, we provide for individual student needs so that we can eliminate barriers to attendance. This may include supporting reliable transportation if needed, providing breakfast if needed, looking at having the student consider later afternoon courses or evening classes, provide family therapy if there is a lack of support within the system, and finally developing a shared plan with the student to assist the student in finding the inherent personal value of school for them. We also engage the school district resources when a student becomes severely truant to ensure the system of supports beyond our school doors are engaged when appropriate. We address truancy through a lens of support, compassion, and clear expectations rather than only providing consequences. We believe all behavior has meaning, so we view this as an opportunity to reach out more effectively and ensure the student identifies fully with the community.

To assess student satisfaction, we offer a quarterly satisfaction survey completed through Survey Monkey and provide five minutes of class time during advisement to ensure this is completed. From there, we utilize this data to identify strengths and next steps to address this concern. In addition, because we are a school dedicated to expanding our cultural consciousness and awareness, we also consistently ask the question: Is our bias as a community or as an individual acting as a barrier for our students? This courageous question increases our awareness of privilege and also supports us to be reflective in where we carry privilege and where personal bias may be impacting how we see and support a particular student.

While at Gilliam, we had from time to time students who were born as one sex but identified as another. On one occasion we had a student who was born a boy but identified as a girl. This student was experiencing bullying from other students, and there were staff who insisted on calling her "Mister" and "Sir", even though they knew she was already taking hormones and engaged in support groups for students who are transgendered. As a school community, this was an opportunity for us to grow and to reflect on how we could ensure Gilliam was also a community where she belonged. We had to provide professional learning for every staff member, set some expectations to follow when working with the student, and then continue to dialogue with the student to ensure we were meeting her needs. We see any crisis of competence in our staff as an opportunity for growth. Over the course of the last couple of years at the Compassion Road Academy we have included required training for our staff regarding LGBTQ issues. The Compassion Road Academy is a "safe school" for all of our students regardless of size, skin color, ethnicity, spiritual beliefs,

gender, sexual orientation, sexual identification, or socio-economic status.

Student satisfaction data is included in all evaluations, including teacher, staff, and administrators. The students are our customers, and it is our responsibility to ensure each student feels like they have a place at the educational table. Lastly, student satisfaction and sense of belonging are a core component of our instructional approach, so evaluating student satisfaction and sense of belonging also correlates to student achievement data.



## **I. Leadership**

### **Section II. LEADERSHIP** *(10 page limit)*

The Compassion Road Academy believes that an effective school that is targeting the needs of our students who have consistently not been able to fully engage or find themselves a full partner in an educational community must be built on a foundation of ensuring freedom for our students.

Because of the issues and trauma that many of our students carry, society has often responded to their issues and concerns by making their world even smaller. When we expect any student to fit into a traditional box, then learning is for compliance sake and for pleasing the involved adults.

However, when we stand by the courageous notion that our work is nothing less than creating miracles and ensuring our students have the community of support they deserve, every action we take breaks down the walls of oppression and bias many of our students have suffered under for many years. So, The Compassion Road Academy requires nothing less than a transformational leader who will stand in the possibility that our everyday actions in this school open doors to freedom. The insidious role of bias and prejudice in our culture silently become a soothsayer of a child's future by reducing expectations and branding a child with a word that allows us to give up on them.

The Compassion Road Academy will change the course of direction for a student by giving them a voice and ensuring that their education belongs to them. The role of school leader will not easily be encapsulated by a list of qualities and references to research. Rather, the expectation of the leadership team at The Compassion Road Academy requires the ability to not be in charge of all things at all times. Rather, distributing leadership to students, staff, parents, and the greater community will be a critical ingredient in what allows us to transform a child's experience of school as failure to one of redemption and hope.

#### A. . Leadership Team Personnel

1. Provide the profile of your school's ideal leader, including skills, qualifications, and characteristics. Is it a requirement that your school leader has school leadership experience?

The Compassion Road Academy believes in a shared leadership model with multiple voices of input around a common vision and mission. To that end, The Compassion Road Academy needs a leader that knows how to ensure every interaction is a professional development experience. Because we believe the real work is always teaching and learning, even when addressing behavior, the school leader must embody through their actions and presence that reflection and growth are the keys to continuing to advance and improve our knowledge base and instructional skills. The leader should demonstrate a strong competence in developing educators in every interaction with instructional dialogue (Duncan, M.

2006; Fink, E. & Resnick, L., 2005)<sup>1</sup>.

When we say instructional dialogue, we mean the ability to support the educator to use formative monitoring data from students to assess if learning occurred based on the teaching. We embrace Richard Elmore's model of the school development cycle (2005) that ensures a school leader is assessing the needs of their staff on a regular basis to determine their next professional development steps needed to overcome any instructional barriers in the classroom. This is incredibly complex work, but we believe the key responsibility for a principal is to be an instructional leader. In the words of Harvey S. Firestone, Founder of Firestone Tire & Rubber, "The growth and development of people is the highest calling of leadership."

Educational researcher and author, Michael Fullan, says of the "Ready, aim, fire" approach to school leadership; that it is the most effective strategy that a school leader can implement; especially when embarking upon a significant change or new initiative. While this may seem counter intuitive on the onset because our hearts tell us that it is better or at least easier for everyone to be on board and bought into the plan before the work begins. However, what we so often overlook is the importance of disequilibrium and it will be the initial naysayers that will put forth the hard questions that must be wrestled with in order to make a good plan a great endeavor! Martin Luther King Jr once said, "A genuine leader is not a searcher for consensus but a molder of consensus!" We need a school leader who knows the research, has seen and experienced the realities of our situation firsthand; who can then set forth a solid plan and fire away. A leader who is not afraid to have the tough conversations but who has the strength and courage to embrace the arguments because what we understand about such undertakings is that the data itself will cause the naysayers to set aside their doubts and it is the data that we will carefully and continually analyze in order to fine tune or work and adjust our systems.

“A good head and a good heart are always a formidable combination,” said, Nelson Mandela. We at the Compassion Road Academy would agree whole-heartedly with Mr. Mandela. We want a school leader that has a good head and a good heart and who knows how to motivate the many hands of our school community to work in unison with one another to make miracles happen for the population of students that we are called to serve. Our leader must be creative and smart about the research, systems and models that work. Furthermore, the “head” implies that our leader must be vigilant in observing and listening and considering multiple opportunities and implications of the decisions that will be made. The “heart” for us symbolizes the values and beliefs of the leader that will be driving the work forward. Our leader must be invested in getting to know the gifts, areas of expertise, and hearts of those people in our community – teachers, students and their families. “Leadership is unlocking people’s potential to become better.” – Bill Bradley, (NBA basketball and Senator).

Head, Heart and Hand leadership – Ritchie Scholars Program, includes the work of the hand/body. All three are essential for moving a school community forward. In order for the body to work

1

Duncan, M. (2006). Literacy coaching: Developing effective teachers through instructional dialogue. Richard Owens Publishing. 2.  
Fink, E. & Resnick, L. (2005). *Developing principals as instructional leaders*. Educational Leadership. 3. Elmore, R.F. & Burney, D. (1997). School variation and systemic instructional improvement in Community School District #2, New York City. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh, Learning Research and Development Center.



efficiently, one must understand the many parts of the body and utilize the body in the most efficient way possible. We would never expect to have our hands responsible for causing us to walk; nor would we ask our feet to work a computer, call on the telephone, or brush our teeth. Similarly, it will be necessary for our school leader to understand deeply not only the many skills and talents that exist amongst the members of our community but also to know our individual frailties as well as how we each process and communicate. The principal will continue to assess our individual needs in and out of the classroom and be able to identify multiple modes of support, including visiting a more knowledgeable teacher, modeling in their classroom, and providing a content coach in their classroom to develop their capacity (Kipnis, A., 2002).

In addition, a strong school leader uses their regular monitoring of learning through regular classroom visits to identify effective professional learning to ensure the staff has the support necessary and the capacity to implement the school improvement plan with fidelity and competence. Using formative and summative data from classrooms and doing regular visitations ensures a principal is always assessing and adjusting their professional development plan to best meet the needs of their teachers. Ideally our school leader will have had specific professional development experience working with teachers and other professionals as a whole group, small group and as part of an individual coaching model.

Haycock (2007)<sup>1</sup> identifies critical components of model schools that are able to consistently demonstrate growth and proficiency at higher levels regardless of socio-economic status or other external factors. A critical focus for our school administrator will be to not only have high expectations for students, strong professional learning for teachers, and a strong ability to develop professional learning to increase fidelity, but it will require the critical ingredient of infusing culturally relevant pedagogy into every aspect of professional learning. Specifically, a school leader, regardless of their background, would need to have a deep understanding of their own personal bias and how privilege impacts how students experience not only the world of education but their experience in their community. Courageous conversations regarding race and other oppressed groups will be a critical ingredient, because we will need to ensure our school culture is on the path to personal growth and instructional reform through the lens of cultural competence. This specific skill set will allow the school leader to understand bias when they see it and support the educators and staff to reflect on their bias. Uncovering unconscious processes regarding bias and privilege is critical for all students to have a chance to be fully seen and provided with an opportunity to be successful. A culturally competence leader also has the ability to support educators and staff to explicitly teach and support students from oppressed groups to code switch and manage a culture where they will need to face oppression and bias on a regular basis. Anything less would be to fail our students (Lindsey et. al., 2005; Boykin, A.W. & Noguera, P., 2011)<sup>1</sup>.

We do feel that it is extremely important that our school leader not only has leadership experience at the building level but that this experience is specific to the population of student that the Compassion Road Academy will be supporting. Ideally our building leader will already have relationships with our present partner organizations; i.e. the Department of Youth Corrections, Paramount Youth Services, DPS High School and Intensive Pathways Principals, Denver Probation; to name a few. Ms. Ortiz participated and trained as part of the first cohort of the Ritchie Scholars Program. As a result, she was able to obtain a superior, hands-on educational/training experience. However, we are most excited that she has direct and specific experience as Principal of Gilliam and believe that this experiential background is essential for the work at hand. In the words of Anthony Jay, "The only real training for leadership is leadership!"

2. If the Principal/Head of School candidate has been identified:

1

Haycock, K. (2007). Closing college doors: How education sacrifices opportunity to privilege. The American Prospect. (18) 2. Kipnis, A. (2002). Angry Young Men. San Francisco: Josey-Bass Publishers.

1

Lindsey, R., Roberts, L., & Campbell-Jones, F. (2005). The Culturally Proficient School. Thousand Oaks, CA.: Corwin Press. 2. Boykin, A.W. & Noguera, P. (2011). Creating the Opportunity to Learn. Alexandria, VA.: ASCD.

- a. Explain why this individual is well qualified to lead the proposed school in achieving its mission and goals. Summarize the proposed leader's academic and organizational track-record. Provide specific evidence that demonstrates the leader's capacity to design, launch, and manage a high performing school. If the school leader has never run a school, describe any principal leadership training programs that the proposed leader has completed or is currently attending.

Kimberly Ortiz would be extending her leadership role as principal of Gilliam to The Compassion Road Academy. Her ability to know her adult learners and plan professional development based on the data has been demonstrated for many years. As a licensed principal who completed her degree program with The University of Denver Ritchie Scholars program in conjunction with DPS, she has worked in urban settings most of her career and has fought tirelessly to overcome the oppression our students experience everyday. Since her time as the administrator at Gilliam she has transformed an otherwise unhealthy, toxic culture to a highly functioning team of professionals.

The staff satisfaction surveys have continued to increase over the years. During her tenure, Gilliam was identified as having the strongest educational program in the State by auditors from the Department of Youth Corrections. Furthermore, Gilliam has been identified as a "showcase" school by the Regional Director of the Department of Youth Corrections. Gilliam was awarded a "Distinguished School Award" in 2009. Ms. Ortiz has met her SIP/UIP goals each of the seven years that she was Principal of Gilliam. Additionally, Kimberly Ortiz also received The Mission Award from Regis University for her work with a non-profit in East Central Africa dedicated to expanding hospice care.

Prior to her work at Gilliam, Kimberly Ortiz served for 3 ½ years as the Assistant Principal for the Contemporary Learning Academy. During this time, CLA was the primary "alternative" school for DPS. Ms. Ortiz has built a reputation of respect among her teachers, her peers and other DPS colleagues. She was also the administrator in charge of the GED and Night High School programs at CLA. She established a District-wide night high school program called Denver's Summer School at Night Program; which served not only students who were currently enrolled at CLA but also students who were enrolled at various high schools across the district. Furthermore, while at CLA, her primary responsibility was to design, develop and administer the school's professional development initiatives. Kimberly Ortiz effectively infused her understandings of curriculum and development and her years of experience as a District-wide, K-12, professional developer into CLA's culture and adult learning experiences.

