

INNOVATION SCHOOL APPLICATION



Noel Community Arts School
April 2011

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Overview.....	Page 2
Introduction.....	Page 3
Innovation: Vision & Mission.....	Page 5
Innovation: Education Plan.....	Page 8
Innovation: Assessments.....	Page 16
Innovation: Graduation and Promotion.....	Page 17
Academic Achievement Goals and Gains.....	Page 19
Innovation: Time.....	Page 20
Innovation: Student Enrollment.....	Page 23
Innovation: Human Resource Management.....	Page 23
Innovation: School Governance and Parent Engagement.....	Page 31
Innovation: Budget.....	Page 35
Innovation: Other Programs, Policies, Operational Documents.....	Page 37
Waivers.....	Page 38
Administrative and Faculty Support.....	Page 38
Community Support.....	Page 38
Appendix A: Request Waivers in Curricular Materials & Instructional Design.....	Page 40
Appendix B: Request Alternative Benchmark Assessment Program.....	Page 41
Appendix C: Request Alternative Graduation and Promotion Policies.....	Page 42
Appendix D: School Performance Framework Goal Setting Worksheet.....	Page 44
Appendix E: Waiver Request Template.....	Page 46
Appendix F: Committee Descriptions.....	Page 47

OVERVIEW

The purpose of Colorado’s Innovation Schools Act is to improve student achievement through greater school flexibility in areas such as human resource practices, budgeting, scheduling, and education programming. That Act provides schools the opportunity for increased flexibility by providing a clear path to waive certain state statutes, district policies and union contract provisions that may otherwise inhibit a school’s ability to implement strategies and tactics that may produce significant gains in academic performance. For more information on the Innovation Schools Act of 2008, please visit: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdegen/SB130.htm>.

The following document is intended to serve two purposes. First, it is an application for schools to request innovation status from Denver Public School’s (“DPS”) Board of Education and the Colorado State Board of Education. Second, it is a planning guide to support the development of high-quality innovation school plans that will produce significant gains in academic achievement.

To facilitate the development of an organized, carefully planned, and comprehensive innovation application, schools should thoughtfully respond to each component of this application. Schools are also encouraged to be collaborative and transparent when creating their plans by providing staff and members of the broader community meaningful opportunities to engage in the development process.

Completed applications will be reviewed by the Office of School Reform and Innovation (“OSRI”) and an Application Review Team (“ART”). An ART is comprised of 6-10 members, each with expertise in a specific area of school development and management (e.g., teaching and learning, special education, budget, human resources, etc.). The review by OSRI and ART is intended to provide feedback to improve the quality of a plan before conducting a staff vote and before requesting innovation status from DPS’s Board of Education.

Schools that secure the necessary support from staff and their community can submit their innovation plan to DPS’s Board of Education for review. Plans that are approved by DPS are then forwarded to Colorado’s State Board of Education for final review.

Note that Appendix A of this application contains questions that must be answered by applicants who desire to secure district waivers in curriculum, assessments, and/or graduation and promotion policies.

Completed innovation school plans should be submitted to:

Denver Public Schools
Office of School Reform and Innovation
Attention: Peter Piccolo
Peter_Piccolo@dpsk12.org
750 Galapago St.
Denver, CO 802

INTRODUCTION

I. Provide your school's name, contact information, the date this application was submitted, and a brief overview of how the plan was developed.

A. Provide your school's name.

Noel Community Arts School
5290 Kittridge Street
Denver, CO 80239-5628
720-424-0800

B. Provide the name of the school leader under innovation status. If different, provide the name of the main contact for this application.

Stacy Miller, Principal

C. Date application submitted.

April 1, 2011

D. Provide an overview of the innovation school plan development process.

1. Describe how the development of the plan was completed.

The Denver Public School Board approved the development of a new school in the Far North East region of the district in the Noel Middle School Facility. The community expressed a strong desire for the new school to focus on rigorous academics, the community, and the arts.

Denver Public Schools recruited and identified the principal of the highest growth middle school in the district to develop the new school. The principal, in turn, identified an assistant principal with a Masters degree in integration of the arts in the curriculum. The new leadership team worked collaboratively with the OSRI staff and external consultants to develop an innovation plan for the new school.

2. Detail who participated on the design team.

Stacy Miller, Principal
Ligia Gibson, Assistant Principal
Allen Smith, Deputy Director of the FNE
Matt Spengler, EdLabs, Harvard
Jeanette Cornier, Innovation Consultant
Amy Asper, Communications Specialist
Noemi Donoso, Director of the Office of School Reform and Innovation

3. Explain specific roles and responsibilities of design team members.

Stacy Miller, Principal – Leadership, Vision, Principal Plan Development
Ligia Gibson, Assistant Principal – Leadership team, Plan Development
Allen Smith, Deputy Director of the FNE – Review and input, FNE coordination
Matt Spengler, EdLabs, Harvard – Input on EdLabs components, review of overall plan
Jeanette Cornier, Innovation Consultant – Writing and revising plan based on input
Amy Asper, Development of communication and community engagement plans
Noemi Donoso, Director of the Office of School Reform and Innovation – Support

4. Provide a summary of how teachers, staff, administrators, the CSC and any parent bodies participated in the development and approval of the plan.

Not Applicable – New School

Summary of Innovations

The Noel Community Arts School plan includes the following innovations:

EDUCATION PROGRAM

- an arts infused education program
- project-based, experiential learning and artistic demonstration of knowledge and skills
- promotion and acceleration of students based on leadership team determination

TIME

- extended day (from 7 to 8 hours) and year (from 171 to 181 days)
- additional professional development time for teachers to integrate arts into the curriculum
- schedule of days off and late starts/early releases based on school needs

PERSONNEL

- at-will employment
- teacher and staff evaluations that meet or exceed the district and state requirements
- school policies for dress and grooming of teachers and staff
- recruitment, hiring schedule, staff selection, employment terms, and offer made by the school
- hire non-licensed teachers for non-core subjects who are not required to meet NCLB highly qualified criteria; the school will hire teachers who meet the highly-qualified criteria for all core content classes
- compensation system that meets or exceeds DPS rates and provides incentives and stipends
- calendar of teacher work days, vacation days, and holidays based on school needs
- professional development content and schedule determined by the school
- staff assignments, transfers within the school, schedules and job sharing determined by school
- not subject to direct placements or transfer of teachers by the District

BUDGET AND OPERATIONS

- managing school finances: collecting revenues and managing receipts of money
- direct contracting for goods and services
- selecting and purchasing district services on an annual basis as determined by school

- leadership and governance model does not include a Collaborative School Committee

II. Describe the vision and mission statement of the school and how innovation status will help the school achieve its mission.

A. State the vision of the school.

Noel Community Arts School students will be among the highest in the state in academic growth and will be actively engaged in collaborative project based artistic learning and expression. Our graduates will be notable contributors to the community and the global workforce. NCAS will become a leader in arts education, working to foster individual creativity and academic success.

B. State the mission of the school.

The Noel Community Arts School prepares students for success in college and career ensuring high achievement and creative thinking through rigorous academics and meaningful application within the arts.

Noel Community Arts School will provide a rigorous academic program to ensure that students graduate ready for success in college or career. Students will gain a deeper understanding and appreciation for art as a representation of human experience. NCAS will leverage the arts to engage in relevant academic pursuits as well as to enrich the lives of students and prepare them with critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration skills essential in the 21st century workforce. NCAS will foster a culture that values both individualization and community. All members of the NCAS community will be valued, accepted and encouraged. Students will learn about themselves and others and how diversity of thought and perspective result in higher levels of achievement for all.

1. Identify the school's target student population and community to be served.

NCAS will serve 6th through 12th grade students in the Far Northeast (FNE) region of Denver. It will open in the 2011-2012 school year with 200 students in grades 6 and 9. NCAS will target students in the FNE community with an interest in the arts and creative expression.

Demand for schools that successfully demonstrate high student performance corresponds to the fact that 80% of today's professional jobs require education beyond high school, (Colorado Department of Labor). Optimal student engagement is required to develop skills involving problem-solving in real world experiences, to develop creative talent to compete in a global market and to build intellectual capacity that subscribes to thinking, speaking and writing. The tremendous responsibility to extend academic connections and engagement for students in Denver Public Schools is an endeavor that compels stakeholders to direct secondary students to realize and pursue post secondary education.

Within the FNE area of Denver, there is a strong demand and need for schools that offer excellent educational opportunities. Currently, students in the region are among the lowest performing in the district. In addition, the community does not have an option for students to attend a school that recognizes the benefits of harmonizing high academic performance with artistic creativity. NCAS will provide students in the FNE region with an opportunity for intensive, academically rigorous programming that complements a robust arts focus. This harmony of academic and arts will combine purposeful aim to maximize each student's individual and collective capacity.

2. Articulate clear guiding purposes and priorities which are meaningful, measurable and attainable.

Noel Community Arts School guiding purposes and priorities:

- Increase academic growth and achievement (CSAP and interim assessments)
- Close academic growth & achievement gaps in reading, writing, & math (minority, FRL, ELL)
- Engage students in arts and creativity (arts courses and community involvement)
- Invest in teacher effectiveness
- Language development and communication skills (language acquisition)
- Build community within and among school (civic engagement and participation)
- Prepare for college and/or career (grad rate, % college w/o remediation, employment)

3. Provide the entire school community as well as external stakeholders a clear, memorable picture of what the school aims to achieve.

At Noel Community Arts School we place the highest value on teacher effectiveness and student achievement. We will have a culture in which all stakeholders including leaders, teachers, staff, students and parents promote an environment that continues self learning and enhances the learning of others. We will challenge students to realize their limitless futures. We will do this through our belief that building academic capacity in students will help them to increase their critical thinking, creativity, communication and collaboration skills. Their academic experience will incorporate artistic opportunities for students to develop their passion which will help motivate student learning and enrich the environment. We challenge students to actualize academic, personal and artistic goals while developing intrinsic motivation to contribute to, engage in, and appreciate the global community.

- C. Explain how the vision and mission support the mission of Denver Public Schools.

The Denver Public Schools mission is to provide all students the opportunity to achieve the knowledge and skills necessary to become contributing members in our society.

