PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA
State Board of Education | Department of Public Instruction

**NC ACCESS Subgrant Program Application Recommendation**
**Lake Lure Classical Academy**
**June 8, 2020**

**Introduction**

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) was awarded a Public Charter Schools Program (CSP) grant from the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) of approximately $36,600,000. The CSP grant is being used to implement the North Carolina Advancing Charter Collaboration and Excellence for Student Success (NC ACCESS) Program[1] to:

1. Increase the number of educationally disadvantaged students attending high-quality charter schools and expand the number of high-quality charter schools available to educationally disadvantaged students;
2. Develop a cohort of charter school leaders who can develop and demonstrate best practices in serving educationally disadvantaged students; and
3. Broadly disseminate best practices in serving educationally disadvantaged students and foster collaboration in the charter school community and between charter schools and traditional public schools.

The NC ACCESS Program has allocated the majority of the CSP funds to advance Priority 1 listed above through school-level subgrants, though subgrant recipients must also demonstrate a desire to share best practices with both charter schools and traditional public schools. The NC ACCESS Program will run a competitive subgrant application process annually and award subgrants to North Carolina charter schools that propose a comprehensive plan to increase the number of educationally disadvantaged students attending high-quality charter schools and expand the number of high-quality charter schools available to educationally disadvantaged students.

This recommendation report includes the following information:


1. Procedural History: A review of the procedural steps taken by the applicant and NC ACCESS Program team to ensure a consistent application and evaluation process. (p. 3)
2. Conclusion and Recommendation: The NC ACCESS Program recommendation to approve or deny the subgrant application. (p. 3)
3. Summary of the Application: A brief description of the applicant's proposed enrollment and funding request. (p. 4)
4. Summary of the Evaluation: A summary of the overall evaluation of the subgrant application by the Review Committee, including section ratings and application strengths and areas of concern. (p. 5-6)
5. Exhibits: Additional documentation pertinent to the recommendation. (p.7)


[1] https://www.dpi.nc.gov/students-families/innovative-school-options/charter-schools/nc-access-program

**Overview of the Evaluation Process**

The NC ACCESS Subgrant Program is a competitive application process designed to award funding for North Carolina charter schools that propose to serve an increased number of educationally disadvantaged students. Each subgrant application has been reviewed by a committee of NC ACCESS Program team members and trained external evaluators. Applications were evaluated using the approved NC ACCESS Program subgrant application scoring rubric.[2]

The subgrant application for Lake Lure Classical Academy was evaluated by a Review Committee consisting of the following individuals:

| Evaluator | Role |
|---|---|
| Dr. Danielle Allen | External Evaluator |
| Dr. Darian Jones | Consultant, Office of Charter Schools |
| Dr. Barbara O'Neal | Program Coordinator, NC ACCESS Program |

All evaluations have been considered, and the recommendation made to the Charter School Advisory Board (CSAB) is based on the evidence provided by the applicant and all evaluations by the Review Committee. The CSAB will take all recommendations, evaluations, application materials, and due diligence into account and make a recommendation for the approval of subgrants to the State Board of Education (State Board). The State Board will determine the final approval of all subgrant awards.

A subgrant application that merits a recommendation for approval should present a clear, realistic picture of how the charter school expects to successfully implement the proposed plans to increase the number of educationally disadvantaged students attending high-quality charter schools and expand the number of high-quality charter schools available to educationally disadvantaged students. In addition to meeting the criteria that are specific to each section, each part of the proposal should align with the overall mission, budget, and goals of the subgrant application and NC ACCESS Program.

Recommendations for approval or denial are based on the completed application which includes school information, signed assurances, enrollment projections, education plan, operations plan, budget, budget narrative, logic model, and appendices. The enrollment projections, education plan, operations plan, budget, budget narrative, and logic model are scored out of a possible one hundred (100) points. Applicants must score at least eighty (80) points to meet the standard and to be considered for a recommendation for approval. Applications that do not meet the standard in all sections as evidenced by the summary review ratings will be deemed not ready for approval.