- b. Provide specific data that demonstrates strong evidence of the school leader's ability to effectively serve the proposed target population.

While Kimberly Ortiz was the principal at Gilliam, the academic achievement for students attending Gilliam consistently showed that 80% or more of the students enrolled in the program for a month or longer showed an average growth of 1.5-3.5 years on the NWEA MAP's assessment in both reading and mathematics when this data was extrapolated and in addition, the average growth for readers was 2 years in just one month's time using a specialized reading intervention program that was developed under Ms. Ortiz's leadership. The Gilliam School met/exceeded the school's performance targets for the time that the school was under Ms. Ortiz's leadership.

3. What other personnel will make up the leadership team? What are the essential duties and responsibilities for each person on the leadership team?

We are a small but mighty team, well-round and full of expertise and passion for this work that calls to us all: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, concerned citizens can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has."

– Margaret Mead

Kimberly Ortiz, Principal – Kimberly has worked in education for twenty years; beginning her career as a high school mathematics teacher

in Jefferson County, CO. She was the the principal at Gilliam for seven years, and she can be credited with the significant turn

around at Gilliam. She created a culture dedicated to learning and ensuring equity for every student who dawns the doors. Kimberly has also served as a mathematics specialist for the district, assistant principal for the Contemporary Learning Academy, and has been an associate professor for higher-level mathematics and educational courses at local universities.

Kimberly believes that serving and supporting children to pursue the dreams of their hearts is the most noble and courageous work a person can engage. It is her calling and her avocation. (B.S. in Mathematics – Metropolitan State College of Denver; M.A. – Curriculum and Instruction –

Colorado Christian University, Emphasis in “at risk/at promise students and students with special needs;” University of Denver/ 34 graduate hours towards M.Ed. – Educational Administration) – licensed as a professional teacher and administrator and highly-qualified in mathematics with a secondary endorsement in Spanish language.

Sia Chandler, Assistant Principal – Sia has been in education for 24 years. She worked as a SPED para for 7 years and then served two years as a classroom teacher for school to career. She worked for 7 years as a counselor/teacher. She spent one year on the BEST team for DPS and served two years as a Dean before becoming an Assistant Principal. She has been an Assistant Principal for 5 years both at the middle and high school levels. Sia has a Masters in Counseling of Education, a BA in Social Sciences and her Administrator’s license.

Melissa Ewer-Scholl, Intervention Coordinator and SAL – Melissa served at Gilliam as the reading interventionist and literacy specialist, having received her masters in reading from Regis University. She also has an additional endorsement in Special Education. Her contribution and impact can easily be measured by increased acceleration for our readers and writers far exceeding District averages, but her heart and commitment to students provides an exemplar for any leader who views their work to serve others. (M.A. – Reading – Regis University) – licensed as a professional teacher and highly qualified in reading and English/language arts.

Matthew Christensen, Guidance Counselor – Matthew joined the Gilliam team in the Spring of 2011 and quickly emerged as a leader among many other highly qualified professionals. He began his work at Gilliam as an At Risk Youth Specialist and served Gilliam as a reading tutor. He was later given the responsibility of coordinating Gilliam’s GED program.

Matthew has a Master’s in School Psychology. While at Gilliam Matthew developed an affective needs intervention to support students in crisis who were returning from court and wholly unable to participate positively in their classes. (B.A. in English/Lit and Comp - M.A. in School Psychology, Clinical Mental Health Concentrations, Denver Seminary)

Jesse Mercer, Mental Health Coordinator, LCSW – BS Criminology; Minor in Human Communication from Southern Oregon University. Master of Social Work, Colorado State University. Jesse has three years of experience working in the public school system as a school social worker. He also worked for a Denver based law firm in which he oversaw more than 50 dependency and neglect cases for children ages 4 weeks to 21 years of age. Jesse possesses a wealth of knowledge about community resources and support for our most needy students and their families.

Nicole Moore, Mental Health Coordinator, LCSW – Nicole is an LCSW. She received her Masters in Social Work from the University of Denver. She also has a BA in Sociology from the University of Colorado. For both her graduate degree and her undergraduate degree, Ms. Moore was a research assistant for multiple projects by University professors in the Department of Psychology, Sociology and Social Work. She was also the principal investigator on two separate projects evaluating the effects of mindfulness on teen mothers. Additionally she worked at Children’s Hospital in both the inpatient and outpatient clinics. She also worked for one year in Georgia leveling sex offenders for the community for the State of Georgia.

Phillip Ouellette, Social Studies Teacher, Reading Intervention Specialist, Lead Teacher, Night School Coordinator – Phillip has five years of teaching experience. For four of those years Phillip taught literacy, reading intervention, social studies and coordinating independent study programs. Phillip has a BA in History from Metropolitan State University with a Secondary Teaching License. He is currently serving in a dual role at the Compassion Road Academy, teaching Social Studies and serving as the Coordinator for CRA’s night school program.

4. What are the qualifications and credentials necessary for the other members of the leadership team?

There are not specific qualifications or credentials required. However, in addition to the building level leadership team there is also a School Accountability Committee (SAC) that is comprised of the Principal, members of the mental health and discipline teams, the Coordinator of Community Partnerships, the Executive Assistant, two teachers, two parents and two students but by the time the new school has opened, the expectation will be that the leadership team will have a parent, student, community partner representative, and a special education teacher included.

5. Have the other members of the leadership team been identified? If not, what is the timeline to fill each position?

Yes, however the members of the SAC change annually.

6. What systems are in place in your leadership team structure to ensure redundancies in knowledge and skill? How do you plan to proactively build a succession plan for your school leader?

Because the leadership team will be engaged in professional development on a regular basis, the expectation will be that each staff member develop deep understandings of one another’s areas of expertise. The learning lab team will be multi-disciplinary and work together with their different arenas of expertise to serve students. We are utilizing a similar model for the leadership team, where we will validate each person’s expertise, but we will be working and collaborating to serve the unique needs of staff and students.

Because leadership is most effective when guided by a common vision and mission, we will not have a model of a demagogue leader that carries the school. Rather, leadership and responsibility is shared, so there will not be a figurehead. Because of this, a new principal replacing Kimberly Ortiz would have systems and structures that ensure collaboration, problem-solving, and professional learning already in place. The Compassion Road Academy does not believe in a micro-managing type of leadership, so the goal is for every staff member to build their capacity through reflection

using data and growth through professional learning(Blasé, J. & Kirby, P., 2000; Crowther et. al., 2002)<sup>1</sup>.

( Appendix G – Job Descriptions for all Leadership Team Positions – 8 page limit)

( Appendix H – Resumes for all Identified Leadership Team Members – 10 page limit )

B. Leadership Team Coaching and Evaluation

1. Explain the school’s system for identifying the school leader’s need for coaching and PD as well as for providing these supports.

Blasé, J. & Kirby, P. (2000). *Bringing Out the Best in Teachers*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press 2. Crowther, F., Kaagan, S., Ferguson, M., & Hann, L. (2002). *Developing Teacher Leaders*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

The school leader or principal has an on-going relationship with the school district instructional superintendent for the network, so the hope would be that this relationship would continue to support the development and growth of the principal. In addition, the principal will be the instructional leader utilizing the data to make an informed choice in a collaborative manner with the leadership team as to what the focus of professional learning should be. We believe that even though the principal and leadership team identify the focus of professional learning, it still means the principal is a fully engaged participant in the professional learning unless it is an arena of expertise the administrator already carries. The environment as described is a culture of reflection using data and professional growth, and this is no different for the principal. The Principal is evaluated by the Instructional Superintendent that is assigned to the network that Compassion Road is assigned to. Furthermore, the Principal is evaluated utilizing the LEAD Framework.

### C. School Personnel Structure

1. In addition to the leadership team discussed above, outline the key positions that your school will fill to ensure successful ongoing operations. Indicate what functions may be outsourced to third parties or consultants.

Staffing needs are determined through a collaborative effort of the Principal, the SLT and the SAC; this includes the classroom teachers; support staff; mental health team and SPED.

Other essential student specific staff will include: One full time guidance counselor, two full time Supply an organizational chart that includes each position/title, name of person holding the position (if applicable), and the year in which the school anticipates adding the position to the staff roster.

2. Supply a staff roster that details all staff positions such that teaching positions are listed individually and all paraprofessional or specialty teachers are included. This roster should be a full list of the planned staff, but can be in list format as opposed to an organization chart. If you are phasing in your program, please use multiple columns to indicate which positions will be added in which years. – This is located in Appendix J.

### D. Student Enrollment

1. Describe how enrollment practices will provide equal access to any student in your attendance boundary who is interested in attending the school, including students in poverty, academically low-achieving students, students with disabilities, and other youth at risk of academic failure.



The enrollment process includes an application and a personal interview with the student and a family member/significant adult. This process ensures that the criteria we use to identify appropriate students for the Compassion Road Academy will be applied consistently.

The ideal Compassion Road Academy student will be the student who is at the top of the intervention pyramid for Denver Public Schools. A large portion of our school's enrollment consists of students who have been recently released from Gilliam or other DYC commitment/placement facility. Additionally, our doors are open to other DPS students who have not found a school home either with their neighborhood school or with another intensive pathway school in the district, targeting students who have been disconnected from school, possibly experiencing homelessness (especially unaccompanied youth), and students who have experienced incidences of developmental/shock traumas, grief and loss, anxiety, depression, chronic stress and other mental health issues that may have caused barriers for the students to learn and achieve, students who have been bullied, etc.

While those of us at the Compassion Road Academy understand that not every school is meant to take care of the needs of every student, we are committed to ensuring that every student has a viable school option in order to pursue his/her high school education. To this end, we will refer students to the District level Transition Team AND we will follow up with parents with suggestions and resources to ensure to the extent that we can that every student has an adequate school home.

(See Appendix K for Enrollment and Orientation guidelines and frameworks.)

# Compassion Road Academy



## II. Educational Plan

### Section III: EDUCATION PROGRAM

*(22 page limit)*

#### A. Curriculum

##### a. The curricular model and focus

The Compassion Road Academy ensures that every participating student receives the level of support needed to engage in their learning and demonstrate improved academic growth and proficiency. We belong to The Denver Public Schools, and we have demonstrated success and strong academic growth for students utilizing the district leadership with curriculum and instruction for several years now. We believe that the curriculum for any school in The Denver Public Schools is the state standards or the common core. In Haycock's model schools research (2007), the number one component that supports a narrowing of the achievement gap is to have high expectations aligned with grade level standards and to provide additional time and opportunity to any student who may need it. We will demonstrate how we are providing the additional time and

opportunity at The Compassion Road Academy that makes us unique and truly highlights how this approach and model ensures a greater degree of success than a traditional school. We address in each content area how the intervention plan aligns with the Denver Public Schools' curricular focus and how this tight alignment provides a greater degree of success because it is clearly linked.

**b. The learning environment (e.g., class size, structure, etc.)**

The learning environment will consist of twenty students per class working at small tables focused on didactic instruction, where students own their learning and use their voices to make meaning of new learning and concepts. In addition, the learning environment provides whole- group teaching for less than 30% of each class period, small group instruction that encourages discourse between students on the learning at hand, intentional grouping to provide additional support or for pre-teaching a lesson, and finally individual time to both apply new learning and to have the support for meaningful practice. There will also be centers in each classroom that provide the necessary technological supports including laptops, Ipads, etc. when needed and connected to their learning, centers filled with manipulatives and school supplies pertinent to the task at hand, and finally each classroom will have a content literacy section that provides additional text resources including leveled texts aligned with the topic being addressed.

**C. Instructional philosophy and approach**

Because we have demonstrated through effective interventions and strong grade-level content teaching that all students can demonstrate significant growth as readers, writers, and mathematicians, we plan to build upon our current instructional model by adding AVID as a school-wide initiative for the 2016-2017 school year. The Compassion Road Academy is utilizing Brian Cambourne's (Itterly, K., 2011) instructional model to ensure effective teaching occurs every day for every student in every classroom. Utilizing the teaching/learning cycle of assessment, evaluation, planning, and teaching, we ensure that teaching and learning is a flexible interaction always based on the most current and informative student data. This instructional design allows on- going adjustment and flexibility to meet the needs of the unique students we serve, because it's recursive and responsive to student data.