The NCAS vision of an inspiring educational experience that fosters individual creativity and community collaboration with the mission of preparing students in the FNE region of Denver for college and career success through rigorous academics and meaningful application within the arts support the DPS mission by ensuring that students in the FNE region, a region that has

demonstrated persistent low performance, have the opportunity to achieve the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed.

- D. Identify specific barriers and/or school needs that impact student achievement. Explain how innovation status will help the school overcome the barriers and/or address the needs in order to achieve the mission.

The following challenges can be barriers to achievement for students in Denver's FNE region:

Lack of high expectations and rigorous academic curriculum

Lack of engaging educational options that ignite student's interest in learning

Lack of safe and healthy environments for learning

Lack of a community of respect and caring that fosters individualization and creativity

Lack of effective teachers and leaders to provide intensive interventions and accelerate learning

Lack of instructional time needed to close existing achievement gaps and provide rich and engaging learning opportunities

Lack of control over resource allocation at the school level to ensure that resources are focused on achieving the school mission

Innovation status will allow NCAS to: 1) offer educational programming that is academically rigorous, customized to the learning needs of students, and infuses the arts to offer engaging applications of concepts, critical thinking, and creativity; 2) create conditions necessary for students to receive intensive support essential to access a rigorous college prep curriculum and perform on grade level; 3) select effective teachers and leaders to provide intensive and customized support to every student; 4) create conditions necessary to support teachers and leaders to deliver the highest caliber learning experience; 5) provide extended learning time for all students to allow for intensive interventions in reading, math, and language development as well as rich and engaging arts experiences; & 6) leverage financial resources to maximize the impact of spending on student achievement, critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration.

- E. Explain how you will leverage innovation status to improve school culture and achieve the vision and mission.

NCAS will leverage innovation status to improve the school culture and achieve the vision and mission by: 1) fostering a unified focus on student achievement; 2) hiring staff who embrace the mission and vision of the school; 3) providing time for teacher collaborative planning, reflection and creativity, 4) creating a collaborative culture where educators, community members, parents, and students work together as a community of learners; 5) establishing partnerships with arts and business organizations; 6) using financial resources creatively to provide incentives, support the development of student leadership, perseverance, and aspirations, and offer a variety of innovative learning opportunities outside of the classroom; and 7) increasing accountability and investment in student achievement through flexibility, autonomy, and transparency.

III. Describe the research-based educational program the school will implement and how the program will produce gains in academic achievement.

Noel Community Arts School will use district-approved research-based curricula. This includes SpringBoard by College Board for Language Arts; CMP for Middle School Mathematics; The Discovering Mathematics series for High School mathematics; and the district adopted science and social studies materials. NCAS will deliver DPS curricula using arts-infused, project-based instructional strategies to engage students and to promote higher level thinking skills. We have selected these materials based on the strong research based and evidence of student achievement from previous DPS schools in which our leadership team has worked.

A. Provide an overview of the school’s research-based education program.

The NCAS educational program includes both research based materials as well as research based approaches to the materials. In addition to the key lessons in the DPS adopted resources, we will utilize an Arts Integration Model, which is a research-proven approach to increasing academic achievement and creative thinking as well as improving attitudes, attendance, and behaviors related to school and workplace success¹. NCAS will use an approach similar to that of successful arts integration schools² which use supplemental projects, aligned to rigorous academic standards and developed collaboratively by teams of cross-curricular teachers, to allow for deep exploration of concepts and application of skills. Our staff embraces the concept that all students can learn at high levels; that academic success is a non-negotiable; that rigorous standards are essential for all students to learn; and the arts are a strong vehicle for students to build their understanding and demonstrate their proficiencies of the learning. Unlike in a traditional Arts School, this artistic expression is in service of the learning goals; we are not trying to produce artists at the expense of scholars; the NCAS will produce scholars who can express themselves both through the academic venues of speaking, reading, writing and listening, but and also incorporate demonstrations of their learning through the artistic expressions of song, movement, drawing, painting and graphic design

NCAS will align its research-based, arts-infused, educational projects with the Colorado P-12 Academic Standards and the key concepts of the DPS curriculum. The education program will: 1) be customized to address the specific learning needs of enrolled students by employing research-based strategies for closing achievement gaps for minority students, students living in poverty, English language learners, and exceptional students needs; 2) provide rigorous academic content as well as project-based applications to increase higher order thinking; 3) infuse the arts into the core curriculum and electives to foster creativity, engagement, and artistic expression; and 4) provide deep courses of study in the arts.

¹ Thomas S. Kenan Institute for the Arts. (January, 2001). The arts and education reform: Lessons from a 4-year pilot of the A+ Schools program

² Berkshire Arts & Technology Charter Public School. (2009-2010). Annual Report. www.bartcharter.org

A convergence of research on professional learning communities indicates that engaging teachers in the collaborative development and monitoring of curriculum, instruction, and formative assessments results in significantly improved academic achievement outcomes and a positive learning environment³. Teachers in all subjects and grades will work collaboratively to identify the Essential Learning Goals (ELG's) embedded in the DPS adopted materials which most powerfully align with the Colorado Academic Standards and connect them to the appropriate units of study. NCAS calls this process Collaborative Action Planning (CAP) and it is a high-powered approach to team-planning. During the CAP time, ELG's and pacing guides will be customized to target student needs based on the CSAP assessment frameworks and DPS curricula. The materials, plans, and resulting student data will be evaluated during grade level and data team meetings. A weekly schedule of staff meetings is included in the appendix.

Essential Learning Goals will be monitored every four weeks using common formative assessments derived out of the curriculum and co-owned by content teams; the results will be reported to students and parents on a regular basis. NCAS will use the Teacher Portal software to monitor and track student growth and to inform instructional planning. In addition, teachers will use common formative assessments to monitor weekly progress on ELGs. Content level teams will meet weekly to discuss student progress on ELGs and to design instruction to address student learning needs. Teachers will regularly examine project products using a "student work protocol" to help faculty calibrate on rigor of products and ensure students are demonstrating learning aligned with the standards and the common core. When appropriate, lessons will be designed collaboratively and address specific learning goals.

Lesson Planning and Unit Pacing will be formulated using the research-based approach of "backwards design". This begins with the **intended outcome**, what NCAS calls the **ELG**, and then uses the curricular resources and projects to help students learn and master the **ELG**. Student learning will be guided by teachers who differentiate their instructional delivery to address the needs and requirements for students receiving English as a Second Language, Gifted and Talented, and Special Education services.

Understanding by Design⁴ templates will be used to plan the units of study from the DPS adopted materials. Teachers will submit unit plans to the school leadership team for approval prior to beginning the unit. Daily lessons will include content and language objectives, process goals that are directly linked to the unit Essential Learning Goals. In addition, lessons will have specific agendas that lead to meeting the goals of the lesson. All planning will be done in collaborative teams of content and arts teachers. Teachers will use the planning and pacing guides designed by the district to guide their work. Teachers will be designing units of study using the current DPS curriculum and grade level standards. In addition, the leadership team will be receiving extensive training through the Buck Institute for designing rigorous and meaningful project based units and student rubrics.

³ Schmoker, M. (2006). *Results NOW*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

⁴ Wiggins, G. & McTighe, J. (2005). *Understanding by design, 2nd edition*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

Example: 10th grade unit

The 10th grade Social Studies course US History begins with the “big idea” that “opportunity” is the promise that people should have the chance to obtain their hopes and dreams (taken directly from the DPS Grade 10 year at a glance). The 10th grade Language Arts American Lit begins with Unit 1: The American Dream. This unit establishes the theme of the “American dream” by examining preconceived notions and exposing students to historical and literary foundations of that dream (taken directly from DPS Grade 10 Unit 1: The American Dream.)

Teachers would use the DPS curriculum to teach the background knowledge and build understanding for students. In addition to completing the written expectations of the units, which align to the Colorado Academic Standards, students would have an opportunity to choose projects they are interested in doing as culminating evidence of their learning. The teacher would develop project ideas for kids and examples of possible projects would be:

- Students create quilt squares that capture the essence of their heritage and serve as a "snapshot" of who they are at this moment in time.
- Students read literary selections emerging from the patchwork of ethnicities that make up America in the 21st century. Selections from Native-American, African-American, Asian-American and Latino-American cultures are included. Students will create a painting, collage, etc. on a canvas board that reflects the theme of that unit.
- Students will complete and present a video autobiography similar to that of the HP commercials. Students will diagram a comic strip of important events of their life and future endeavors. Using pictures and video they have collected students will upload. Music will be added as well using Garage Band.
- Students will research the Ellis Island experience and write and perform an original song that details the emotional experiences of people who entered the United States through Ellis Island.
- Students will work in groups to create an interactive and fun wiki that will serve as an engaging tool in both teaching and learning about the American Dream. Ideally, the project will provide insight into both fact and student reaction to the events of this time period in American History to make it relevant and meaningful for today's students.

(Above project ideas adapted from <http://www.bie.org/tools/>)

In addition, NCAS arts teachers will use DPS best practices to guide their planning. These Best Practices are detailed at http://curriculum.dpsk12.org/arts/teacher_support/tools/best_practices/index.html. All arts teacher will engage in daily collaborative planning for 60 minutes and turn in weekly plans. Students

will engage in exploratory art in the middle years and we specialize in the high school years around what student “passions”; course offerings will reflect student interest. All students enrolled in NCAS will take a minimum of one intensive art class and will have opportunities to further explore the arts in core content classes, electives, and out of school time programs. NCAS will partner with Harmony Project and utilize local artist to help plan instruction and projects by partnering with core content teachers (letter of support attached).

Beginning at entry into NCAS, each student will have an individual career and education plan that guides them through their next 7 years of education, preparing them for college or career. The plan will assure their path into rigorous study and progressive steps toward postsecondary education. Beginning in 8th grade, students will be advised on their credit path through their quarterly appointment with learning family leaders, student advisors and college counselors to focus their graduation and continued school path.

Students in middle school will be provided with opportunities for progression through coursework when they reach proficiency. Students will not be limited to curriculum only for a given grade level. Instead, all students will have opportunities to participate in advanced course offerings in the core curriculum or the arts.

B. Provide an overview of the instructional philosophy and approach. What innovations, if any, will the school implement?