[2] https://files.nc.gov/dpi/documents/charterschools/ncaccess/scoring-rubric.docx

**Procedural History**

The following outlines the steps completed by Lake Lure Classical Academy (Applicant), the NC ACCESS Program team, and the Review Committee to ensure an objective, transparent, and comprehensive application evaluation process:

1. The Applicant submitted a Letter of Intent (LOI) to the NC ACCESS Program prior to the deadline on January 15, 2020 indicating interest in applying to the NC ACCESS Subgrant Program.
2. The LOI was reviewed and the Applicant was designated as "Eligible" to complete a full subgrant application. The Applicant was notified of their eligibility status via email.[3]
3. The CSAB was notified of the Applicant's eligibility status via emailed report on January 27, 2020.
4. The Applicant submitted a full subgrant application in Epicenter prior to the deadline on March 1, 2020.[4]
5. The NC ACCESS Program Review Committee evaluated the full subgrant application using the approved NC ACCESS Program subgrant application scoring rubric.[5]
6. A final recommendation was drafted based on the completed evaluations by Review Committee members.

**Conclusion and Recommendation**

Lake Lure Classical Academy submitted an application for an Expansion subgrant for implementation beginning in the 2020-2021 school year. The application and evaluation summaries for the subgrant application submitted by Lake Lure Classical Academy begin on page four (4) of this document. Based on the procedural history and the comprehensive evaluation of the Review Committee using the approved NC ACCESS Program subgrant application scoring rubric, the NC ACCESS Program team recommends Lake Lure Classical Academy be awarded an Expansion subgrant for the 2020 application cycle.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Subgrant Application for Lake Lure Classical Academy:** | **RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL** |

Dave Machado, Director
Office of Charter Schools

6/8/20
Date

[3] See Exhibit A.
[4] See Exhibit B.
[5] See Exhibit C.

**Summary of the Application**

School Name: Lake Lure Classical Academy

Location of School: Rutherford County

CMO/EMO: N/A

Subgrant Type: Expansion

Projected Enrollment:

| Subgrant Year | Grade Levels Served | Total Student Enrollment | Total ED Student Enrollment | ED Enrollment Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2020-2021 | K-12 | 497 | 170 | 32% |
| 2021-2022 | K-12 | 530 | 179 | 34% |
| 2022-2023 | K-12 | 560 | 209 | 36% |
| 2023-2024 | K-12 | 595 | 226 | 38% |
| 2024-2025 | K-12 | 650 | 260 | 40% |

Requested Funding Amount: $1,249,993.70

Recommended Funding Amount: $600,000[6]

[6] The NC ACCESS Program reserves the right to recommend less subgrant funding than officially requested by an applicant based on the strength of the application, projected growth, the activities and justifications provided, past academic, operational, and financial performance, and other due diligence. The CSAB and State Board will make recommendations and approvals based the "Recommended Funding Amount". The NC ACCESS Program will conduct a final budget review with each awarded school and approve all final budgets prior to the reimbursement of any funding.

**Summary of the Evaluation**

In accordance with the NC ACCESS Program subgrant application scoring rubric, "in order to pass the review, applicants must (a) meet all criteria in sections (I), (II), and (VII); and (b) score at least eighty (80) combined points between sections (III), (IV), and (V). Section (VI) will be used to determine priority if there are more eligible applications than subgrant awards."[7] The review committee's average rating for each section of the application are as follows:

| General Standards | Status |
|---|---|
| Section I – Application Contact Information | ☒ Complete ☐ Incomplete |
| Section II – Assurances | ☒ Complete ☐ Incomplete |
| Section VII – Certification | ☒ Complete ☐ Incomplete |
| **Total** *(all sections must be **complete** to pass)* | ☒ **Pass** ☐ **Fail** |