**Literacy**

The Compassion Road believes that it is our role as educators to ensure that our students develop as readers and writers rather than teach them to read and write (Caulkins, L., 2000; Harvey, S.,

2011). This line of distinction is critical, because it describes the instructional environment and belief that guides our practice. We believe the role of content literacy and content writing is critical in ensuring our students can meaningfully access post-secondary opportunities and succeed in those higher level settings, where knowing how to mine non-fiction resources by utilizing the multiple text features and then using that knowledge to incorporate into their content writing is a critical skill that will be required them at all higher levels of education (Klein, P., 2008). This is also a primary focus of the new “Common Core Standards.” At The Compassion Road Academy in the literacy intervention classes, students are engaged in whole group instruction, where in this short mini-lesson, mentor authors are utilized to highlight a specific learning objective to enhance them as readers and/or writers. In addition, students are engaged in independent reading on a regular basis with weekly conferring to deepen their comprehension and increase their stamina with a variety of genres. We utilize the writing process to ensure our writers are engaging in multiple genres of writing and using mini-lessons to inform that process. In addition, we will have reader’s response journals to be utilized as a journal reaction between the teacher and student weekly. Finally, the expectation for all core teachers is to be intentional in their teaching about how to use text features unique to the genre of textbooks to deepen their access and comprehension while engaging in content, including science and social studies. This teaching of reading in all contents explicitly utilizes the secondary reader’s continuum to guide our instructional foci and also utilize this for monitoring students’ growth formatively.

#### Mathematics

The Compassion Road Academy staff believes that the effective teaching of mathematics is nothing less than a civil rights issue (Schoenfeld, 2006)<sup>1</sup>.

Too often, our students are denied access to the grade-level rich mathematics they deserve in favor of classes that offer well below grade-level skills. Our belief is that students are engaged as mathematicians and solve novel problems while understanding and highlighting the mathematical concepts imbedded within the problem. We focus on summarizing the learning rather than summarizing the problem when implementing the launch, explore, and summary instructional model. We also believe that students, regardless of their current number development level, can be successful with grade-level concepts. For example, if a student is learning quadratic functions and examining the growth in a table, we can use what we know about a student’s number sense to ensure they work with friendly numbers to ensure the numbers do not become a barrier to the grade-level concept. In addition, we are explicit in our launch to highlight the differences between additive thinking and multiplicative thinking inherent in delineating a linear function from a non-linear function.

We address explicitly in our launch the underlying number concepts critical to deeply understanding the content teaching at hand. Finally, every mathematical block will begin with a unique instructional strategy called a number talk (Richardson, K. 2003), whereby students will solve computation problems in their heads without paper and pencil, and then they have an opportunity to share and acquire multiple strategies and approaches to solving the problem at hand. The focus of this instructional strategy develops numerical fluency and increased flexibility with number sense. Additionally, there a large instructional focus on problem solving with “real world/relevant” opportunities as well as encouraging the estimation skills of our students.

#### Science

<sup>1</sup> Schoenfeld, A. H. (2006). Mathematics teaching and learning. In P. A. Alexander & P. H. Winne (Eds.), *Handbook of Educational Psychology (2nd edition)* (pp. 479-510). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum. 2. Calkins, L. (2000). *The Art of teaching reading*. Heinemann. 3. Harvey, S. & Goudvis, A. (2012). *Strategies that work*. Stenhouse Publishers.



The Compassion Road Academy insists on students being engaged as scientists through the process of inquiry-based learning. Students are engaged in developing hypotheses and testing these educated predictions through experimentation. This engaging and hands-on experience supports students to discover concepts and understandings of their natural world that will develop concepts from which they can build their scientific literacy. During the launch, novel scientific vocabulary is explored and working definitions are created as students deepen their experience with new words. This experience of content vocabulary development is recorded on the word wall, and picture cues are also incorporated to ensure access for all students and to act as a rebus from which students can access for long-term memory. Regardless of the content of science being addressed, the students are making connections between the major themes and concepts of the field that apply to all arenas of science. There is an emphasis on distinguishing the value and purpose of a variety of data collection systems, displays of the data, and then interpretation of these varieties of data, including qualitative, quantitative, and hermeneutic. Unique instructional approaches will include an exploration of careers in mathematics and science through classroom speakers, field trips, and outdoor field studies (Herman et. al., 2011)<sup>1</sup>.

#### Social Studies

As social scientists, our students explore the multiple fields of social studies, including psychology, sociology, history, etc. to examine the critical themes that define a culture, a family, and an individual. This systemic approach to evaluating and deepening the major themes of social studies aligns with the school's focus on understanding a student as part of a greater system. This theme and focus will define the rationale and purpose for all social studies instruction.

Students are given opportunities to make personal connections to the content at hand and understand the role society plays in their lives by examining current affairs through a historical lens. This means that students are problem-solving and discussing the major issues and themes of history, psychology, and sociology to develop their voices and their own personal set of beliefs against the backdrop of the major tenets of theory that guide every field of the social sciences. An example would be that students study the major issues of depression as an individual lens through psychology, depression as a social construct through sociology, and finally understand how the concept of depression as a disorder is situated in history (Kracl, C., 2012).

As a social scientist, we open the doorway to exploring why certain groups of people experience privilege and why other groups experience bias and oppression. Using this lens of cultural competence, we examine every major theme of psychology, sociology, and history through a critical lens and discuss how privilege and oppression are reinforced through revisionist histories and generalized research when using only white males in a study. Questions such as, "Who decided who was in charge? Why were certain groups of people privileged? How does this still occur today?" will be examined with a critical eye as we own that all fields of social studies are infused with bias, so having an educated and aware conscience will inspire critical thinking and decision-making. Our lens of cultural competence is infused in every aspect of our teaching and is an explicit component of our teaching every instructional period.

#### d. Instructional methodology and strategies necessary to deliver the curriculum –

The Compassion Road Academy integrates the LEAP Framework as our foundation for addressing and cultivating effective teaching and learning. This foundation is our tool for reflection as we problem-solve learning data for students weekly. These weekly student achievement meetings provide a regular context for teachers to problem-solve instructional supports set against the backdrop of student data. From there, the LEAP Framework is an incredible common language and foundation from which to grow our capacity and flexibility in meeting the unique needs of

<sup>1</sup> Herman, J. et. al. (2011). Relationships between teacher knowledge, assessment, and practice in science teaching. CRESST Report 809. National Center for Research. 2. Kracl, C. (2012). Review or True?: Using higher---level thinking questions in social studies instruction. Social Studies, (103), 2, 57-60.

students we serve. For example, if we discover from our data that a teacher needs to focus on developing a more engaging learning environment for students, we reference the LEAP Framework to discern specific instructional strategies known to develop this into action. In addition, if the leadership team begins to see a pattern in all classrooms that is substantiated through student data, then we utilize the LEAP Framework to develop a common dialogue and common focus for professional learning targeted for the whole staff.

●. Methods to differentiate instruction to meet the needs of your targeted student population – The Learning Lab Model

The Compassion Road Academy

The Learning Lab - A Multi- Disciplinary Intervention Model

Purpose: The main purpose of The Learning Lab ensures that all students who enter The Compassion Road Academy have the skills and understandings necessary as readers, writers, and mathematicians to achieve at the same level of academic rigor as their age and grade-level peers. In addition, The Learning Lab also ensures that students' social/emotional needs are addressed in the context of academic growth and excellence. It is important to note that some of our students with unique cognitive and/or developmental disabilities may need specialized programming.

The Learning Lab Model:

By utilizing the teaching/learning cycle developed by Brian Cambourne, we evaluate individual learning plans for each student using the assessment, evaluation, planning, and teaching recursive instructional model. The students will be targeted for this additional intervention based on the assessment information we collect when students enter the facility. This intervention will focus on our students with the greatest level of academic needs as readers, writers, and mathematicians while also ensuring that every student either is prepared to successfully matriculate from high school or successfully pass the GED test.

- A) Path 1 – Target Credit Recovery Model: During the initial week of a student's orientation into the Compassion Road Academy, he/she will participate in a variety of academic assessments. Additionally, the transcripts of incoming students will be carefully evaluated. This information will not only be used to determine a student's initial course schedule, but also to assess the opportunity for credit recovery for each incoming student. Those of us at the Compassion Road recognize that it is not uncommon for our students to lose credit due to emergent situations that occur in their lives that are beyond their control. Consequently, the academic proficiency of our students can be easily described much like "Swiss cheese." They will often have a variety of learning gaps but not so much that it makes sense for them to always have to repeat an entire semester of a course. For students in this situation, we will develop mini units of study and assessment in collaboration with the student that students can complete before and after school and during learning lab hours in order that they might be able to demonstrate proficiency with the Essential Learning Goals (ELGs) of a given course; in order to obtain credit for that course without having to repeat an entire semester's worth of work as would most likely be the case in a traditional high school setting.
- B) Path 2 - Literacy Intervention: Using our formative assessments as students enter the Compassion Road Academy, it will be determined whether or not students are identified for this service. In addition, Individualized Education Plan service delivery requirements may also warrant a student being selected for this additional intervention. (Intervention Framework Included)
- C) Path 3 - Mathematics Intervention : Students will generally have a co-plan and co-teach environment for mathematics where a general education teacher highly qualified in mathematics will both consult and co-teach directly with a highly qualified special education teacher.



In addition, small groups will be pulled from time to time to address numeracy development. (Intervention Framework Included)

- D) Path 4 - Affective Needs Support: Addressing how social/emotional challenges impact the educational experience for students will be critical to their success both academically and in life. To that end, we have developed a plan to address these affective needs in a comprehensive manner. The focus will be on a crisis response model and trauma response model emphasizing psycho- educational support grounded in a cognitive behavioral framework. This support plan will include but not be limited to:
- 1) Suspension Support – When students are suspended from school due to behavior that could be considered dangerous to the student and/or to others, students will be placed on restriction in a location within the school. They will be assigned an academic packet and an individualized affective needs project; which will both be required to be completed to be readmitted into school. This will include meaningful restitution and an amends process (Restorative Justice).
  - 2) Individualized Counseling Services – Each student will be given a mental health assessment in order to determine his/her needs moving forward at the Compassion Road Academy. Students will be assigned their own counselor. Students will be placed on a leveled support system based on assessed need; i.e. some students may see their assigned counselor once per week or once every two weeks or once per month.
  - 3) Small Group Counseling and Supports: A variety of small group supports are available for students. Students may be assigned to a support group based on assessed need or students may opt into the various supports available. These support groups include but are not limited to: Grief and loss counseling; drug and alcohol classes/counseling; gang reduction/prevention; LGBTQ; Wilderness Therapy; Animal Assisted Therapy; Men of Valor; Young Women’s Empowerment; to name a few.
  - 4) Daily Check- Up: In addition to the school-based social worker who will be individually connecting with each student carrying IEP service hours in the mental health arena, students will be offered the opportunity to sign-up and our affective academic support staff will check-in with each student who asks for an individual check-in.
  - 5) The Family Therapy Lab: This lab will be directly supervised by a licensed mental health professional, and this intensive counseling service will be focused on reuniting families when possible, providing groups for students focused on systems that impact their daily life, and individual counseling. This is another example of a unique support system we will be providing to students to ensure they have the emotional support to overcome their challenges and to ensure that these students understand we care about them as whole people rather than just being concerned about their test score.

Progress Monitoring:

Participating students receive weekly monitoring of their progress towards the stated intervention focus to determine both the level of support needed and the appropriate intervention necessary for a student to grow as a reader, writer, and mathematician. The progress monitoring reports will also be used to determine if a student may need a referral for special education services. This data will be critical to document growth and can be utilized for future grant opportunities and to affirm that federal funds utilized for this purpose are making the impact necessary to affirm use of these dollars in this manner. We will also use our weekly data when we connect on Mondays to adjust plans of instructional support to ensure every identified student is demonstrating growth.