NCAS will implement innovations in the educational program and approach, using research-proven arts-infused core curriculum to increase student engagement and achievement, customized interventions designed or selected by the school to close achievement gaps, and deeply engaging arts experiences to inspire students and connect them with the global community.

The NCAS educational program is built on the following assumptions:

- Aligning NCAS curriculum to key concepts in the DPS curriculum and the Colorado P-12 academic standards will: 1) ensure that students graduate prepared for postsecondary success; 2) increase student success on state and district assessments; and 3) provide continuity for students who transfer among DPS schools;
- Implementing the DPS core curricula with fidelity may increase achievement from its current level but will not likely result in the dramatic gains necessary to close existing learning gaps for students in the FNE region;
- Providing an innovative approach to interdisciplinary examination of the arts and hands-on, project-based applications of academic concepts will increase engagement, achievement, and high order thinking. This will be made possible through the selection of faculty aligned with this philosophy and dedicated to a whole-school concept, which are essential to our success.

NCAS will: set clear learning goals mapped to essential standards; provide engaging arts-infused curriculum; develop foundational academic skills as well as higher order thinking through a combination

of research-based direct instruction and inquiry approaches; continually monitor student achievement and adjust instruction; and develop communication and collaboration skills of students and staff.

C. Summarize the school's culture and learning environment (e.g., classroom-based, independent study, etc.). What innovations, if any, will the school implement?

The NCAS culture:

- Consistent high expectations and achievement
- Continuous learning and growth
- Creative thought and expression
- Collaboration and teamwork
- Caring, kindness, and respect
- Leadership and perseverance
- Individual accountability for community success

The NCAS learning environment:

- Collaborative learning communities
- Flexible grouping for instruction and intervention
- Project-based, experiential learning opportunities
- Artistic and creative demonstration of knowledge and skills

Innovations:

NCAS will create this culture and learning environment by extending the day and year in order to provide the time for collaborative learning communities where: 1) students engage in hands-on, collaborative art projects that apply academic concepts and critical thinking skills; and 2) teachers collaborate daily, analyzing student data, designing instruction, learning together and developing projects to challenge students.

The NCAS educational program will focus on engaging students in academic learning through a rigorous, arts-infused core curriculum and extensive enrichment and intervention for all students. Students will belong to learning families from the time that they enter NCAS and will stay with the same group throughout their educational experience at NCAS. The PBIS system will be used to teach all students the expectations and culture of the school. Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) will be consistently taught and reinforced by all teachers and adults within the school.

NCAS will hire and develop teachers who are committed to the NCAS vision and mission and who have the knowledge, skills, disposition, and drive to contribute to the NCAS learning community. Teachers will model caring, collaboration, creativity and will have an unyielding belief in the capacity of students for learning and achievement.

D. Describe class size and structure. What innovations, if any, will the school implement?

Due to the nature of the arts-infused curriculum, class sizes at NCAS will be smaller than the DPS average. Each class will be approximately 25 students in core classes, with a maximum initial enrollment of 100 students in 6th grade and 100 students in 9th grade. Arts classes will be smaller as some students will have only one dedicated art period to allow for time for academic interventions and acceleration. Intervention classes will be provided to smaller groups of students and will allow for individualized instruction and support.

RTI Plan: All students that are not yet proficient in reading, math or English language development will receive an intervention during the school day in place of a second arts class. Students will be assessed throughout the year to determine what intervention is needed. Reading and math interventions will be available to all students and if the need is present students will receive two intervention classes during the school day. Intervention class assignments will change quarterly based on student data. Specific interventions will be adjusted by the intervention teacher based on weekly progress monitoring data.

E. Describe how the program will serve English language learners. What innovations, if any, will the school implement?

Based on the demographics of the FNE region, NCAS anticipates a significant population of English Language Learners (ELLs). All NCAS core teachers will be ELA qualified through the District and will provide research-proven sheltered instruction (SIOP) for ELLs to ensure strong language supports in all core classes. ELL's who are NEP or LEP will also receive an additional 60 minutes of English Language Development support every day. All instruction will be in English with appropriate support (including native language supports when possible) and scaffolding from highly qualified instructors.

Innovations:

NCAS will hire, supervise, and evaluate all teachers including teachers who will support ELLs.

NCAS will adapt core curriculum, modify instruction and assessments, and select interventions that align to the needs of enrolled students and the mission of the school.

F. Describe how the program will serve special education students. What innovations, if any, will the school implement?

NCAS will provide students with disabilities with appropriate accommodations, interventions, and special education services to meet their individual needs. Students with mild or moderate disabilities will receive support from a licensed special education teacher hired by NCAS. The special education teacher will work with core academic and art teachers to provide appropriate instructional strategies and accommodations as well as providing direct intervention services to students as needed.

NCAS will also offer a center based program for students with disabilities who have significant cognitive disabilities. The center based program will be staffed by licensed special education teachers hired by NCAS.

Other student services, such as counseling, social services, psychological services, and health services will be determined by NCAS and provided by licensed personnel.

Students who are gifted and talented will have opportunities to take advanced course offerings and/or compacting of curriculum. Advanced Learning Plan Guidelines would be utilized to work with clustered and flexible groups and accelerated coursework will be available for students that meet criteria for both Gifted and Talented and Highly Gifted and Talented. Partnership work with colleges, universities and performance venues will be developed to support GT students. Cross grade clustering, extended and/accelerated coursework and performance challenge during and beyond the school day would be provided through the school and partnership with community apprenticeships. (e.g. Destination Imagination, Math Olympics, Debate Team)

Innovations:

NCAS will hire/dismiss, develop, supervise, and evaluate all teachers including special education teachers, GT teachers and related service providers.

NCAS will develop core curriculum, modify instruction and assessments, and select interventions that align to the needs of enrolled students and the mission of the school.

G. Explain any academic services or programs that are supplemental to that which is included in DPS's core curriculum. What innovations, if any, will the school implement?

Reading: Intervention for all students who are not yet proficient on the reading CSAP will include Reading Advantage, Language!, Six Minute Solutions, Spellography and other research-based intervention programs that are identified as effective in meeting the academic needs of NCAS students.

Math: Data-driven, individualized tutoring in mathematics is central to the NCAS education plan and a critical component of the Ed Labs study. Students who are not yet proficient on the math CSAP or NCAS assessments will receive daily math tutoring using Navigator, ALEKS, First in Math, and other research-based intervention programs that are identified as effective in meeting the academic needs of NCAS students.

Language: ELLs requiring an ELD block of targeted daily language instruction in addition to the instructional support provided by all core teachers will receive explicit instruction in English language development in listening, speaking, reading, and writing using the district recommended Shining Star curriculum.

Supplemental academic services and programs will be part of the education program innovations implemented at NCAS. Innovations will include modified education programs and staffing to deliver core and supplemental instruction.

- H. Explain how the school will use innovation status to improve the education program to produce gains in academic achievement.

Innovation status will allow Noel Community Arts School to customize curriculum and instruction to the individual learning needs of students and provide arts infused project-based applications of critical concepts to increase student engagement and deepen understanding. As students begin to learn about important concepts they will be authentically demonstrating learning through artistic expressions, projects and performances. As previously described, teachers will meet weekly to make adjustments to lessons based on student learning outcomes. Student learning will be measured by common formative assessments developed by teachers in collaboration with the school leadership team.

The extended day and year will allow for additional instructional time to close learning gaps in core academic areas while also providing a full and rich learning experience that prepares students with critical thinking, communication, and collaboration skills that are critical to postsecondary education and workforce success.

NCAS will recruit, select, and retain effective staff members who sign on to the mission, goals and pedagogy core to NCAS's approach to academic gains.

- I. **If you are requesting waivers to DPS core curriculum materials please complete Appendix A.**

Appendix A Curriculum Waiver -- Not Applicable

INNOVATION: ASSESSMENTS

IV. Describe the school's assessment plan and how it is critical for the school to produce gains in academic achievement.

- A. Provide an overview of the school's proposed assessment plan. Describe any assessments that will supplement assessments required by DPS and the state.

NCAS will follow the district student assessment policy ILBA, administering all assessments in accordance with federal, state, and local laws and policies.

In addition to assessments required by the district and the state, NCAS's teachers will develop common formative assessments designed to measure the Essential Learning Goals (ELGs) of the school's curriculum (see educational program).

- B. Explain how the school will measure and evaluate academic progress of individual students, student cohorts, and the school as a whole throughout the school year and at the end of each academic year.

Stoplight assessments, designed to measure ELGs, will be administered every four to six weeks. In addition, teachers will administer weekly formative assessments to monitor student progress. Individual

assessment results will be reported to students and used by content level teams in weekly data meetings to determine progress and design instruction for individuals and groups of students.

- C. Explain *how* and *how frequently* the school will collect and analyze diagnostic, formative, predictive, and summative student academic achievement data, use the data to refine and improve instruction, and report the data to the school community.

NCAS will have an assessment board of directors that will consist of a teacher from every content area to monitor student achievement progress as measured by the ELG’s and research based rubrics. This seven member team will consist of an administrator, four content area representatives and the two intervention specialists. This committee will meet monthly to evaluate unit plans and align them to the needs of the students and ELGs. The board will examine bodies of evidence including but not limited to achievement, attendance, behavior and interventions to determine student placement and individual student goals. Reports on the board’s findings and recommendations will be created and distributed to all stakeholders.

Diagnostic – Students who are below proficient on state assessments will be assigned to an intervention class. Intervention teachers will assess students using valid and reliable diagnostic assessments to determine specific learning needs and to group students for intervention.

Formative – Progress toward ELGs will be monitored weekly and monthly using common formative assessments developed by teachers as part of the school’s curriculum. Additionally, DPS interim assessments will be used to validate findings on formative assessments and to make adjustments to instructional programming as necessary.

Predictive - District interim assessments (i.e. acuity and interim) will be used to predict student achievement on summative assessments and to adjust instruction according to needs.

Summative – State summative assessments will be used to evaluate student growth and achievement by school and student group. Summative assessment data will be used to evaluate the educational program and to schedule students for instruction the following year. Students who are below proficient on state assessments of reading, writing, or mathematics will be required to take an intervention class.