Readers Writers Workshop – Emphasis on Independent Reading and Small Group Instruction

10 - 15 minutes	35 - 40 minutes	5 - 10 minutes
Whole Group Instruction	Instructional Options <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Independent ( I )</li><li>• Small Group (G)</li></ul>	Summarizing the Teaching Point

<p><u>Reading Demonstrations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– instructional focus based on student reading behaviors against the secondary reading continuum for DPS</li> <li>- Provides a model of a proficient reader reflecting strong and varied strategies</li> <li>- Demonstrations reveal thinking, skills and other behaviors readers use while engaged in reading.</li> <li>- This particular portion would focus on comprehension strategies that lead to developing background knowledge and making text connections</li> </ul>	<p><u>Teacher Support:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Multi- Syllabic Reading REWARDS; teaches specific word attack and rate development strategies in an effort to improve rapid word recognition and comprehension through an embedded vocabulary component</li> <li>b) Read 180 Intervention – coupled with one on one conferring with teacher specialist; will be used to develop explicit comprehension skills.</li> <li>c) Reading Assistant from Scientific Learning a brain based reading program that builds fluency and comprehension skills.</li> <li>c) Just Words; a multi-syllabic and phonics intervention</li> <li>d) Individual Reading Conference – conferring with readers to support them with text selection, review comprehension strategies and develop higher level questioning and text interaction</li> <li>e) Small Group Reading Instruction Groups</li> </ul> <p><u>Independent Options:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Independent Reading with appropriately leveled texts</li> <li>Reader’s Response Journal</li> <li>Reading Groups – students select a text to read with peers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Reader’s Response – could take place at any time throughout the instructional block</li> <li>b) Student Share- students are able to share strategies and insights with teacher and peers</li> <li>c) Application time, students apply new strategies with the guidance of teacher or independently based on teacher and student discretion</li> </ul>
--	--	---

Number Development Block/ Content Reinforcement and Front- Loading

10 - 20 minutes	30 - 35 minutes	5 - 10 minutes
Whole Group Instruction	Instruct ional Options <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Independent ( I )</li><li>• Small Group (G)</li></ul>	Summarizing the Teaching Point

<p>Number Talk – based on number development continuum</p> <p>LAU NCH –</p> <p>Number Development Centers - whole group demonstration on number development center/ game/ activity/ computation strategy</p>	<p>EXPLORE</p> <p><u>Number Development Centers</u></p> <p>Kathy Richardson’s Critical Learning Phases</p> <p>Assess/Evaluate:</p> <p>Based on The Secondary Number Development Interview, determine where a student lies on the continuum of number development. Monitoring Notes will be utilized for every student in the intervention, which monitors students’ growth with whole numbers, rational numbers, and irrational numbers.</p> <p>In addition, determine if a student is at a beginning (teacher-support), developing (independent station or center), or secure level with a number concept (connect number concept to computation).</p> <p>Planning:</p> <p>After the teacher has identified the appropriate center, the teacher ensures the monitoring of the students’ target numbers to ensure the appropriate level of challenge exists.</p> <p><u>Key Resources:</u> Kathy Richardson’s Intermediate Number Dev. Series/ Investigations/Connected Math</p> <p>Teaching:</p> <p>The teacher will identify which students need a teacher-directed center versus students that can work independently. After the small group instruction experience, the</p>	<p>SUMMARY</p> <p>Number Development Center Summary:</p> <p>After the students engage in their center work, the teacher will ensure students make connections between their center work and computation. For example, if a student is working on knowing their rational number combinations to create a whole number, the teacher will have them do an addition or subtraction problem that applies this number concept.</p> <p><math>\frac{1}{2} + \frac{3}{4}</math></p> <p>(You might hear a student say, “I know that <math>\frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{2} = 1</math>, so I have <math>\frac{1}{4}</math> left over. So, I can make a one and then <math>\frac{1}{4}</math> more, so the answer is <math>1\frac{1}{4}</math>.)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Front- Load Content:</p> <p>This instructional option is where the teacher provides an interactive demonstration on content that will be coming up in their grade level pacing documents. For example, a teacher may start to explore area and perimeter with students prior to them experiencing this concept in class. This ensures that students approach new learning with greater confidence. This is not meant to be a lecture. Rather, this should be a problem-solving experience to introduce students to the concepts, mathematical vocabulary, and highlight the</p>
--	--	--

	teacher will continue to monitor the students in their centers.	connections with number development.
--	---	--------------------------------------

## 2. Utilization of the DPS Curriculum

Because many of our students at The Compassion Road Academy may be returning to their home schools at some point, it is critical that our district curriculum, scope and sequence, and level of rigor required for all students in DPS be maintained and enhanced for our most needy students. Upholding the fidelity, quality, and intention of the DPS curriculum will be critical to our success. Our instructional, affective, and levels of intervention are the unique recipe we provide to our students to ensure their success. In other words, our level of support is far greater than would be typically available in a regular traditional high school, but the expectations and curricular focus will be maintained.

## 3. Scope/Sequence

Our students are assessed using a standards-based grading system, where the most critical themes of any grade-level content area are assessed. This also diminishes the role of bias in assessment, because we are ensuring that our assessment system is tightly linked to our instructional outcomes. By utilizing a standards-based/competency model, academic growth and achievement is based on proficiency rather than seat time, and then grading is based on proficiency rather than non-achievement factors and homework completion. Students are enrolled weekly and will participate in an orientation process that will include but not be limited to: Academic and affective needs assessments; empathy training; and academic and affective interventions.

(See Appendix K for the orientation framework.)

( [Appendix K – Course Scope and Sequence for One Grade i n Each School Level – 15 page limit](#))

## 4. Academic Standards: Defining the Goal

We have not added additional academic standards. Rather, we use the common core standards to truly know what proficiency looks like in each major theme of each content area. Then, we discern and identify what intervention will look like that specifically addresses content gaps. Content gaps will be mainly addressed in the classroom through front-loading and small group instruction prior to learning based on current formative data collected through monitoring during regular instruction. Further, brain based instructional strategies will be incorporated into each classroom setting to support accommodation and intervention by developing the Executive Functioning skills of our students

(Chenoweth, K., 2007; Jensen, 2009)<sup>1</sup>.

## 5. Cultural Relevancy

Because ninety percent or more of the students at The Gilliam Detention Center are children of color, we recognize and embrace the role education plays in the lives of assisting disenfranchised groups of students to attain the dreams of the hearts. Our staff is required to attend and participate in a variety of professional development opportunities that are focused on “cultural competency and culturally responsive teaching.” We also infuse an emphasis on equity and awareness of institutional racism in our instructional approaches with students. We believe an oppressed group that is empowered with the knowledge and support to recognize where they experience bias and oppression is more capable and far more effective in addressing the personal biases they face everyday.

We believe that the reason we have a majority of our students of color placed at Gilliam is a reflection of a greater societal issue regarding oppression and bias. We are unafraid and courageous in addressing this. We expect every educator and staff member to be willing to engage in the process of examining the bias they carry and how that may act as an instructional barrier for a student. Our school engages in this

courageous conversation on a regular basis and we shine the light on how oppression and institutional racism impacts learning everyday. We will continue to raise consciousness about this in every interaction, and it a chief foundation from which we draw to inform our work and our level of effectiveness. We will courageously address all forms of bias and privilege, examining gender privilege, heterosexual privilege, religious privilege, and white privilege as we assess our achievement data and ensure that disaggregated groups are reflected on our data wall. A student achievement gap is a reflection of how effectively we take on the issues of culture and bias, and we use this student data regularly to have courageous conversations and to guide our practice and improvement. In closing, culturally relevant pedagogy is not an additional component to our work. It is the work.

**6. Class Size.** Describe the school's class size and structure.

There are currently no more than 22 students per class. This is a strong number that will still allow heterogeneous grouping and flexible support systems, but this is also small enough to ensure students do not fall through the cracks or become invisible. The classroom setting has desks/tables that can easily be moved to support a variety of flexible grouping structures. The classrooms are set up for centers providing access to technology supports, manipulatives when appropriate, and also be filled with additional texts that support the topic at hand.

**7. Timeline of Curriculum Development.** If the curriculum is not fully developed, provide a timeline outlining curriculum development during the school's pre-opening year. Who will be responsible for completing the alignment of curriculum with standards? How are funds allocated in the budget to account for this process?

The curricular review and alignment was accomplished by the leadership team in collaboration with district experts in The Division of Instruction. We will continue to reach out to our district support systems to ensure we carry this instructional plan forward using the knowledge and capacity of district support staff.

**B. School Schedule & Calendar**

<sup>1</sup> Chenoweth, K. (2007). *It's being done*: Boston: Harvard Education Press 2. 2. Jensen, E. (2009). *Teaching with poverty in mind*. ASCD.



1. Provide the school's proposed calendar for the first year of operation and identify the total number of days and hours of instruction. Identify the number of in-service days for teachers. Explain how the calendar will support the stated goals of the educational program.

We have included this in Appendix L.

2. Provide sample daily schedules for one week of classes, both from the perspective of a student and the perspective of a teacher. Describe the structure of the school day and week. Note the length of the school day, including start and dismissal times. Provide the minimum number of hours/minutes per day and week that the school will devote to academic instruction in each grade for core subjects such as language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. What is the average number of minutes of academic instruction to be provided each day? Provide the minimum number of hours/minutes per day and week allocated for tiered interventions, enrichment, tutoring and other non-academic activities. Explain how the school's daily and weekly schedule will optimize student learning for all students, including those needing either acceleration or intervention.

We have included this in Appendix L.

( [Appendix L – School Calendar & School Day Schedule – 3 page limit](#) )

#### C. Progress Monitoring and Assessment

1. Measurable Annual Achievement Goals and Benchmarks and
2. Longitudinal Data Review

The demographic data for the Compassion Road Academy is approximately 45% Latino, 45% African American, 10% other (Asian, Caucasian, Native American, other); of those students we typically find that 25-30% of those students are identified SPED with 80% of those students having an ED designation; meaning that on average 20-25% of the students at the Compassion Road Academy will have a significant emotional disability. We also find that 65% or more of the students are three or more years behind grade level in reading and writing and 80% of the students are four or more years behind grade level in mathematics. Approximately only 10% of our students are ELL students levels L3 to L5 who come to CRA seeking ELD services. Even so, we recognize that the majority of our students, largely due to the lack of consistency in their schooling, have severe deficits in their language development.

#### Reflection on Data:

For the cumulative 13-14/14-15 SPF, we are still plagued with inaccurate data calculations and reporting from our first year (13-14). This is because of the 2 and 3 year measures on the SPF. While the District did admit that the data was incorrect; they refused to take steps to rectify the errors or hold us blameless for the year in question. The errors occurred primarily as the result of the complex interfacing with Gilliam AND as a result of not having access to "Grade 13" for our GED students. For example, 50% of our students came to us from Gilliam. As a result, the "attendance improvement" data is skewed because students came to CRA after experiencing 100% attendance in a lockdown facility. Furthermore, our attendance secretary was unaware of the "alt program" attendance "reason" for much of the first semester; which resulted in inaccurate reporting of our "overall attendance rate." Lastly, because the students were unable to complete their courses at CRA because of incarceration, their ability to make AYC was greatly hampered. Without access to the "Grade 13" enrollment tab our GED students were counted in several areas where they should not have been counted (MAPs; TCAP; attendance improvement; attendance rate; and AYC) thereby skewing the data by increasing the denominator and lowering the overall "success" percentage. Furthermore, as a new school, we were new to the "game;" which includes to a large extent a lack of understanding as to the systems and logistics that govern the way in which the

systems of accountability in education work. Regardless of these frustrations, the task at hand is to continue to move forward; as we did last year, where we have control.

It appears that we are plagued this year with inaccurate data as well. We made several enrollment adjustments (students who had left but whom we had not yet withdrawn previously). These adjustments should have favorably impacted our MAPs data as well as our attendance data and AYC. On the Principal Portal system, our overall attendance rate for the year was at 87%. We also do not have a lot of our data available to us currently; i.e. attendance improvement, AYC, and truancy. Additionally, the overall parent survey response rate is up 7%. That being said, this is representative of MORE THAN a 10% increase from last year but we did not get the bonus point. This too must be investigated.

**\*MAPs growth:** We are still awaiting accurate MAPs data from the District. That being said, our data is bleak and mostly stagnant from the previous year. We are consistently showing a growth rate of 40-60%. We know that we are doing better than this but we are plagued with, as most Pathway schools are, students who are not bought into the MAPs assessment and therefore “throwing the test.” So in addition to increasing the level of instructional and curricular rigor, it is clear that we need to put some strategies in place to garner more student “buy-in” of this assessment. We have drawn this conclusion as we had approximately 20 students who performed significantly worse on the Spring assessment than they did on the previous Fall’s MAPs tests. Even with taking into consideration the student “buy-in” factor, our reading, writing and math scores continue to fall well short of our goals. The comprehension levels for our students are falling around the 6<sup>th</sup> grade level; which is an indicator that while the students can read (phonemic awareness), their vocabulary levels continue to be very low. As for writing, last year we implemented a school-wide interdisciplinary writing initiative. We learned that while we were supporting our students with the Common Core Standards of non-fiction, evidenced based writing strategies; we were in actuality teaching oranges while testing apples; at least as far as the MAPs – Language Usage test is concerned; as the Language-Usage MAPs assessment tests basic foundational writing skills (grammar; spelling and punctuation). For this year, we recognize that we need to put time and energy into reviewing with our students these basic writing components. Our math scores also continue to fall well short of our intended goals. We have the additional challenge this year of supporting two very new CRA math teachers. Furthermore, it looks like we will lose one of these math teachers mid-year this year due to his health. Students’ level of performance in mathematics when they come to us is generally at the 5<sup>th</sup> grade level. We are convinced that the answer is not to separate and remediate BUT rather to provide a strong level of imbedded intervention. For students performing at very low levels however, we will provide a double block of mathematics twice per week for additional support.

#### **Trend Data:**

By analyzing our “young” trend, we are finding that we continue to receive a very broad range of students with multiple issues. We also seem to be enrolling students who have more severe mental health issues. This is most likely because of our therapeutic model. What is also interesting however, is that while we are receiving more students with mental health issues, the percentage of students that we are receiving who are over age and under credit/who are behind grade level in reading/math has remained constant. We have had quite a few victories in addition to our challenges. One tremendous victory for us this year is that we have had a much smaller percentage of students who have made repeated trips back to Gilliam/the “system” through the course of this year. The reduction of the recidivism rate of our adjudicated youth has been one of the primary goals of the Compassion Road Academy. The recidivism rate has dropped 60% between our first year (13-14) and our second year (14-15). The COACT data was solid. We were less than 1% point away from hitting green in all 4 areas. Our overall attendance and attendance improvement data is up; which is encouraging but we need to keep our focus on these important factors because these are two year measures; so we are not “out of the woods” yet. Our AYC data has not yet been provided but we are confident that we met expectations for AYC; providing the corrections that were made at the end of the year were taken into account by DPS.

#### **Student Engagement:**

Last year we tightened up our attendance reporting; enrollment and scheduling. One of our primary Major Improvement Strategies was to focus on our

overall attendance rate. We were very pleased to see this rate increase from 67% our first year (13-14) to 87% our second year (14-15). Of course, as attendance is a two-year measure, we still fell short of meeting the “approaching” category for our cumulative total. This year we will once again have a robust attendance initiative; but this time, we will also be focusing on individual student attendance “growth.” With regards to the Student Perception Surveys, we hit 90%, entering the blue category. However, this percentage is too close for comfort; so we will continue to have the student perception survey data on the front of our minds throughout the school year. In terms of the parent perception surveys, we increased our response rate more than 10% from the previous year; as 10% of 46 is 4.6 and we hit a response rate of 53%. (We were not given a bonus point however but as this is an oversight, we will continue to pursue that extra bonus point). That being said, the overall parent satisfaction rating declined by 8%. This is of great concern! It appears from the responses that our “parent communication” was sorely lacking last year. This factor will be addressed in one of our Major Improvement Strategies for this year.

#### Priority Performance Challenges:

PPC#1-2: For this first Priority Performance Challenge we have chosen to reiterate what we believe to be the underlying causation factor for the underachievement of our student population at Compassion Road. What we understand is that there are factors that impact our students’ ability to achieve/make forward progress in their academics; i.e. severe grief and loss issues (death loss and otherwise); severe trauma experiences; depression; anxiety, addiction; chronic stress; abuse/domestic violence. Nearly 20% of our students have been assessed with “acute” depression and are at risk of suicide. **The Compassion Road Academy in its design, is committed to addressing these underlying issues and thereby attempting to arrest the negative/non-productive behaviors that are getting in the way of our students’ academic success. This is a Priority Challenge that impacts multiple SPF indicators.**

PPC#1: Low achievement in all major areas (Reading, Writing and Mathematics) the majority of our students are reading and writing at the 6<sup>th</sup> grade level. Furthermore, the majority of students are performing at the 5<sup>th</sup> grade level in mathematics.

PPC#2: Even in consideration of the growth we saw between year’s one and two with our overall attendance data, we are still dealing with two year measures. Therefore, we must continue our push for increased, overall attendance rates. Furthermore, while we saw growth with our “individual student attendance growth” data; it was not sufficient, so this needs to be emphasized in our Major Improvement Strategy in our school’s UIP for attendance.

PPC#3: Our students did quite well with the COACT test last year. We were less than 1% point away from hitting green in all four areas. This means that we need to focus intentional effort in this area to ascertain green status for our COACT.

PPC#4: The parent perception survey ratings were 8% lower for the 14-15 school year as compared to our first year, 13-14. This is of great concern. The data is telling us that we scored markedly lower with the “parent communication” related questions. This must be a focus for the upcoming 15-16 school year; especially because the parent perception survey result is a 6 point possible measurement category on our SPF. There is no acceptable rationale for why we would get anything less than blue in this category!

#### SPF Goals

SPF Category	2016-2017 Goals	2017-2018 Goals	2018-2019 Goals
<b>Attendance Rate</b>	86%	88%	90%
<b>Attendance Growth</b>	77%	80%	85%
<b>Truancy Rates</b>	10%	8%	6%
<b>MAPs Growth Reading</b>	80%	85%	90%

<b>MAPs Growth Writing</b>	80%	85%	90%
<b>MAPs Growth Math</b>	80%	85%	90%
<b>PARCC Status</b>	State Expectation	State Expectation	State Expectation
<b>PARCC median growth</b>	State Expectation	State Expectation	State Expectation
<b>COACT/SAT</b>	Rdg: 16% Eng: 14% Mth: 16% Sci: 16%	Rdg: 17% Eng: 15% Mth: 17% Sci: 17%	Rdg: 19% Eng: 17% Mth: 19% Sci: 19%
<b>AYC</b>	90%	90%	90%
<b>Student Perception Survey</b>	92%	94%	96%
<b>Parent Perception Survey</b>	80%	85%	90%
<b>Graduation Rate</b>	55.4%	57.4%	59.4%
<b>Dropout Rate</b>	25%	20%	15%

**Other Goals:**

<b>Category Label</b>	<b>2016-2017 Goals</b>	<b>2017-2018 Goals</b>	<b>2018-2019 Goals</b>
Recidivism back into the "system"	Down 65%	Down 70%	Down 75%
% of Students participating in CTE options	10%	15%	20%
% of Students with Concurrent Enrollment	10%	15%	20%
Time on task in the classroom	Up 20%	Up 25%	Up 30%
Re-occurrence of hospitalizations due a mental health related condition	Down 10%	Down 20%	Down 30%
Need for crisis counselor during the school day	Down 10%	Down 20%	Down 30%

Progress monitoring data is analyzed and assessed on a weekly basis and serves as the impetus for teachers' weekly student achievement meetings. The data supports the teachers and other school staff to make timely and formative decisions in order to effectively adjust instructional strategies to meet the learning needs of all of our students. Additionally, students are expected to track their own growth data using the results from the weekly progress monitoring assessments.

### 3. Information System to Manage Student Data to Ensure Effective Management

The Compassion Road Academy has developed a 3-dimensional data platform that will now allow us to track data from a variety of data sources for each of our students. This data is viewed weekly during the "student achievement/kid talk" sessions.

### 4. Corrective Action Approach if Achievement Goals Not Met

As previously mentioned one of the primary tenets of the Compassion Road Academy is to be honest and transparent about the data. This is imperative if we are going to be able to support our students to grow and find success. Therefore, we have on-going conversations and adjust our instructional strategies accordingly. Furthermore, administrators are in the classrooms on a daily basis. As trends are identified and teacher development needs become apparent, we incorporate this observational data into our professional development plans. Individual teacher effectiveness is supported through a differentiated professional development plan. Corrective actions if necessary, are the responsibility of the Principal. Corrective actions may be given for violation of the "non-negotiables" of the Compassion Road Academy. It is the belief of the leadership of the Compassion Road Academy that skills and strategies can be taught but values and soft skills cannot so easily be adjusted. If a staff member of Compassion Road violates a guiding moral principle of the school community; i.e. demonstrates a lack of respect for a member of the community either youth or adult, this may result in a corrective action.

### 5. What other types of data will you collect (i.e., attendance, credit accumulation)?

Ongoing District data tracking resources are used consistently as part of the weekly student achievement meetings. The administration also reviews all of the periodic progress report grades and will have pertinent conversations with teachers, students and their families. Family attendance at school functions is monitored and families receive invitations and also calls of regret if family members were not able to make it to a designated function. If there was important student/school information given at a particular meeting, arrangements will be made to get the information to the family as soon as possible. We are also tracking the "response to intervention;" especially with our mental health interventions. Likewise, we are tracking our students who have legal involvement; i.e. probation/parole, in order to ensure that our students do not return to the system and are therefore able to successfully "graduate" from the requirements of probation/parole.

## 6. Policies and Standards for Grade Promotion

Just as we have ongoing enrollment at the Compassion Road Academy in order to support the success of our students and the decrease in recidivism, we also have on-going grade promotion. Students are fully aware when they have received enough credits to be considered a sophomore, junior, senior by the District standards. We feel that these conversations are extremely important in order that we build up our students to be strong, knowledgeable, and positive self advocates.

## 7. Graduation Requirements (High Schools only).

### a. Graduation Requirements

We utilize the same graduation requirements as the rest of Denver Public Schools. There is no variance with this, because we believe in the rigor and level of proficiency required of students to attain a high school diploma. Our school provides additional levels of support to ensure every student has this opportunity.

### b. Plan to Ensure Students Graduate from High School

Because our model is to ensure that students are validated for what they know through standards-based assessment and monitoring, we ensure a student receives credit from a perspective of proficiency rather than seat time. This is more than a credit recovery model. It allows students to enter our academy and instantly receive credit and also use the most current content formative data to ensure appropriate placement.

#### Exit Standards After Graduation from High School

In addition to a student demonstrating proficiency in all content areas required for graduation, a student also has to demonstrate proficiency with the twenty-first century workplace competencies to ensure they can advocate and build a bridge to their career and area of passion. We accomplish this goal through ensuring every student at The Compassion Road Academy will be completing both a Dream Project, which is a reflection of their personal passions and career interests and ensuring every student complete required internships and community service opportunities to apply the workplace competencies and receive feedback in a meaningful context of their choosing.

#### English Language Learner Students

The Compassion Road Academy ensures that all teachers are ELA-E qualified to ensure every classroom provides a strong language development environment, where all lessons will include an ELD and a content standard focus for learners. We will also ensure that the environment has displays that facilitate access and development of language, and that implementation of best practices from the DPS ELA Department's instructional guide are implemented with fidelity in every classroom. We are committed to this focus being a significant theme of all professional learning, and every person on the leadership team will be expected to expand their understandings in this arena as part of their professional growth plan yearly. Because of the critical focus this program provides to the academic achievement of all students, this program is directly supervised by the principal.

#### D. Special Education Students

The Compassion Road Academy believes that effective special education services begins with ensuring this support is additional and also provided in context to ensure a learner has the support they need and deserve to reach the highest levels of proficiency. In addition to ensuring a student has the support to reach their IEP goals, we also expect a student with special needs where there is not significant cognitive needs to achieve at the same level as their peers because otherwise, the additional services would not be making the intended difference for the learner. The weekly student achievement meetings will be reflecting on how a student with special needs' growth is commensurate with the level of support being provided.

##### 1. Identification of Students with Special Needs

Because the students we are targeting reflect the population of students that are often over- represented in special education, we must take this process very seriously. We have a balance to ensure we do not identify a student that would not justly benefit from being on an IEP and we also must ensure that students who need the services and support an IEP provides receive them. Our current special education team works in collaboration with the district manager to assist in decision- making on all aspects of the special education process. Our process reflects a strong RTI model that ensures we evaluate the needs regularly of all students and plan interventions accordingly.

After multiple intervention attempts occurring both in the classroom and in the learning intervention lab, we will then evaluate our progress monitoring data over a cycle of three interventions (generally six months) to determine if an initial IEP process should be initiated.

Because we have a strong student study team composed of all of the learning specialists and a few core teachers, we establish plans of support for students over the course of months before a special education referral is ever discussed. In addition, using a culturally competent lens, we evaluate whether or not our current staff serving this student have the necessary professional learning or instructional competence to serve an individual student. From there, this could become a two-pronged approach, where we develop the educator's competence and capacity while also providing the appropriate intervention either within the classroom or in the learning lab as an additional period.