- D. **If you are requesting waivers to DPS assessments, please complete Appendix B.**

NOT APPLICABLE – No Waivers Requested

INNOVATION: GRADUATION AND PROMOTION

- V. **Describe the school’s proposed graduation and promotion policies.**

- A. Explain policies and standards for promoting students from one grade to the next.

Consistent with the DPS promotion, retention and acceleration policy IKE, NCAS agrees that “grade retention or acceleration may increase the likelihood that students will succeed in meeting challenging

academic expectations at the next grade level. Retention provides a second opportunity to master skills, while acceleration increases the likelihood that academic expectations will be challenging.”

As academic achievement in middle school is critical to the future success of students in the FNE region, the NCAS promotion, retention, and acceleration policy will require that students in 6th, 7th and 8th grade that do not meet or exceed a student growth percentile of 55 on the state assessment in all areas including reading, writing, and mathematics be considered for retention (see attached policy and procedures). The principal will make final decisions about promotion, retention, and acceleration after considering the body of evidence for student academic progress.

As academic achievement in high school is essential for success in college the retention program for grades 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grades will include placing students who need to repeat a course on academic watch. Students on watch will be monitored by learning family teacher in addition to participating in the monthly college counseling offered to all NCAS high school students. Students on academic watch may utilize alternative credit recovery options including approved online courses, after school options, and Saturday school.

With the exception of the above policy change, the NCAS promotion, retention, and acceleration policy is adopted from DPS Policies IKE and Procedures IKE-R.

B. Provide the school’s exit standards for graduating students.

NCAS will follow the DPS Policy IKF for graduation requirements.

C. Describe how and when promotion and graduation criteria will be communicated to parents and students.

Parents and students will be notified of the promotion and graduation criteria upon enrollment in NCAS via the school handbook. In addition, a letter will be mailed home at the beginning of each school year to notify parents of the requirements that the student will need to meet to be promoted to the next grade.

All NCAS students will develop an Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP) and will participate in monthly planning meetings with a counselor to discuss progress toward graduation and postsecondary goals.

D. Explain what policies and processes the school will implement for students at risk of dropping out of high school and/or not meeting the graduating criteria proposed (i.e., credit recovery, etc.)

NCAS will offer credit recovery opportunities to students who are at risk of not having sufficient credits to graduate. Credit recovery options will be available for students to demonstrate competency in content standards via the District online program, Saturday school, after school or by re-taking a class. All of the

students who are at risk of dropping out or meeting graduating criteria will be closely monitored by a learning family teacher.

- E. **If you are requesting waivers to DPS graduation and/or promotion policies, please complete Appendix C.**

See Appendix C

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT GOALS AND GAINS

VI. **Describe the goals and specific gains in academic achievement the school will commit to as a result of securing innovation status.**

- A. Outline the clear and measurable annual achievement goals the school commits to through innovation status in order to meet or exceed District expectations for the School Performance Framework indicators.
1. See **Appendix D: Academic Goals Worksheet**

Noel Community Arts School Annual Academic Performance Goals:

Goal A.1: NCAS will increase student growth over time toward state standards.

- School Median Growth Percentile of 55 or higher in reading, writing, and math on CSAP

Goal A.2: NCAS students will be proficient in reading, writing, math, science, and English.

- 15% increase in students scoring proficient or advanced in reading, writing, & math on CSAP (baseline % of enrolled students P/A last year)
- 40 point average scale score growth on CELA
- Make Adequate Yearly Progress in reading, writing, and math on CSAP
- 10% reduction in achievement gaps (FRL, ELL, SE, and ethnic groups)

Goal A.3: NCAS students will be prepared for post-secondary success.

- 90% of students will meet or exceed a score of 22 on the ACT
- 100% graduation rate within 5 years
- 100% of students will apply to attend college and 100% of students will be accepted into a two or four year institution.

Note: Post-Secondary Readiness goals are not applicable in 2011-12 or 2012-13. 11th grade students enroll in 2013-14 and 12th grade in 2014-15.

Goal A.4: NCAS students will participate fully and demonstrate interest and satisfaction with the school.

- 95% attendance for 6th grade students
- 92% attendance for 9th grade students
- 85% satisfaction rate based on DPS survey

Noel Community Arts School Annual Organizational & Financial Goals:

Goal B.1: School Demand

- 100% enrollment – all available spots filled

- 90% of promoted students will return for the next school year
- 90% of students will continuously enrolled

Goal B.2: Financial Goals

- NCAS will annually raise funds and secure grants

Goal B.3: Leadership & Governance Quality

- 90% participation in board meetings
- 100% of board members serve full term and participate in self-evaluation process

Goal B.4: Parent & Community Engagement

- 85% of responding parents will report that they are satisfied on the DPS survey
- 50% of parents will respond to the survey

Goal B.5: School-Specific Organizational Objectives

NCAS will hire, train and retain effective teachers and support staff

- Teachers will be provided with at least 50 hours of professional development each year
- 85% of faculty and staff, when surveyed annually, will acknowledge satisfaction with the school’s work environment
- 80% of faculty and staff who are asked to return each year will return for the following school year. Of those who choose not to return, a majority will cite reasons other than dissatisfaction with the school’s environment for their decision

B. Describe how the school will engage in continuous quality improvement in order to meet or exceed these achievement goals. What innovations, if any, in continuous quality improvement will the school implement?

The NCAS board of advisors will review academic, organizational, and financial data and evaluate progress toward performance and implementation benchmarks quarterly. Student data analyses will be presented by the Assessment Board, disaggregated by academic subjects, student groups, grade level, and teacher. The Board of Advisors (BOA) will make recommendations for improvement based on trends and concerns that emerge. The school leadership team will make adjustments to the educational programming, scheduling, staffing, and resource allocations based on recommendations. The school principal will distribute a summary of data trends, board recommendations and actions to be taken to students, parents, and the community via a quarterly report and the school website.

C. Attach the school’s Uniform School Improvement Plan (UIP) and briefly explain how the proposed innovation plan aligns with UIP goals.

NCAS will develop a performance or improvement plan in the fall of 2012. Goals in the UIP will be aligned with the New School and Innovation Plans. The plan will be updated annually as required by state law.

INNOVATION: TIME

VII. Describe how the school will use time strategically to support the vision, mission and education program so as to produce gains in academic achievement.

A. Describe any innovations to the school’s calendar and schedule under innovation status and how such changes will lead to increased student achievement.

1. Attach the school’s proposed calendar and daily schedule of classes under innovation status. Include both a teacher and student schedule.

See attached DPS calendar, NCAS student schedule, and NCAS teacher schedule

Calendar: The NCAS calendar will follow the DPS calendar (see attached) and will add 10 additional weekdays immediately prior to the start of the year. Due to facilities limitations, the NCAS calendar will add 6 additional weekdays immediately prior to the start of the year in the 2011-2012 school year. Students will begin on August 10, 2011. Teachers will begin on July 28, 2011. In future years, the NCAS leadership team may change the dates of observed holidays and teacher professional development based on student and staff needs but will not reduce the number of days within the calendar. The increase in number of days will add 80 hours (48,000 minutes) to each school year, significantly increasing instructional time in order to close achievement gaps and increase academic achievement⁵.

Schedule: The NCAS student schedule will extend the day from 7 hours to 8 hours, increasing instructional time by 60 minutes for every student each day. Increased instructional time has been proven to produce gains in academic achievement as well as improving students’ attitudes toward school and attendance⁶. The extended day and year schedule will result in an overall increase of 251 hours (21%) of instruction each year (1.0 additional hour per day x 171 days + 10 additional days x 8 hours).

Teacher Schedule: NCAS teachers will work 194 days a year, 10 days more than the 184 days on the DPS calendar and will work a professional work week that includes 45 scheduled hours and the expectation that additional work, outside of scheduled hours, will be required to fulfill the job responsibilities. One day each week, teachers will engage in 1.5 hour professional development in addition to the collaborative learning time built into the regular work day. Teacher schedules may be staggered (e.g. 7:00am-3:45pm M,T,TH,F and 7:00am-5:00pm W for core teachers and 8:00am-5:00pm M-F for art teacher) and are subject to change based on student and school needs and principal discretion.

2. Summarize the length of the school day, including start and dismissal times.

The NCAS school day is 8 hours (480 minutes), beginning at 7:30am and ending at 3:30pm.

⁵ Farbman, D. and Kaplan, C. (2005). Time for a change: The promise of extended-time schools for promoting student achievement. Boston, MA: Massachusetts 2020.

⁶ The Quality Imperative: A State Guide to Achieving the Promise of Extended Learning Opportunities. 2009; Princiotta, D., and Fortune, A.; Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices; A Five-Year Comparison between an Extended Year School and a Conventional Year School: Effects on Academic Achievement. 2008; Khankeo van der Graaf; Center for American Progress. (2010). *Expanded Learning Time by the Numbers*; Farbman, D.A. (2009). Tracking an emerging movement: A report on expanded-time schools in America, National Center on Time & Learning.

The total number of days for NCAS students will be 181, 10 days more than the 171 days on the DPS calendar.

3. Summarize the total number of hours and days of instruction for core subjects such as language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Explain how the calendar will support the success of the innovation program.

Core Academics (4 hours per day)

Every NCAS student will receive a minimum of 4 hours (240 minutes) per day of instruction in core subjects (60 minutes each: Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies). In addition, every student will receive 1 hour (60 minutes) per day of math tutoring, increase the total number of hours in core subjects to 5 hours per day. Therefore, the total minimum number of hours of instruction in core subjects over the course of the year (181 instructional days) will be 905 hours (54,300 minutes). Students who are not proficient in reading or writing will receive an additional hour per day of intervention which will increase the number of hours of instruction in core subjects to 6 hours (360 minutes) per day and 1,086 hours (65,160 minutes) per year. The extended day and year calendar allows for increased instructional time and intensive interventions, as well as, deep exploration and integration of the arts.

4. Summarize the total number of hours and days allocated for tiered interventions, enrichment, tutoring and other non-academic activities.