##### 2. Recruitment of Students with Special Needs

The Compassion Road Academy will be an equal opportunity location, and we will ensure that we have no policy or process that prohibits or inhibits the registration of a student with special needs. Because we are targeting students who have been disengaged from school for long periods of time, our data from previous years indicates that we will typically have 25-30% of our students designated as SPED. To this end, we have developed an inclusionary model that will ensure students receive their core academic instruction in addition to interventions appropriate to the academic needs at hand. These interventions are targeted and timely and we adjust the instructional support plan as needed based on the formative student data collected during weekly progress monitoring. The admissions process will ensure that we coordinate with LDT recommendations and incorporate the district process for placement decisions to ensure that our school and our academic support systems will truly be the most appropriate placement for a student. Lastly, it is critical to mention that we are developing this academic and affective support model to ensure that students who may or may not be on IEP's will experience a holistic support system that responds proactively and intentionally to meet the unique needs students carry. By having a multi-disciplinary team of specialists, including 2.5 special education teachers, 2 LCSWs, multiple support staff, a .5 school psychologist, and an Intervention Coordinator, we will ensure this collaborative network addresses these needs both within their core instruction and within the learning intervention lab which is an additional time and intensive

opportunity that does not replace core academic instruction.

### 3. Staffing Considerations

By utilizing our team of human resource professionals, we have been able to work closely with their team to ensure we get the right people in the right positions. her at Gilliam for almost eighteen years.

We believe the key to retaining effective special education teachers is to ensure they have the proper amount of time to address the legal and compliance components of their job, to also ensure they are included in any major decisions impacting the school-wide intervention plan, to ensure they are provided with the proper resources to effectively support students both in a classroom and in an intervention lab.

### 4. Service Delivery/ Instructional Support Model

Please reference the intervention section for each core content area. We believe that the intervention that would occur at a Tier III level is focused on developmental challenges and gaps. So, to this end, we have developed Tier III interventions that focus on those developmental gaps and challenges. We separate knowledge and proficiency into two separate strands as Piaget did. Piaget defined knowledge as either being social knowledge which is culturally defined standards and outcomes, and then he also defined knowledge as being developmental, coining number development sequences as logico-mathematical knowledge, which is very different than needing support with understanding linear functions in a table, graph, and equation. However, there are links between developmental knowledge and social knowledge, which we make explicit in our instruction both in the general education and the intervention classroom (McMaster et. al., 2005)<sup>1</sup>.

So, we view Tier II interventions to occur inside the classroom and both provide greater access to grade-level content experiences by front-loading or pre-teaching and also developing content vocabulary critical for access to the learning at hand. Our Tier III evaluates readers, writers, and mathematicians using developmental assessments to identify a strategic intervention to develop those critical missing links. For example, we utilize Kathy Richardson's Assessing Number Concepts Series to do one-on-one interviews assessing a students' developmental number sense with whole number systems, rational number systems, and irrational number systems. We then use this data to develop targeted interventions through number development and computation games and experiences that are either teacher-directed when it is direct instruction or independent experiences to facilitate meaningful practice.

### 5. Schedule Adjustments

Our plan is to have a strong core educational model and then offer the intervention lab as an additional elective credit to students who would benefit. So, we ensure the special education team and the other teacher specialists co-teach one period a day to ensure their interventions link tightly to the academic experience for students. We also then identify this co-taught environment to meet the academic needs of our most struggling students on IEP's. This collaborative team then works

<sup>1</sup> McMaster, K. L., Fuchs, D., Fuchs, L. S., & Compton, D. L. (2005). Responding to nonresponders: An experimental field trial of identification and intervention methods. *Exceptional Children*, 71 (4), 445-463.



together in a student study fashion weekly to adjust plans or to create new instructional supports for identified and non-identified students.

## 6. Assessment Process

Because we are doing weekly progress monitoring against the student's identified area of need, we naturally use both formative and summative data on a regular basis to ensure our targeted interventions are meeting the needs of the identified students. Please reference the above section where we describe in more detail how each of these assessments links well to the academic core for students.

## 7. Professional Development Considerations

Our multi-disciplinary learning specialist team who leads the intervention lab will be developing teachers in their classrooms through mentoring and coaching while working alongside students, provide a lesson study model approach where we explicitly look at one student who is not showing academic growth and developing a shared plan to increase capacity and collaboration. We believe examining one student in this intense way will actually expand the instructional capacity for future students. This will be an on-going system infused into our weekly planning. Finally, the learning specialist team will provide professional development to core academic teachers, staff, and even parents throughout the year to build a deeper understanding of how literacy connects with all content arenas, specific instructional supports we can infuse in every classroom as a Tier I support system, develop capacity with small group instruction focused on a Tier II level of intervention focused on providing more access to grade level content and also reinforcing concepts inherent within those grade-level key ideas, and finally inform the teachers on how to use the components within an IEP to inform individualized support of certain students.

## 8. Center-Based Program Considerations

We would partner with our district special education manager to effectively plan for this type of center-based program. We actually believe our academic support model would be a strong way to encourage more center-based students to have greater access with the general education population. This is another reason why we chose not to be a charter school, because the systems of support specific to this type of center-based program would be critical to ensure the success.

Because our special education teachers are generalists and have a multitude of knowledge in how to serve the unique needs of any student, we are able to ensure we hire and retain effective teachers that demonstrate a strong understanding and capacity to ensure The Compassion Road Academy is a place for all students to be successful. In addition, through our collaboration and partnership with the school district, we ensure that we have the same expectations and culture regarding student learning, meaning that we will employ weekly progress monitoring data to ensure we are meeting the unique needs of the students we serve. In addition, by approaching instruction through a developmental lens and a standards-based grade level lens, we believe this foundation allows a student to show up and be fully seen and valued for wherever they are on this spectrum.

If we became a school that hosts a center-based program, we would ensure the teachers leading this effort were a full and active part of the specialist intervention team. This also means the wealth of knowledge and support of this team would be made available to the teacher and students of this program. We must model our inclusionary belief system first by ensuring the center-based teacher is fully included in our professional development and our intervention team.

## E. Academic Intervention and Acceleration

### 1. [Assessment System to Identify Potential Students for Intervention](#)

In the arena of assessment, we will utilize both formative and summative measures for students as they enter the academy. We believe summative data gives you a comprehensive picture of a student, whereas formative data assists you in making targeted instructional decisions to impact that larger picture. Too often, summative data takes a front seat when engaging in instructional

dialogue, but we believe that daily monitoring allows a teacher to adjust and make decisions in the moment to ensure learning has occurred. By employing the NWEA MAPS assessment, we start with an overall picture of how the student is performing in the major content areas of literacy, mathematics, science, and social studies. From here, we will be doing an online screener tool developed by Scholastic to determine a reading comprehension level. We also employ a number interview that examines how students count, compare, compose/decompose with number to one thousand (1,000) based on Kathy Richardson's critical learning phases, which we apply to whole number systems, rational numbers, and irrational numbers. On the affective front, we use the Self Esteem Index in addition to one-on-one interviews with mental health staff to develop an effective social/ emotional plan of support. We will use the Choices Assessment and the abbreviated Myers-Briggs assessment to evaluate career interests and readiness. Finally, we evaluate the ACCESS proficiency results for each student in the arenas of receptive language, expressive language, reading, and writing to make determinations about how instruction will need to be enhanced and front-loaded to ensure access to the engaging academic content and to also ensure that students receive the necessary language supports to either plan for front-loading of academic content language or for being identified for a unique academic block focused on language development. By incorporating a multi-tiered assessment approach with on-going progress monitoring, we evaluate what level of support a student needs in the areas of academics, affective supports, and career engagement.

## 2. [Response to Intervention](#) Tier I

Using the Response to Intervention model, we ensure that our Tier I instructional strategies include vocabulary walls with picture cues to ensure access for all students to the content language, front-loading academic content and language explicitly, heterogeneous grouping to ensure multiple perspectives, homogeneous grouping for targeted support instruction, student to student discourse for students to own their new learning, summaries focused on learning objectives rather than the activity, building on previous knowledge when launching a lesson, multiple check-ins for understanding, brain based instructional strategies to increase engagement and to work specifically to develop the Executive Functioning skills of every student, and available technology or manipulatives pertinent to the learning at hand to name a few are in place in every classroom.

### Tier II

We believe Tier II interventions should occur within the general education setting and should mostly focus on the academic content at hand, including teacher-directed small groups during independent time, conferring with an individual student, front-loading the lesson from the next day to ensure a student feels more confident in approaching new learning, small group practice sessions to reinforce a concept at hand, and providing multiple models of a concept with application to novel situations to increase confidence and flexibility with new learning to name a few. Piaget outlines that students learn the social knowledge and vernacular in their grade-level content experiences, and their developmental knowledge gaps or challenges do not need to act as a barrier to accessing grade-level content.

### Tier III

We never allow the choice to be between intervention and grade-level opportunities. We simply provide both opportunities, and we ensure a tight alignment between the content being addressed in the classroom and the Tier III interventions that are additional instructional time offered beyond the core academic experience. An example of this is that when students are approaching the study of genetics in science, the learning lab would then address Chi Square analysis ahead of time.

Students would explore the connection to what they already know through multiplication with polynomials and exploring partial products in multiplication to build a bridge to this new

understanding. We accomplish this level of synergy by ensuring every learning specialist has one hour of instructional co-teaching in their area of expertise to ensure this tight alignment.

We do not view Tier III as a special education component. Rather, we view Tier III as a real and authentic way to address developmental gaps our students may carry, especially because many students in our target population have had multiple periods of being disconnected from school. To address how we approach intervention at a Tier III level, we will have a learning lab that will be composed of all learning specialists, including an ELA teacher, special education teacher, a reading intervention specialist, and finally a mental health provider to infuse affective education and support into everything we do. This learning lab model allows us to ensure all of the experts are working together for kids at the same table. The expertise and decision-making can happen in the moment, and the student can receive the support they deserve. We also view the learning lab as a tool for professional learning for our entire staff to develop their skills and understandings to enhance their primary instruction and ensure more students effectively learn the content at hand the first time.

In addition, this collaborative model provides an environment for cross-pollination of expertise(Burns & Senesac, 2005)<sup>1</sup>.

3. What specific interventions will be employed to help close the achievement gap? Because We are a “No Place for Hate” school through the Anti-Defamation League, we will ensure that every teacher is on the path to becoming culturally aware of their own bias and also how that bias impacts their everyday decisions with students. We view the achievement gap as an opportunity to address the systemic barriers within the school and the greater society that are causing oppression or prejudice to take place in our classrooms. This informs every decision we make, and the focus on cultural competence will be infused into everything we do. It is the key to truly reforming education, and we embrace this challenge. The achievement gap will not be met with excuses; it will be met with dedication, professional learning, and be a guidepost for us as we evaluate whether or not we are living up to our stated vision and mission.
4. How will your school schedule and use time to ensure adequate opportunities to support the needs of all students, including ELL, SPED, intervention, and G&T programming?

Teachers are given extra time throughout the day to meet with students. Additionally, we have a flexible program schedule on Fridays. Lastly, students have a daily advisement; which affords time for the advisement teachers to counsel with individual students and to therefore support individual student needs.

5. For High Schools Only. Explain what systems and structures the school will implement for students at risk of dropping out of high school and/or not meeting the proposed graduation criteria.

We have an attendance committee that meets weekly to review the previous week’s attendance and to provide differentiated supports/interventions for students. We view attendance issues as formative data that the school community may not be effectively meeting the needs of the student in question. So, it will also be an opportunity to address how the school community can enhance our customer service and support for individual students. From there, we will use a systemic model to

<sup>1</sup> Burns, M. K., & Senesac, B. V. (2005). [Comparison of dual discrepancy criteria to assess response to intervention](#). *Journal of School Psychology*, 43, 393-406.

evaluate barriers and supports the student has in their life to support them attending school on a regular basis. However, we certainly align with the system DPS utilizes to evaluate tardiness and those expectations will be the same. As these factors are evaluated, we develop a plan for supporting the student to improve their attendance by doing a home visit to identify possible solutions to the current barriers a student is experiencing. This may include supporting reliable transportation if needed, providing breakfast if needed, looking at having the student consider later afternoon courses or evening classes, provide family therapy if there is a lack of support within the system, and finally developing a shared plan with the student to assist the student in finding the inherent personal value of school for them. We also engage the school district resources when a student becomes severely truant to ensure the system of supports beyond our school doors are engaged when appropriate. We address truancy through a lens of support, compassion, and clear expectations rather than only providing consequences. We believe all behavior has meaning, so we view this as an opportunity to reach out more effectively and ensure the student identifies fully with the community.