Academic Intervention/Acceleration (1-2 hours per day)

Each student receives 1 hour (60 minutes) per day of intensive math tutoring (10:1), resulting in 181 hours (10,860 minutes) of additional math instruction/intervention per year. Students who are not proficient in reading or writing will receive 1 hour (60 minutes) per day of Tier II intervention, resulting in 181 hours (10,860 minutes) of additional literacy intervention per year. Students needing Tier III academic support will be provided with intensive interventions within the 2 hours allocated for language arts and literacy interventions and the 2 hours allocated for math and math tutoring.

Arts/Enrichment (1-2 hours per day)

Each student will receive a minimum of 1 hour (60 minutes) per day of arts exploration (middle school) or arts specialization (high school). Students who are not receiving academic enrichment or intervention will receive 2 hours (120 minutes) per day of arts.

Non-academic Activities (1 hour per day)

Students will spend 1 hour (60 minutes) in non-academic activities each day. Students will be provided 30 minutes for lunch and will spend 23 minutes in transitions from one class to another. Additionally, all students will spend 7 minutes each day checking in with their learning family advisors, making connections and organizing for academic success.

After-school academics and enrichment programs will be available on campus from 3:30-4:15 via the Beacon Program as well as activities sponsored by NCAS and community partners.

INNOVATION: STUDENT ENROLLMENT

VIII. Describe the enrollment procedures and practices of the school with innovation status.

- A. 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.

NCAS will follow the DPS school of choice enrollment practices. An enrollment matching process will be conducted by the District, ensuring equal access to any student who is interested in attending the school.

- B. Please attach any written enrollment documents, including the Student Handbook, and/or forms that will be provided to or required of students and families.

See attached outline - Student Handbook

INNOVATION: HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

IX. Describe the proposed plan for staffing, recruiting, selecting, and developing employees, the school's personnel policies, and the school's leadership structure. Explain how they will be changed by innovation status, and how these changes will lead to increased student achievement.

- A. Describe any innovations in the school's personnel policies under innovation status and how these changes will produce gains in academic achievement.

To meet the needs of all students and to achieve the academic performance goals outlined in Section XI and in Appendix D, NCAS requires maximum flexibility to design and implement human resource policies and procedures that align with the vision, mission and education plan of the school.

NCAS is committed to hiring outstanding individuals who understand and are prepared to meet the demands of creating a school that produces significant gains in academic achievement for all students.

The innovation plan includes waivers from state statute and the DPS/DCTA collective bargaining agreement, including but not limited to, waiver of the Teacher Employment, Compensation and Dismissal Act of 1990

Employment Status. Teacher’s employment with NCAS and the Denver Public Schools will be “at-will” and will not be subject to the Teacher Employment Compensation and Dismissal Act of 1990, § 22-63-101, et seq. The teacher will have a right to end his/her work relationship with NCAS and the Denver Public Schools for any reason at any time. NCAS and the Denver Public Schools will have the right to end the work relationship with the teacher at any time in accordance with personnel policies in the Employee Handbook.

Teachers employed by the Denver Public Schools who obtained non-probationary status in the Denver Public Schools prior to their employment at NCAS will be at-will as described in the preceding paragraph. Such teachers will regain their non-probationary status with DPS upon securing, without break in service, a mutual consent position within another DPS school. Such teachers will have the right to participate in the DPS staffing cycles available to all DPS teachers, but will not be guaranteed placement in any other school or further employment beyond their employment at NCAS if they do not secure a position through mutual consent.

The employment of secretaries and paraprofessionals with NCAS and the Denver Public Schools will be “at-will.” Secretaries and paraprofessionals will have a right to end his/her work relationship with NCAS and the Denver Public Schools for any reason at any time. NCAS and Denver Public Schools will have the right to end the work relationship with secretaries and paraprofessionals for any reason at any time in accordance with personnel policies in the Employee Handbook.

The employment of custodians and facilities managers with NCAS will be “at-will.” NCAS can release custodians and facilities managers from the school for any reason at any time, provided school leadership proposes, and the District approves, an alternative custodial and facilities management solution. The employment rights of custodians and facilities managers with the District that have been released from NCAS will be determined by District policy and the applicable collective bargaining agreement or memorandum of understanding.

As described in this document, including in Appendix E, NCAS is requesting maximum flexibility to:

- Recruit and hire all staff, including teachers, administrators, and other support personnel, using practices that will ensure employee fit with the school’s Innovation Plan.
- Post all vacant positions and recruit and hire all staff as the need arises, even if such need falls outside the District’s standard hiring cycle.
- Not receive direct placements of teachers by the District.
- Create non-traditional job descriptions, which may include adding roles and responsibilities to any job.
- Establish the calendar, work year, work week, work day, job assignments, class size and teaching loads to align with the Innovation Plan.
- Create a governance and leadership structure that aligns with the Innovation Plan.
- Hire non-licensed teachers for non-core subjects who are not required to meet NCLB highly qualified criteria; the school will hire teachers who meet the highly-qualified requirements for all core content classes.

- Create a professional development program that supports the Innovation Plan. The School will have the option to participate in District-provided professional development.
- Create a process to address under-performing employees.
- Establish compensation rates and other methods of rewarding performance and extra work time, including additional bonuses and/or incentives.
- Implement other programs and policies, such as a dress code and employee and student conduct expectations that will support the school's culture as described in the Innovation Plan.

Such flexibility will be limited only by federal law, and the statutes, Collective Bargaining Agreement provisions and District Board policies not waived in this application.

Effective teachers are the single most important factor in raising student achievement, especially with low-achieving students. The flexibility to staff the school with the most effective and committed teachers, afforded by the innovations in personnel policies, will allow NCAS to reach its goals of high academic growth and achievement for all students⁷.

- B. Describe any innovations in the school's staffing plan under innovation status and how these changes will produce gains in academic achievement.

NCAS teachers will work 194 days a year, 10 days more than the 184 days on the DPS calendar and will work a professional work week that includes 45 scheduled hours and the expectation that additional work, outside of scheduled hours, will be required to fulfill the job responsibilities. One day each week, teachers will engage in 1.5 hour professional development in addition to the collaborative learning time built into the regular work day. Teacher schedules may be staggered (e.g. 7:00am-3:45pm M,T,TH,F and 7:00am-5:00pm W for core teachers and 8:00am-5:00pm M-F for art teacher) and are subject to change based on student and school needs and principal discretion. The master schedule will be developed based on student academic needs, not teaching schedules.

Extended day and year schedules and student based scheduling are both proven methods for increasing academic achievement.

1. Describe all non-teaching staff positions and how they will contribute to achieving the school's goals.

The only non-teaching staff positions at NCAS include the principal, assistant principal, and office assistant. (Addition office staff and paraprofessionals will be hired in additional years)

The principal and assistant principal set the vision, mission, and culture, and keep all school activities focused on achieving the school's goals. The principal and assistant principal are instructional leaders, supervising and evaluating the impact of instruction on student achievement, artistic learning and expression, and the community.

⁷ Conventional estimates of the variance in teacher effectiveness at driving student achievement range from 0.15 to 0.24 standard deviations per year in math and 0.15 to 0.20 in reading (Rockoff 2004, Hanushek and Rivkin 2005, Aaronson et al. 2007, Kane and Staiger 2008).

The office assistant will contribute to NCAS achievement by assisting the principal with budgeting, coordinating partnerships, organizing events and performances, and communicating with parents, freeing the principal to stay focused on student achievement and engagement.

2. Attach a copy of the school's organizational chart with innovation status.
 - a. Highlight any changes in the organizational structure with innovation status and how these changes will lead to increased student achievement.

In the NCAS organizational chart, the principal is the director of the school, accountable for school outcomes. All staff are supervised and evaluated by the principal or assistant principal. The principal receives advice and support from the Board of Advisors. The principal reports to the District assigned Administrator and receives support for implementation of the innovation plan from the OSRI team.

Providing the principal with autonomy in programming, staffing, scheduling, and use of resources will lead to increased student achievement as has been demonstrated by other autonomous schools across the nation⁸.

- C. Describe any innovations in the school's process for identifying, recruiting, and selecting new staff under innovation status and how these changes will lead to increased student achievement.
 1. Explain the strategies and processes to identify and recruit faculty, support staff and administrative staff.

NCAS will use the DPS web site and job fairs to recruit staff as well as recruiting through arts-community partners. NCAS will recruit and select personnel as needed, at any time in the year, not in accordance with the DPS hiring cycles.

All staff will be hired by the Leadership Team, consisting of the principal, assistant principal, and three teacher leaders.

Innovation status will allow NCAS to effectively recruit, develop and retain highly effective teachers who are committed to the vision, mission, and culture of the school. Effective teachers lead to increased student achievement.

2. Describe selection criteria and other qualifications for faculty, support staff, and administrative staff that will ensure fit with the vision, mission and academic plan of the school.

Teachers selected to teach at Noel Community Arts School will participate in a robust selection process. Elements of the interview process may include: teaching a lesson, responding to a set of data and writing

⁸ Abliedinger & Hassel. (April, 2010). *Free to Lead*. National Alliance for Public Charter Schools.

a plan for next steps in using the data, a group interview, a formal face to face interview and robust reference checking.

The job description and performance criteria for the interview will include evidence of strong mastery of content, student academic growth, collaboration and teamwork, impact in community, and project-based learning. Additionally, teachers will need to demonstrate a commitment to the arts-infused educational program and participation in the collaborative learning community.

- D. Describe any innovations in the school's compensation system under innovation status and how these changes will lead to increased student achievement.
 - 1. Describe any incentive or reward programs and how they align with the vision and mission of the school.

Base teacher compensation will be based on the DPS salary schedule/Procomp and will be supplemented with yearly stipends. Teachers will receive an annual stipend for their extended year and day. All stipends will be split and paid in July, November and March. Stipends will be different each year depending on available funding. Teachers will be eligible for all Procomp incentives.

Providing teachers with additional pay for additional time as well as performance incentives will increase student achievement by extending the day and year and attracting and retaining the most effective teachers.

- E. Describe any innovations in the school's professional development plan under innovation status and how these changes will lead to increased student achievement.

NCAS teachers will be both participants and providers of the school's professional development. Working in collaborative learning teams, teachers will design and lead professional development in their areas of expertise and demonstrated strengths. All teachers will model instruction for others and will participate in the development, implementation, and revision of curriculum and assessments.

The NCAS innovative professional development plan that develops the internal leadership capacity of all school staff will lead to increased teacher effectiveness and sustainable student achievement gains.

- 1. Explain career growth and development opportunities for staff to maximize the contribution and retention of highly effective employees.

NCAS teachers will design and lead professional development in areas of expertise and demonstrated strengths, maximizing the impact of the most effective teachers on all students.

- 2. Describe how the school's culture and leadership team will support the professional growth of all teachers.

NCAS will hire and develop teachers who are committed to the NCAS vision and mission and who have the knowledge, skills, disposition, and drive to contribute to the learning community. All NCAS teachers and leaders will model caring, collaboration, and creativity and will have an unyielding belief in the capacity of students and adults for learning and achievement.

3. Describe the schools plan to cultivate future leadership capacity.

NCAS will empower all employees to take on leadership responsibilities within the school and across the district. All staff will be participants and leaders in the NCAS professional learning community.

4. Explain how the school will demonstrate a spirit of collaboration so as to share innovative practices across the entire district.

NCAS will participate in the FNE schools collaborative and will be involved in principal leadership within the District. NCAS will invite other district leaders to visit the school and will share learning and results district-wide. In year two, NCAS may apply for the EPIC program.

F. Describe any innovations in the school's performance management system under innovation status and how these changes will lead to increased student achievement.

1. Describe policies and procedures for establishing individual employee goals.

NCAS will use the LEAP evaluation system framework and observation tools to set individual performance goals. Teachers will set goals in consultation with their supervisor.

2. Describe policies and procedures for evaluating staff, providing feedback and celebrating excellence.

Teachers will be evaluated using the DPS LEAP evaluation frameworks, which include student growth data as measured on standardized assessments, principal observations and student feedback.

All teachers will be evaluated 4 times per year using the DPS effective teaching framework and student progress monitoring. Each month we will celebrate teacher success with public recognition.

Any LEAP processes and procedures that infringe upon the at-will employment agreement will not be included in the NCAS performance management system.

3. Describe who is involved in the evaluation process, how feedback will be provided, and how often.

Consistent with the DPS LEAP evaluation system, the principal, the assistant principal, and peer observers will be involved in the evaluation process. Teachers will be evaluated 4 times per year and will receive feedback on progress toward individual growth goals and student achievement gains.

4. Explain how the school will handle unsatisfactory leadership and teacher performance.
 - a. Describe employee remediation policies and procedures.

Teachers will be provided with differentiated professional development and support as determined by their supervisor. Ineffective teachers will not be retained.

NCAS will not have remediation policies and procedures. Dismissal procedures will be consistent with the NCAS at-will employment policy.

5. Describe how the performance management system will be used to drive improvements in teacher effectiveness and student achievement.

Frequent observation and feedback will be used to drive instructional improvements that will result in increased student achievement.

- G. Describe any innovations to the school's leadership structure as a result of innovation status and how these changes will lead to increased student achievement.

NCAS will not have a Collaborative School Committee as outlined in DPS policy BDFH. Instead, the principal will be accountable to the District for achieving the goals set forth in the innovation plan and will have the autonomy and authority to make decisions about the school's design, budget, staffing, discipline and safety procedures, and calendar and schedule consistent with the innovation plan. The principal will receive guidance and support from the school Board of Advisors and OSRI staff. By providing the principal with autonomy, accountability, and support, innovation status will result in increased student achievement.

- H. Describe the qualifications and capacity of school leadership (i.e., skills, experience, and available time) to identify and respond to the needs of the school and to ensure the innovation plan is successfully implemented.

Stacy Miller will be the principal of Noel Community Arts School. This will be her fifth year as Principal and prior to that she was the Assistant Principal for two years; her experience has provided her with a solid background.

Stacy began her career in education at Montbello High School where she was a technology and business teacher. Shortly after joining the Montbello team, she and a few colleagues began a Project Based Learning team. This team focused on giving students an opportunity to display their learning through

projects and presentations. The team operated for three years and saw tremendous student achievement growth.

At the end of four years at Montbello, Stacy was given the opportunity to move to a central administration position in DPS. She took a position in the Curriculum and Instruction office where she worked with secondary schools for three years to help kids plan for college/career. Stacy was then asked by the Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction to serve as a Curriculum Coordinator. She served in this position for one year and pursued a position back in schools. She was then hired for the Assistant Principal position at Merrill. She remained at Merrill for six years, 2 as AP and 4 as Principal, and in that time Merrill became the highest academic growth traditional middle school in DPS.

Ligia Gibson will be the assistant principal of Noel Community Arts School. This is her first year as an assistant principal. Prior she has served as an Administrative Assistant and an Administrative Intern, through the Ritchie Program for School Leaders in several DPS schools. Ligia has a Masters degree in arts integration and curriculum.

Ligia began her teaching career as a bilingual teacher in MA. After relocating to Denver, she has worked as a 3, 4th & 5th grade classroom teacher as well as an ESL teacher and Descubriendo la Lectura (Reading Recovery) teacher. Her experience led her to work as a Literacy Coach through both DPS and Public Education and Business Coalition. It is through this work that she honed her skills to help teachers become more effective and reflective of their teaching and helped effect student growth.

After displaying leadership qualities Ligia was selected to participate in the Ritchie Program for School Leaders. She served as an Administrative Intern at Cory Elementary and Merrill Middle Schools. Through her work at these schools, district leadership selected her to work as an Assistant Principal at Ford Elementary. She has worked on a strong positive school culture and ensuring the focus on student learning continues as the school undergoes the process of Turnaround.

- I. Provide a detailed leadership succession plan which engages the school's parents and teachers to ensure consistency and stability in implementing the mission and vision of the innovation plan.
 1. If there is a change in leadership, describe the process the community will engage in to identify and recommend qualified candidates.

The NCAS Leadership Succession Plan is as follows:

In the event that the current school principal vacates the position, the Board of Advisors, which includes the school leadership team, a business community representative, two core teachers, two arts teachers, one paraprofessional, the business/office manager, and five parent representatives, will be responsible for implementing the principal selection process. The school leadership team will select their two top candidates in consultation with the Board of Advisors and make recommendations to the DPS Superintendent. Potential applicants who currently work at the school will not be able to participate in or attend any selection related meetings.

A neutral person will be invited to facilitate all faculty and parent/community meetings.

The selection process will include: a faculty meeting to identify characteristics and criteria of desired new leader that are consistent with the innovation plan; a parent/community meeting to identify characteristics and criteria of desired new leader that are consistent with the innovation plan; development of a job description based on faculty and parent/community input; posting of position of DPS website and other related sources; development of interview questions and selection criteria rubric based on job description and input on criteria; application screening and scoring; reference checks on top candidates; conduct interviews including performance tasks; host a public symposium for finalists; conduct site visits to finalists current schools; school leadership team selects final candidates; submits recommendation of two finalists to Superintendent for final selection; announce position acceptance to staff, students, parents, and community.

INNOVATION: SCHOOL GOVERNANCE & PARENT ENGAGEMENT

X. Describe proposed changes to the school's governance structure and parent engagement strategy. How will these changes produce gains in academic achievement?

A. Describe your plan to ensure a robust and participatory governance structure that will provide accountability and support to the school.

1. If applicable, attach a copy of the school's committee descriptions.

NCAS will be governed by the DPS Board of Education in accordance with the School Innovation Plan. The NCAS principal will have the authority set forth in this innovation plan to manage the school. The principal will be held accountable and supported by the School Leadership Team, the Board of Advisors, the DPS Office of School Reform and Innovation, and the DPS FNE Administrator.

Leadership Team

The school leadership team will include: the principal, the assistant principal, and three teacher leaders, selected by the principal. The leadership team will make decisions about hiring and dismissal of staff, including the new leadership in the event that the current principal leaves the school. They will also make decisions about educational structures & schedules, educational programs, community involvement, and budget and resource allocation. The leadership team will meet once a week to discuss and plan professional development for teachers, monitor calendars, update policies and shape the school culture. The leadership team will continually cultivate new leaders and help ensure that the teachers that serve NCAS students are the most dedicated, reflective and effective in facilitating student learning. The leadership team will be held accountable by the principal.

Board of Advisors

NCAS will not have a CSC. Instead, NCAS will have a Board of Advisors (BOA) consisting of the school leadership team, 1 business community representative, 2 core teachers, 2 arts teachers, 1 paraprofessionals, 1 business/office manager, and 5 parent representatives – 2 middle school parents and

3 high school parents. The BOA will support the leadership team in securing resources and developing community partnerships necessary for success and will hold the leadership team accountable for reaching implementation and achievement goals.

The NCAS board of advisors will review academic, organizational, and financial data and evaluate progress toward performance and implementation benchmarks quarterly. Student data analyses will be presented by the Assessment Board, disaggregated by academic subjects, student groups, grade level, and teacher. The Board of Advisors (BOA) will make recommendations for improvement based on trends and concerns that emerge. The school leadership team will make adjustments to the educational programming, scheduling, staffing, and resource allocations based on recommendations. The school principal will distribute a summary of data trends, board recommendations and actions to be taken to students, parents, and the community via a quarterly report and the school website.

The BOA will be held accountable for their participation in board meetings and active advocacy for the school. All BOA members will participate in a self-evaluation and will receive feedback from their peers on the impact of their involvement of school outcomes.

B. Describe the parent and community engagement plan that will be implemented to support the school's mission.

As with any successful school, parents and the community will be critical to the success of the integrated arts school. Parents and community members must be engaged on myriad levels from strategic oversight to hands-on involvement.

On the parent front, ALL NCAS parents will be actively involved in the school. NCAS envisions parent engagement in the following three areas:

- 1) Board of Advisors
- 2) Parent Outreach Committee
- 3) Student and Parent Engagement

Board of Advisors

As mentioned earlier in the proposal, the NCAS BOA will engage 5 NCAS parents to be part of this group. The BOA will include 2 middle school parents and 3 high school parents who will represent the larger school body. Additionally, the BOA will engage 1 NCAS business community member to support school to community partnerships.