## F. Gifted and Talented Students

### 1. Identification Process

In addition to our entry process where we evaluate MAPS data against current TCAP/PARCC data to try to immediately identify any gifted and talented students, we maintain our weekly student achievement meetings where we will be examining exceptionalities in all of our students. We believe that most of our students are gifted and talented. Their survival skills and resiliency are to be honored and validated in every interaction. To this end, we partner with our gifted and talented support staff in the school district to ensure that support systems are infused into every core academic classroom to provide a richer experience with grade-level content and also to ensure we accelerate learning for our gifted and talented students.

### 2. Methods to Increase Representation of Minority Groups

Because of the target population we are serving, we ensure that any student with exceptionality will be identified and supported in this arena. We will also not rely on traditional cut- score models to determine giftedness. Rather, we will employ a body of evidence to ascertain their arena of giftedness and also to ensure they have the documentation necessary to receive this additional support and acceleration.

### 3. Service Delivery/ Instructional Plan of Support

The key to effective instruction is being grounded in a strong philosophical foundation. So, to this end, we view gifted education as an opportunity for students to extend and deepen their knowledge through acceleration and extensions rather than additional work. So, we view this approach as ensuring that a student's individual exceptionality be developed and extended in all settings. In a student's arena of exceptionality, this could be through providing different questions to discuss and problem-solve during the explore component of a lesson, providing primary or more advanced text sources on a topic at hand, ensuring that when a student reaches proficiency at a stated grade- level in a subject area based on monitoring against the standards, we then advance the student to the next grade-level course, and finally by ensuring on-going consultation with the gifted learning specialist to ensure we plan effectively for individual students' exceptionalities. We want to ensure we do not have a simple list of instructional strategies that may or may not be responsive to

student needs. Rather, we will have on-going consultation and collaboration to ensure we have the best plan in place for any student(Sternberg, R.J.,1995)<sup>1</sup>.

#### 4. Schedule Adjustments to Meet the Needs of GT Students

The academic program will be delivered using a staggered schedule; which will allow for greater flexibility in start and end times as well as extended day programming to support students who are behind in credits or desiring to participate in an accelerated educational program. Further, we will offer extended internships, community service options to target their area of exceptionality, and also ensure they have the supports documented in a 504 plan for college or post-secondary options of their choosing.

#### 5. Assessment System Implications

Our weekly student achievement meetings and multi-disciplinary intervention team meetings will track student progress against a clearly defined set of benchmark data to ensure our current educational plan is truly meeting the needs of our gifted students.

#### 6. Qualified Staffing

We are relying heavily on our Networks G-T partner to aid with the identification and support of our G-T population. We currently have approximately 15 identified G-T students. We will be incorporating our partner into our PD cycle and establish one on one coaching supports for our teachers to learn what is necessary in order to adequately support this group of students.

#### 7. Professional Development Support

We will rely on the DPS experts from The GT Department to ensure our GT specialist remains up to date and on the cutting edge of providing the best practices.

### G. Supplemental Programming

#### 1. Supplemental Programs Offered for Students

Drug and Alcohol addiction recovery classes and support including but not limited to: AA/Alateen/Alanon/Arapahoe House, etc... will be made available to students and their families.

Judi's House will be used to support our students who are suffering from grief and loss issues resulting from the death of a loved one.

Through a partnership with G.R.A.S.P. and G.R.I.P, students will have the opportunity to participate in gang prevention and intervention groups.

Daily enrichment offerings include but are not limited to: yoga, belly dancing, drumming, cooking, slam poetry, media and technology, sports performance and conditioning, financial literacy, DJ-Hip Hop, Chess, to name a few....

<sup>1</sup> Sternberg, R. J. (1995). *A triarchic approach to giftedness* (Research Monograph 95126). Storrs, CT: The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented, University of Connecticut.

## 2. Extra-Curricular/ Co-Curricular Activities

Extra Curricular Sports – will be a regular part of the Compassion Road extra curricular menu of activities. Students will be able to participate with either their neighborhood school's athletic program for all seasonal sports programming or through the Colorado Charter School organization (currently only basketball). The Compassion Road Academy will work in close collaboration with the Director of Athletics for Denver Public Schools to ensure that participating students are meeting or exceeding all eligibility requirements

Enrichment Program: This program; which occurs during the regular school day as well as after school provides students with the opportunity to participate in a variety of activities that they would most likely not have an opportunity otherwise. The course offerings include but are not limited to: Belly dancing; meditative coloring; slam poetry; African Drumming; Yoga; G.R.A.S.P., Drug and Alcohol counseling, cooking, to name a few.

TaeKwonDo: Students have an opportunity to participate in the TaeKwonDo program. TaeKwonDo is a collegiate sport AND CRA has developed a relationship with the Director of the Korean Academy of TaeKwonDO AND Chair of the TaeKwonDo program at the Metropolitan State University. Students are belt tested and have the opportunity to achieve Black Belt status through the program at CRA. They are also able to participate in a variety of tournaments.

Service Learning – students will be given multiple opportunities to participate in community service work both within and outside of the confines of the schoolhouse. This service learning will address the needs of students who are on probation as well as to provide extended learning opportunities and enrichment.

Community Service – We have a staff member that supervises and facilitates the community service requirements of our students who have “legal involvement.” This is an excellent opportunity for our students because they are able to take care of this legal obligation on-site; which keeps them in school.

Wilderness/challenge experiences – the Compassion Road Academy will actively engage its students with a variety of outdoor experiences especially through the summer months.

Family Fun Nights – the Compassion Road Academy will engage families on a bi-weekly basis with Family Fun Nights. These activities will include but will not be limited to movie nights at the school, family dinners, game nights, bowling nights, etc...

## 3. Volunteer and Community Service Opportunities

A really exciting and critical feature of our program is that every student will be required to dedicate a minimum of 3 hours per month to either being engaged in an internship or doing community service. Through our Compassion Project our students are able to participate in a variety of service learning opportunities. These opportunities include but are not limited to: the holiday food drive; community clean-up; peanut butter and jelly day, to name a few. Additionally we have a Probation/Youth Court Advocate that supervises community service of our adjudicated youth that require community service hours to meet the expectations of their probation. We are able to have students complete this needed community service on school grounds; which further supports student attendance and connection to the schoolhouse.

## 4. Summer School Planning

The Compassion Road Academy will provide summer school programming in accordance with the District's summer school programming effort and available dollars.





#### IV. Teaching

##### Section IV: TEACHING

*(5 page limit)*

#### A. Teacher Coaching –

##### 1. Primary Goals for Teacher Coaching

We believe that continuous improvement and professional growth are critical for any school community to grow in their practice and pedagogy. We also believe that coaching can provide an incredible foundation for professional growth, because it supports educators to be reflective in their practice and to also better respond to student data as it is collected formally and informally throughout a lesson. We will commit to ensuring that all teachers in the building are coached against the LEAP Framework, because we believe the framework provides the most comprehensive picture and vision for effective pedagogy. We will also focus our professional development on certain aspects of the framework as our data reveals the need. For example, we may choose to focus our professional learning as a school on learning environment

based on classroom observations revealing a lack of student engagement and/or poor student satisfaction surveys. We will use this as a roadmap to ground all of our instructional dialogue. However, the flexibility of the LEAP Framework allows a teacher and a coach to identify target arenas that will provide the greatest overall benefit to building the capacity of that teacher.

The administrative team will also be coaching against the LEAP Framework to ensure a tight alignment to this framework. In addition, because we believe that the achievement gap reflects bias and a lack of culturally competent teaching and environments, we will also ensure that all coaching supports every educator to reflect on their own personal biases and use that information to enhance awareness of how an educator's possible privilege may be creating a barrier in serving a certain group of students due to a lack of personal awareness and a lack of cultural understanding.

## 2. System-Wide Plan for Coaching

The Compassion Road Academy believes in a culture that is supportive, caring, and compassionate enough to inspire both the students and staff to take risks. So, coaching will be provided to all teachers for at least a quarter per year, but new teachers or teachers needing more support will be provided with more support.

The coaching model will be grounded in a context of professional growth and improvement. There will be clear boundaries between coaching and administration, so that teachers have a safe environment to struggle and receive the support they deserve to improve their practice. The coaching model will not be connected with evaluation in any manner, except that a teacher's demonstrated academic growth for students and clear alignment to the LEAP Framework will be directly used in their evaluation. So, indirectly, the coaching support will have a direct impact on the quality of a teacher's review.

Because our professional learning will always provide weekly student achievement meetings designed to highlight through noticing and naming what is working with students and also to address additional support plans for students who are still struggling to demonstrate growth, opportunities to address students who are needing support due to a lack of growth will be how we ground our peer to peer feedback. We will approach these situations as a team and try to problem solve together unique and creative solutions to ensure every student attending The Compassion Road Academy has the support they deserve to be successful.

## 3. Schedule for Classroom Visitations

Each administrator will be in each teacher they supervise a minimum of two times per week. Because we approach the role of the principal as an instructional leader, being in classrooms regularly to support and impact the quality of instruction students receive will be a critical component of how we support and develop teachers. From these two weekly observations, an instructional dialogue will occur for thirty minutes weekly or bi-weekly depending on the level of support a teacher needs. This student achievement meeting will occur weekly to examine the impact the teaching is having on the learning of students using real data.

From this data, an instructional dialogue will ensure to determine strengths and challenges occurring currently in their instructional approach. From there, we will then develop an instructional focus to develop or enhance. In closing, a plan of support will be provided to the teacher to ensure the teacher receives the support necessary to take on this new learning with students. We always balance accountability with support. We believe the key to having a healthy climate and retaining teachers is to ensure support equals

accountability and expectation. This is also what we hope will occur in classrooms for students, so modeling this balance is critical to our approach to developing a culture of inquiry and problem-solving to improve student achievement.

#### 4. Research Basis to Inform Effective Teaching

Using the LEAP Framework, which is research-based and comprehensive, will ensure we have a common roadmap and context from which to discuss instruction. This common language and framework will serve to create common dialogue and the framework applies to all teachers. This reduces the possibility of specialist teachers somehow feeling disengaged or disconnected from the overall instructional vision for our school. The teacher coaches will be utilizing Marilyn Duncan's (2009) model for instructional dialogue which uses Brian Cambourne's teaching/ learning cycle to ground conversations regarding teaching and learning. The model of collecting relevant assessment data connected to the learning objective, evaluating this data, developing an effective instructional plan, and finally implementing the plan in the teaching episode is a recursive model

that allows us to apply the LEAP Framework to the actual process of planning and teaching with an emphasis on whether or not learning actually occurred.

We believe instructional dialogue will be a powerful tool to ensure every educator is reflective about their practice and we also believe this process directly develops a recursive thought process for a teacher to employ independently as they plan for learning in the future.

### B. Teacher Evaluation

#### 1. Policies and Procedures for Establishing Individual Employee Goals

The Compassion Road Academy believes that professional growth is a part of our cultural context, so our weekly to bi-weekly student achievement meetings will be the foundation for every teacher to identify unique instructional supports for students. In addition, this instructional dialogue will also support the professional growth of our teachers. Our current district evaluation plan reflects a more modern approach to ensuring our teachers reflect on their practice all the time rather than having a fixed goal for growth that may or may not be timely and effective at increasing student achievement. So, at the beginning of each year after reflecting on both student data and our monitoring plan, every teacher, whether on evaluation cycle or not, will be responsible for developing individual goals based on that data.

#### 2. Policies and Procedures for Evaluating Staff

We employ the same policies and procedures required of any teacher within DPS. We are developing a Promote the Positive Program, where each staff member caught in the act of doing something which positively impacts student achievement will be recognized by their students, peers and/or administration.

These forms can be completed at any time, and they will be recorded in their files when received. After they are received, the school principal signs the form and places the original in the teacher's box. This can be originated from a student, staff member, parent, or administrator. In addition, we have multiple rituals around celebration built into every professional learning, because we believe we build on our strengths.

#### 3. The Evaluation Process

As mentioned above, the principal and/or assistant principals will be directly involved in supervision with all staff members, and the feedback will be provided on a regular basis based on our weekly to bi-weekly student achievement meetings. The feedback is connected to student data, even if we are evaluating an art teacher. They need to monitor learning against clear learning objectives and discuss strategies of support for students who either need an extension of their learning or intervention. The focus will always begin and end with student achievement. The data tells us a story, and this regular meeting is designed to allow this data to speak.