Parent Outreach Committee

In addition to parents providing strategic consultation on the BOA, NCAS will engage parents on a tactical level through the Parent Outreach Committee (POC). The goal of the POC will be to engage parents in proactively communicating NCAS's progress, challenges and successes to all stakeholders, and actively soliciting their feedback and participation in dramatically improving student achievement. In addition, the group will work to further engage more parents through seminars, workshops and other events that support academic achievement. It will provide a larger number of parents the opportunity to get involved

with the school at a leadership level. The communication specialist will oversee this committee and its initiatives.

The POC will work on a variety of projects ranging from event planning to public relations activities to retention efforts to providing regular volunteer support within the school. The POC will serve as support for the BOA, the leadership team and the communication specialist. The POC will meet on a monthly basis with meetings in between as needed (for specific events, planning, etc.) The POC will be open to all NCAS parents, but the school will strive to have a consistent group of at least 12-15 parent leaders.

Student and Parent Engagement and Commitment

To ensure engagement across the school, ALL parents will be required to agree to the school compact, a commitment to the partnership that will exist between the student, parent and the school. The school compact will outline the expectations of the school as well as the required commitment of students, parents, and school staff which includes the school's core values and code of conduct. Students and parents will understand and agree to the terms of the extended day and tutorial requirements, attendance policies, uniform dress code, and community apprenticeship requirements.

Community Engagement

Over the years, schools in FNE have faced a lot of challenges and schools like Noel have been thought of negatively. With the launch of NCAS, the school has the opportunity to alter current perceptions of Noel, its students and all schools in the FNE region. Below are some strategies NCAS will implement to engage the community in this transformation process:

- Include parents and community members on the NCAS Board of Advisors
- Forge community partnerships and support by conducting an audit of community resources in FNE Denver to identify potential partners.
- Respond to the needs of the community through targeted events including open houses & health fairs
- Ensure consistent communication from the school through media relations, newsletter distribution, website updates and new media.

C. Describe how innovation status will be used to leverage parental involvement.

Innovation status will allow for NCAS to create a parent/student agreement that will require involvement from each and every parent.

In addition, through the school's BOA, NCAS parents will have the opportunity to provide to be involved in the oversight of school progress and advise on future directions.

D. Describe any community partnerships needed to implement the school's innovation plan.

1. Describe any other community partnership or services you anticipate developing as a result of innovation status.

Noel Beacons Neighborhood Center

In addition to the extended school day, NCAS will develop a partnership with Noel Beacons Neighborhood Center to provide after school programming at the school from 3:30 – 6:00pm. A program of Catholic Charities, Beacons is a nationally recognized and evidence-based model that provides high quality out-of-school time programming for youth, parent engagement and family support services.

Programs offered through Beacons are based on the Beacons Community School model of utilizing strong partnerships between public schools and community-based organizations to reduce barriers and provide essential services on site. Beacons integrates 6 core areas of programming through after school and summer programming: academics, arts & culture, leadership, post-secondary readiness, recreation and technology.

Specifically at NCAS, Beacons will offer after-school enrichment classes in a variety of areas including the arts. Beacons will work with NCAS to tailor its class offerings to support the needs of the school and its students. Beacons enrichment classes will offer additional opportunities for arts exposure and focus through extended day learning, plus introduction of other subjects such as cooking, technology, photography and more.

Ed Labs

NCAS will partner with the Education Innovation Laboratory at Harvard University (EdLabs). EdLabs specializes in applying the research and development (R&D) model to education with the goal of identifying how to effectively close the achievement gap. While EdLabs' work spans across a number of disciplines, the lab has recently focused its research on whole school reform.

From these studies and ongoing research into successful schools, NCAS will adopt the common trends identified by EdLabs as key practices of successful schools. Together, these practices represent a results-driven blueprint for student achievement. Currently the blueprint consists of five tenets or specific focus areas, each demonstrating a significant correlation with increased student achievement. The tenets include:

1. **A Focus on Human Capital:** Successful schools recruit top leadership talent, reward teachers for performance (monetary or otherwise), and hold teachers individually accountable for increasing student achievement.
2. **Increased Time on Task:** Effective schools require students to increase their time on task. Extended school days, weeks, and years are all integral components of successful school models.
3. **High-Dosage Tutoring:** Classroom instruction is supplemented with individualized tutoring or small learning communities, typically during the regular school day.
4. **High Expectations and a “No Excuses” Culture:** In successful schools, students buy into the school’s mission and into the importance of their education. This feature must permeate all other investments.

5. **Data-Driven Instruction:** Students are assessed often, assessments are broken down into discrete skills, and students are re-taught the skills they have not yet mastered.

With the help of the Blueprint Schools Network, an advisory group that helps work with districts on how to roll out these strategies, Ed Labs will use these five tenets as a foundation for reform efforts at NCAS.

Colorado Statewide Parent Coalition

NCAS will partner with the Colorado Statewide Parent Coalition (CSPC) on parent engagement and involvement. CSPC was founded in 1980 and led by a group of parents and educators who came together to begin grassroots coordinated efforts to empower parents to become their children's advocates and have a voice in their educational process. The CSPC provides training and technical assistance to parents and educators and enhances their abilities to establish effective home/school partnerships in order to increase student achievement. The primary goal of the CSPC is to close the achievement gap and increase graduation rates for students who come from historically under-represented families.

Additionally, NCAS will pursue partnerships with the following community organizations: Project Harmony, Think 360, DPS Foundation, Denver Chamber of Commerce, KB Homes, Cleo Parker Robinson Dance Company, Colorado Ballet, Denver Jazz Club, Denver Arts Museums, Student Art League and Colorado Colleges and Universities.

Communications and Marketing

As NCAS prepares to welcome students for the 2011/2012 school year, the school's communication specialist will work with the administrative and leadership team to create a recognizable brand and focused marketing plan to introduce the school to the community and position it as a leader in FNE Denver. Prior to the 2011/2012 school year, NCAS will work with a professional graphic designer to develop a logo and visual brand that supports the school's mission, vision and core messages. Once developed, marketing priorities for NCAS will include: website, new media presence (Facebook and Twitter), school overview brochure and folder, direct mail piece for future recruiting, outdoor banners/signage and apparel featuring the new brand.

- E. If applicable, attach a copy of the school's bylaws.

Not Applicable

INNOVATION: BUDGET

- XI. **Provide a budget and an estimate of potential cost savings and increased efficiencies as a result of innovation status. Explain how the school's allocation of resources, as reflected in the budget, supports the vision, mission and education plan.**

- A. Using the financial model provided, create a detailed five-year budget reflecting major revenue and expense items and key assumptions. The budget should balance each year and reflect financial stability in three to five years.

See Attached Five-Year Budget

- B. Provide a budget narrative describing the financial plan that includes an explanation of the school's path to financial stability.
 - 1. Provide an overview of how the allocation of resources, as reflected in the financial plan, supports the vision, mission and education plan of the school.

The NCAS financial plan supports the vision, mission, and education plan of the school by leveraging the SBB allocation to hire teachers who are effective at increasing student achievement and committed to artistic learning and expression and collaborative work. The NCAS budget will be based on actual salaries instead of district averages, allowing the school to apply cost savings to hire additional art teachers and provide stipends for extended day and year.

- 2. Explain major revenue sources, including any funds originated from private sources.
 - a. If revenue is generated from private sources, disclose contributor names, amounts of the contributions, duration of the contributions, and funding commitments already secured by the school.

Walton grant funding of \$300,000 is being applied for by NCAS to support the initial implementation of the innovation plan.

DPS start up funding of \$600,000 and Walton grant funding of \$300,000 will be used to: develop the new school curriculum, purchase, technology, curricular materials and art supplies, train teachers in curriculum, instruction, assessment, and collaboration, and fund high dosage, high intensity math tutoring.

Note that the \$300,000 Walton grant has not been included in the financial projection.

- 3. Highlight additional operating costs resulting from the unique attributes of the innovation proposal.
 - a. Explain specific resources, material, equipment, staff, programs and policies that create additional operating costs (e.g., longer school year and school day).

Additional operating costs result from: 1) longer school year and school day; 2) additional arts teachers; 3) additional arts equipment; 4) new school curriculum development; 5) professional development; and 6) Blueprint Schools, high dosage math tutoring.

- b. Highlight one-time implementation costs that will be incurred during the planning year and/or year one of operating with innovation status.

The non-salary budget allocates \$200,000 in year 0 and \$64,176 in year one for costs associated with curriculum development and purchasing of new school educational materials and equipment.

- c. Explain how the school will fund such additional operating costs.

Start up funding will be used to fund these additional one-time operating costs.

4. Highlight cost savings or increased efficiencies due to the unique attributes of your innovation proposal (e.g. analysis of budgeting using average vs. actual salaries or estimates of centrally budgeted services for which the school intends to access funding directly).

The primary initial cost savings created by this innovation proposal will be realized by budgeting with actual rather than district average salaries. It is estimated that budgeting on actual salaries will provide the school \$225K in 2011-2012 and \$100K in 2012-2013, which, for the purpose of being conservative, has not been incorporated into the five-year budget.

NCAS will also have the right to analyze the costs and benefits of certain district-provided services. On an annual basis, the school will review a “menu” of services provided by the district and have the option to receive the dollar value of such services, which can then be used to engage a third-party provider. In some cases, funds can be used to support other initiatives at the school. NCAS believes cost savings will be realized by not purchasing professional and curriculum development.

- C. 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.

1. Identify the person(s) who will directly manage and oversee the school’s budget.

The NCAS principal will directly manage and oversee the school’s budget. The principal will be supported by an office manager with strong business management and organizational skills.

INNOVATION: OTHER PROGRAMS, POLICES, OPERATIONAL DOCUMENTS

XII. Describe any other innovations not yet explained in the application and how such innovations will lead to increased student achievement.

- A. Describe any other programs, policies, and/or operational documents at the school that would be affected by the proposed innovations, how these programs, policies and/or operational documents would be affected, and how the changes will lead to increased student achievement.

Not Applicable

WAIVERS

- XIII. Describe the waivers you are requesting from DPS policies, collective bargaining provisions and state statutes. Clearly describe the replacement policies and practices that the school is proposing.**
- A. Please complete **Appendix E**.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FACULTY SUPPORT

- XIV. Provide evidence of administrative and faculty support**
- A. Attach evidence that the majority of administrators support the innovation proposal.
- B. Attach evidence that more than 50% of faculty have voted to support the proposal.
- C. If seeking waivers from collective bargaining agreements, attach evidence that more than 60% of faculty have voted to support the proposal.
- D. Attach statements of support from other staff employed at the school.