#### 4. Professional Performance Issues

As evaluation proceeds, we will discover either a teacher or administrator that may need additional support to reach their professional potential and to demonstrate the integrity of their professional standards in action. We will be evaluating each staff member on whether or not their performance goes against our core non-negotiable or whether it is an improvement in practice issue. Each concern will be addressed very differently. If it is a misalignment with our core beliefs and non-negotiable, the focus of the remediation plan will be very clear and establish a clear corrective action plan that infuses a strong foundation of

professional learning with an emphasis on professional integrity. However, if the issue at hand is the professional educator having trouble bringing their instructional capacity to the level required to make the intended difference, support systems will be put in place including visitations to other teacher classrooms, coaching, co-teaching with a more knowledgeable other, and/or professional learning experiences targeting the area of instructional need.

#### 5. Performance Management System

Because we are grounding our common dialogue around instruction using the LEAP Framework, the performance system should never surprise anyone. Because we are using a common language and framework to discuss our practice and aligning this discussion around student data and achievement with on-going professional learning, student achievement meetings, and instructional dialogue, a performance review should be a clear summary of the strengths and next steps every educator should know through our reflective practice.

### C. Professional Development

#### 1. Professional Development Model

The Compassion Road Academy will have a responsive professional learning model based on student data and common instructional issues. Because we value students owning their learning and having meaningful practice, we will ensure the professional learning reflects the same standards and values. We will model in our professional learning what we want to occur in our classrooms. The leadership team will be determining through monitoring and student data the focus and intent of professional learning, and we will access any resource or consultant necessary to ensure our professional learning targets the area of instructional need.

#### 2. School's Culture and Leadership Team Involvement

We are all engaged in using student data to reflect on our practice. This is our guiding practice, and we expect every educator to be reflective and flexible in meeting the needs of all students. Our systems of support, including the achievement meetings, regular professional learning, and coaching ensure that our discussions and focus is always on academic achievement.

#### 3. Professional Development – Induction to School

Because we are a DPS school, we will ensure we provide meaningful time to develop our educational staff on the LEAP Framework, discuss systems for collecting and evaluating student data in all disciplines, communicate the common core standards to create clarity on what the instructional focus will be for teaching and learning, and finally engage all teachers in the fourteen principles of brain development highlighted in *Teaching with Poverty in Mind* (Jensen, E., 2005). Our unique supports to ensure our program is developed with fidelity in our practice are strong models of the instructional approach, consistent and dedicated focus on our professional learning foci, and finally calling our instructional focus to light in on-going achievement meetings where we apply new learning to novel situations with real students. Additionally, staff members are asked to read the first three chapters of the book *Growth Mindset* by Carol Dweck AND the book, *Healing Developmental Trauma – a Neuro Affective Relational Model*.

#### 4. Time Dedicated to Professional Learning

We have a minimum of one professional development day per month. Because of our staggered schedule with extended days and longer blocks, teachers will have common blocks for planning during the Enrichment classes weekly, and in addition our special education teachers co-plan and co-teach with our mainstream teachers. We also meet weekly on Monday mornings. In general, twice per month on these Mondays there is a 30 minute professional development component included.

#### 5. Interim Data – Professional Learning Response

The overall whole group professional learning will adjust based on the needs of students identified within the data. The plan may be to either strengthen or reinforce new instructional understandings or approaches or to guide the plan in a different direction as needed. The professional learning must be tied to student achievement. The interim data is our mid-year evaluation of our effectiveness, so we will utilize this data to notice and name what is working and to courageously own areas where we may need growth.

#### 6. Cultural Competency

Cultural competency and a reflection on how personal biases impact decision-making in the classroom will be addressed in all conversations about the work. We address this issue directly through a week-long seminar

with The Anti Defamation League to become a “No Place for Hate” school, and addressing bias and oppression will become the foundation and lens from which we address every aspect of the work. It will not be an add-on component, because for us, it is the work of closing the achievement gap. In addition, we plan on addressing cultural competency in our recruitment process by ensuring our candidates are required to reflect and address how their own personal background may act as a barrier or hinder their ability to connect with certain students.

#### 7. Assessment of Effectiveness – Professional Learning

The effectiveness will always link back to student achievement data and also classroom monitoring to see if teachers are approximating the new understandings in their practice. Professional learning will have clear instructional outcomes and also encourage teachers to take risks and expand their practice in a supportive environment.

### D. Teacher Recruitment, Hiring, and Retention

#### 1. Teacher Recruitment

By partnering with the DPS Human Resources office, we will ensure we target teachers that will be most appropriate to the setting at hand. Our key focus is always to ensure we target culturally competent, passionate, and flexible educators committed to the task of creating miracles everyday through their work. Teacher recruitment will also occur through reaching out to pre-service teacher programs at University of Colorado Denver and Metropolitan State University because we will be providing student teaching opportunities to a few select candidates. This will hopefully inspire teachers to consider our community and also develop our reputation in the college community as an environment that supports professional capacity in a caring and respectful environment.

#### 2. Professional Standards Used for Hiring Candidates

Utilizing the professional standards we employ in DPS and the competent professionals in HR department, we will continue our strong partnership in ensuring we target the best professionals for the unique job at hand. We will be seeking candidates that are culturally competent, flexible in their approaches to teaching and learning, and candidates who believe students deserve to direct their own learning. Lastly, because of the learning culture that guides our practice, we would need to have a person who sees their role as a learner.

#### 3. Highly-Qualified Assurances

By partnering with DPS Human Resources and ensuring we target applicants with the necessary requirements for any position to be considered highly-qualified, we will always expect that our students who carry significant needs and challenges, receive competent and capable teachers. This is another component Katie Haycock (2001) identifies as a precursor to closing the achievement gap. So, through our partnership with Human Resources, we will accept nothing less than a highly-qualified applicant for any position.

#### 4. Timeline for Hiring/ Process

As staffing need presents itself, we will partner with the DPS HR Department to ensure we follow effective human resource practices by partnering with a more competent professional. We will assess the effectiveness of our hiring decisions based on student achievement data. As mentioned, our performance process takes this into account throughout the performance review process. CRA does not follow the traditional DPS hiring schedule.

#### 5. Cultural Competencies

The key cultural competencies required of any staff member serving at The Compassion Road Academy is the willingness to examine personal bias, the understanding to own and apply the achievement gap for any oppressed group to inform instructional practice, the ability to employ

effective culturally relevant pedagogical techniques, and finally the courage and wisdom to never blame a student for their lack of engagement or instructional growth. The achievement gap is an invitation for every professional at The Compassion Road Academy to grow and enhance their instructional practice and improve the culture so that every student has a place at the educational table.

#### 6. Retention Strategies

The issue of retention of effective teachers is a critical ingredient in CRA's success thus far. We had 100% teacher retention between years one and two. After year two we lost one teacher because he wanted the experience of teaching at a large comprehensive high school; we lost another teacher because she wanted a position outside of the classroom and is now a Dean at an elementary school; and we lost a 3<sup>rd</sup> teacher who recently married and decided she wanted to teach online classes so that she could concentrate on starting a family. The key is to develop an effective culture through developing support systems that honor the wisdom, talent, courage, and leadership of every educator. We believe if you want every student to succeed, the administration must ensure any accountability or expectations of teachers are met with an equal amount of support, trust, and respect for their professional dignity.





## V. Finance

### Section V: FINANCE

*(5 page limit)*

#### A. Budget and Policy Narrative

1. Describe any expenses the school expects to incur that are in addition to what DPS traditionally funds (e.g., additional curriculum materials, extended overnight field trips, additional professional development experience, etc.). If you believe you will have additional revenues separate from DPS funding, please list them as well.

The Compassion Road Academy will plan on raising a minimum of \$100,000 in discretionary funds every year to support our instructional approaches which provides a greater amount of instructional time than a typical high school student would receive. We plan on raising these funds through grants, Colorado Department of Education special project grants, McKinney--- Vento Project Funds, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Funds to Support After---School Programs, demonstration grants, foundation grants, cooperative agreements with partners with a percentage share, and possibly program income.

Because our teachers still work a traditional number of days allowed within the approved teacher contract, we have developed a rotating calendar that ensures every educational content arena is covered by a qualified teacher. It is like having a year---round calendar where the students are always present, but the teachers rotate on and off as needed for their breaks. We will also be doing staggered schedules, but a teacher will not be working beyond their instructional time allowed in contract. Teachers will be overlapping their schedules to accomplish the outcomes of having a longer school day with extended planning times. Due to this and our smaller class size, our per pupil expenses will be higher.

In addition, we have identified that we will be partnering with The Learning Source to provide family literacy. Even though we may not be responsible to cover 100% of the contracted services for this to occur, we will also need to ensure we use the additional discretionary funds, donations, and program income to cover this expense if it grows and expands. We may also need to provide scholarship opportunities to provide funds for taking the GED, so we again may need to utilize the additional resources for this purpose.

As the needs arise and the school efficacy grows to expand our services, we will be engaged in seeking additional discretionary or mandatory funds to support these endeavors. However, we must be certain that as we seek additional funds that we have the internal controls and staff to manage these additional funds. In addition, we must also ensure that a grant project truly aligns with our stated mission and vision to ensure additional funds or cooperative agreements do not cause us to stray from our core purpose.

2. Provide an overview of how the allocation of resources supports the vision, mission, and education plan of the school.

The Compassion Road Academy will ensure our budget reflects our highest ideals and commitment to meeting the needs of our students. To that end, our current budget reflects a clear commitment to the real work of teaching and learning. As evidenced in our application, most of our budget is being directed towards teachers. In addition, our budget reflects a comprehensive school experience, including art and physical education.

It is critical to mention that because we will operate this school on two campuses, including the current school contained within The Gilliam Detention Center, we will be identifying ways in which each campus can share expertise and resources to maximize both the use and efficacy of staff. Every year, we will continue to evaluate how to maximize these resources and possibly take advantage of these similar needs to increase efficiency and decrease costs on both campuses. For example, if we are partnering with The Learning Source for GED instruction, then why not have this partner serving our students in detention for a portion of the time to maximize the service and reduce the cost? It is a unique finance feature of this model that will allow us to ensure a tight alignment between both campuses while also decreasing the financial burden for a certain service or staff member.

Because we have a family therapy lab, which will be clinically supervised by our assistant principal that is a licensed family therapist, we can also provide an array of mental health services and referrals for students and their families. The program income we gain from this will be applied to support the expansion of a summer-based affective needs program that will reflect the principles of outdoor lab and expeditionary learning. The best part is that the lab will be providing services through a partnership with pre-service counseling students who are required to provide over 800 hours of internship with students and families for licensure.

Our current budget also accounts for the fact that many of our students may not have the funds to support regular school fees. So, to that end, we must ensure that we set aside funds for that purpose. We will also partner with the McKinney-Vento district team to ensure we target the needs of our homeless students and ensure they have what they deserve to be successful, including at a minimum school supplies and transportation costs when eligible.

3. Explain the policies and processes that will be implemented to ensure that sound financial management practices are implemented and that the financial plan is executed with fidelity. Who will be directly managing and overseeing the school's budget?

The principal will be the sole chief financial officer for the school. This ensures a clear alignment from school improvement plan to resource management to budget to purchasing. The Compassion Road Academy will have a census of students that will most likely ensure we are eligible to receive mandatory federal funds, including school-wide Title I, Part A and Title I-D to name a few. We will receive these federal funds due to our identified poverty percentages and because we are targeting students who are eligible for delinquent status due to a

number of our

Students being on probation and our school being considered part of the student's overall plan. Because we will be managing local funds, state funds, and federal funds at a minimum, we must ensure we are following the administrative requirements that follow the funding sources. In addition, we must also ensure we are aligning with the cost principles that ensure every expenditure aligns with our stated mission and vision. This is the standard of financial management to ensure allowable of funds, and we will ensure that every expenditure is allocable to the purpose at hand.

In addition, because we are using federal funds and we will not be consolidating, we will also need to ensure that we are supplementing district and state funds rather than supplanting to ensure we are meeting the standards of allowable. We will accomplish this by ensuring we have tight internal controls, including signatures being required for every expenditure from the principal on every purchase order, funds transfer, and other funds management documents.

The signature will indicate a clear link from school improvement plan to budget to resource. These internal controls will reflect our core belief that managing our funds wisely and ensuring these funds meet the intended purpose ensures the funds are maximized to meet the needs of our students.

Because we will have a variety of funding sources and we are not consolidated, we will also ensure that if we have an employee covered by two funding sources that we employ the appropriate time and effort certifications to ensure we are in compliance with the federal administrative requirements. We will also manage our equipment purchases and our fixed assets on a yearly inventory log with appropriate labels indicating the funding source for each purchase.