All staff will sign a letter of commitment upon agreeing to work at NCAS that demonstrates their support for the innovation proposal.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

- XV. Provide evidence of community support**
- A. Provide a letter of support showing majority of members support innovation status from the school's CSC.

Not Applicable – New School

- B. Provide letters of support from community based organizations.

See attached letter of support.

- C. If applicable, provide other evidence of community support.

Per the Noel MS application for turnaround: The Far Northeast Community Committee (FNECC) was convened by A Plus Denver in partnership with DPS to examine issues critical to the region including: academic performance,

effective feeder patterns, program offerings, high school configurations, school overcrowding, and strategies to close the achievement gap and meeting the needs of ELLs. The FNECC recommended the opening of new schools in order to provide high quality choice in the region. The DPS Board of Education approved NCAS as a FNE region new school option.

Throughout the FNECC process, it became clear that there were not high quality arts education opportunities in FNE Denver. This became a priority for the committee, and was supported by parents and community members.

During the enrollment process, NCAS participated in the FNE School Expo and hosted an Open House and Meet the Principal Event introducing the school, and its leader, to the community. During the Expo, NCAS spoke with 40-50 families, approximately 10% of attendees, who were interested in attending and solicited feedback from those in attendance. Further demonstrating the need for strong school options in FNE Denver, one parent stated:

“My dream for the NCAS is for it to offer serious academics, with strong arts opportunities and no fluff.”

During the NCAS Open House and Meet the Principal events, the school attracted approximately 30 families to those events, many of which with students who had already selected NCAS as a top choice on the FNE Preference Form.

REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS

- Teacher Schedule
- Student Schedule
- Student Handbook
- Personnel Policies
- Written Enrollment Documents and Forms Provided to Families
- Organizational Chart
- Committee Descriptions
- N/A By Laws
- Five-Year Budget
- Evidence of Administrative Support (Administration Commitment Letters)
- Evidence of Faculty Support (Faculty Commitment Letters Signed Upon Position Acceptance)
- N/A Letter of Support from CSC (Support is Evident by Enrollment in New School Option)
- Letters of Support from Community Based

**Appendix A
Curriculum Waivers**

Not Applicable

**Appendix B
Assessment Waiver**

Not applicable.

APPENDIX C

Noel Community Arts School

Request Alternative Graduation & Promotion Standards

Schools requesting waivers from DPS's graduation and promotion standards are required to complete the questions in Appendix C.

Waivers in curriculum, assessments, and/or promotion and graduation policies are granted by the Chief Academic Office, the Instructional Superintendent, and Assistant Superintendent. Requests for waivers in this application will be forwarded to the CAO and appropriate IS for review.

- 1. Explain the school's policies and standards for promoting students from one grade to the next. Describe how and when promotion and graduation criteria will be communicated to parents and students.**

As academic achievement in middle school is critical to the future success of students in the FNE region, the NCAS promotion, retention, and acceleration policy will require that students in 6th, 7th and 8th grade that do not meet or exceed a student growth percentile of 55 on the state assessment in all areas including reading, writing, and mathematics be considered for retention (see attached policy and procedures). The principal will make final decisions about promotion, retention, and acceleration after considering the body of evidence for student academic progress.

With the exception of the above policy change, the NCAS promotion, retention, and acceleration policy is adopted from DPS Policies IKE and Procedures IKE-R.

Parents and students will be notified of the promotion and graduation criteria upon enrollment in NCAS via the school handbook. In addition, a letter will be mailed home at the beginning of each school year to notify parents of the requirements that the student will need to meet to be promoted to the next grade.

- 2. Provide the school's exit standards for graduating students. Exit standards should clearly set forth what students in the last grade you anticipate serving will know and be able to do.**

NCAS will follow the DPS Policy IKF for graduation requirements.

- 3. Explain how graduation and/or promotion requirements will ensure student readiness for college and other postsecondary opportunities.**

Consistent with the DPS promotion, retention and acceleration policy IKE, NCAS agrees that "grade retention or acceleration may increase the likelihood that students will succeed in meeting challenging academic expectations at the next grade level. Retention provides a second opportunity to master skills, while acceleration increases the likelihood that academic expectations will be challenging."

The NCAS promotion policy will increase retention rates of middle school students with low academic growth rates in order to provide them with the intensive intervention that they need to catch up and graduate ready for college and the workforce.

4. **If it differs from DPS, explain how students will earn credit hours, how grade-point averages will be calculated, what information will be on transcripts, and what elective courses will be offered. If graduation requirements for the school will exceed those required by DPS Policy IKF, explain any additional requirements**

NCAS will follow the DPS Policy IKF for graduation requirements.

APPENDIX D
School Performance Framework Goal Setting Worksheet

DPS School Performance Framework Indicators	Innovation School Annual Achievement Goals and Measures
Academic Performance & Success	
<p>Student Growth Over Time Toward State Standards, including the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CSAP and other assessments chosen, including assessments in compliance with the Colorado Basic Literacy Act 	<p>Student Growth Over Time Toward State Standards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Median Growth Percentile of 55 or higher in reading, writing, and math on CSAP
<p>Student Achievement Level/Status, including the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CSAP and other assessments chosen, including assessments in compliance with the Colorado Basic Literacy Act Colorado English Language Assessment (CELA) Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Achievement gaps (FRL, ELL, Special Education, and ethnic subgroups) 	<p>Student Achievement Level/Status</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15% increase in students scoring proficient or advanced in reading, writing, & math on CSAP (baseline % of enrolled students P/A last year) 40 point average scale score growth Make Adequate Yearly Progress 10% reduction in achievement gaps (FRL, ELL, SE, and ethnic groups)
<p>Post-Secondary Readiness (for high schools), including the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Colorado ACT scores Graduation rate College acceptance rate 	<p>Note: Post-Secondary Readiness goals are not applicable in 2011-12 or 2012-13. 11th grade students enroll in 2013-14 and 12th grade in 2014-15.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 90% of students will meet or exceed 24 on ACT 100% graduation rate within 5 years 100% of students that apply get accepted
<p>Student Engagement, including the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance rate Student satisfaction 	<p>Student Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 95% attendance for 6th grade students 92% attendance for 9th grade students 85% satisfaction rate based on DPS survey
<p>School-Specific Educational Objectives (must be based on <i>valid, reliable</i> measures)</p>	<p>School-Specific Educational Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> None added
Organizational & Financial Viability	
<p>School Demand, including the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enrollment rate Re-enrollment rate Continuous enrollment rate 	<p>School Demand</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% enrollment – all available spots filled 90% of promoted students will return for the next school year 90% of enrolled students will continue
<p>Financial Fundraising goals Reserves</p>	<p>Financial Grant Writing and fundraising.</p>

Other	
Leadership & Governance Quality	Leadership & Governance Quality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90% participation in board meetings • 100% of board members serve full term and participate in self-evaluation process
Parent & Community Engagement , including the following measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent satisfaction • Parent response rate on DPS Parent Satisfaction Survey 	Parent & Community Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 85% of responding parents will report that they are satisfied on the DPS survey • 50% of parents will respond to the survey
School-Specific Organizational Objectives	School-Specific Organizational Objectives NCAS will hire, train and retain effective teachers and support staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers will be provided with at least 50 hours of professional development each year • 85% of faculty and staff, when surveyed annually, will acknowledge satisfaction with the school’s work environment • 80% of faculty and staff who are asked to return each year will return for the following school year. Of those who choose not to return, a majority will cite reasons other than dissatisfaction with the school’s environment for their decision

APPENDIX E
Waiver Request Template

See attached.

Appendix F Committee Descriptions

Leadership Team

NCAS will be governed by the principal. The principal will be held accountable and supported by the NCAS Board of Advisors and the DPS Office of School Reform and Innovation.

The school leadership team will include: the principal, the assistant principal, and three teacher leaders, selected by the principal. The leadership team will make decisions about hiring and dismissal of staff, including the new leadership in the event that the current principal leaves the school. They will also make decisions about educational structures & schedules, educational programs, community involvement, and budget and resource allocation. The leadership team will meet once a week to discuss and plan professional development for teachers, monitor calendars, update policies and shape the school culture. The leadership team will continually cultivate new leaders and help ensure that the teachers that serve NCAS students are the most dedicated, reflective and effective in facilitating student learning. The leadership team will be held accountable by the principal.

Board of Advisors

NCAS will not have a CSC. Instead, NCAS will have a Board of Advisors (BOA) consisting of the school leadership team, 1 business community representative, 2 core teachers, 2 arts teachers, 1 paraprofessionals, 1 business services manager, and 5 parent representatives – 2 middle school parents and 3 high school parents. The BOA will support the leadership team in securing resources and developing community partnerships necessary for success and will hold the leadership team accountable for reaching implementation and achievement goals.

The NCAS board of advisors will review academic, organizational, and financial data and evaluate progress toward performance and implementation benchmarks quarterly. Student data analyses will be presented by the Assessment Board, disaggregated by academic subjects, student groups, grade level, and teacher. The Board of Advisors (BOA) will make recommendations for improvement based on trends and concerns that emerge. The school leadership team will make adjustments to the educational programming, scheduling, staffing, and resource allocations based on recommendations. The school principal will distribute a summary of data trends, board recommendations and actions to be taken to students, parents, and the community via a quarterly report and the school website.

The BOA will be held accountable for their participation in board meetings and active advocacy for the school. All BOA members will participate in a self-evaluation and will receive feedback from their peers on the impact of their involvement of school outcomes.

Assessment Board of Directors

NCAS will have an assessment board of directors that will consist of a teacher from every content area to monitor student achievement progress as measured by the ELG's and research based rubrics. This seven member team will consist of an administrator, four content area representatives and the two intervention specialists. This committee will meet monthly to evaluate unit plans and align them to the needs of the students and ELGs. The board will examine bodies of evidence including but not limited to achievement, attendance, behavior and interventions to determine student placement and individual student goals. Reports on the board's findings and recommendations will be created and distributed to all stakeholders.