| Technical Standards | Points Possible | Points Earned |
|---|---|---|
| Section III – Application Narrative (A, B, and C) | 70 | 64 |
| Section III (D) – Student Transition Plan | ☒ Complete ☐ Incomplete | |
| Section IV – Budget, Budget Narrative, and Logic Model | 30 | 31 |
| Section V – Competitive Preference Standards | Up to 12 | 6 |
| **Total** *(must receive at least **80 points** to pass)* | **100** | 101 |

| Priority Standards | Standards Possible | Standards Met |
|---|---|---|
| Section VI – Priority Consideration Status | **4** | **2** |

| Overall Application Status | Rating |
|---|---|
| In order to pass, the application must (a) achieve a rating of "Pass" for the General Standards and (b) score at least eighty (80) points on the Technical Standards. The Priority Standards will be used to determine priority if there are more eligible applications than available awards. | ☒ **Pass with Priority** |
| | ☐ **Pass** |
| | ☐ **Fail** |

[7] https://files.nc.gov/dpi/documents/charterschools/ncaccess/scoring-rubric.docx

The review committee recommends that the subgrant application for Lake Lure Classical Academy be approved based on the following evaluation:

**Strengths**

The applicant proposes to increase the educationally disadvantaged population from 148 to 170 in year 1 of the grant, an increase of 22 students, and an increase of the educationally disadvantaged population to 260 within five years. These projections are complete and ambitious, especially given the rural location of the school.

The applicant provided four clearly defined and measurable SMART goals that are relevant to the NC ACCESS mission and purposes. For example, the applicant indicated one goal is to reduce discipline referrals to less than 50 by June 2022. The applicant will do so by implementing the Mindful School Initiative and Restorative Justice programs. The results will be measured by a decrease in referrals.

The applicant clearly demonstrated that the school will implement several research-based instructional practices to ensure the educational program is appropriate to meet the needs of all students and especially those who might need additional supports. The applicant will use strategies, such as whole group instruction, flexible grouping, small group, co-teaching, and differentiated instruction.

The applicant clearly demonstrated that partnerships are in place to support students. For example, Blue Ridge Community Health will partner to provide mental health counseling and sports physicals for students. The Isothermal Community College partners for face-to-face classes for high school students.

The applicant provided clear plan for marketing and recruiting students and families. The plan includes a focus on geographically targeting four counties, such as Henderson, Rutherford, Polk and McDowell. The applicant will use digital advertising as well as radio. The marketing plan will include information in English and Spanish.

The applicant provided an in-depth plan for transportation that shows a commitment to eliminating transportation as a barrier to enrollment. The applicant currently offers transportation and has 10 buses and 17 cluster stops that pick up over 70% of the student population. The grant will provide 3 additional buses that will specifically address the geographical gap in the rural area. The buses will specifically provide transportation in areas where economically disadvantaged students live. Transportation will also be provided for students who want to participant in after school activities.

**Weaknesses**

The applicant is not proposing growth in enrollment of educationally disadvantaged over all grade levels. The applicant did not make clear if the 50 students to be recruited each year for kindergarten would be educationally disadvantaged, or more specifically, economically disadvantaged.

The applicant proposed using STEM to attract and address the needs of educationally disadvantaged students – though the it was unclear how specifically they would ensure the STEM education was meeting the needs of educationally disadvantaged students.

**Exhibit A: NC ACCESS Program Eligibility Notification**

PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION | Mark Johnson, *Superintendent of Public Instruction*
WWW.NCPUBLICSCHOOLS.ORG

January 14, 2020

VIA EMAIL

Thomas Keever, Executive Director
Lake Lure Classical Academy
1058 Island Creek Road
Lake Lure, NC 28746
tkeever@llcharter.org

Dear Mr. Keever,

Thank you for your interest in the NC ACCESS Subgrant Program and for submitting a Letter of Intent (LOI). We are grateful for your commitment to the students of North Carolina. After a review of the LOI, eligibility criteria, and school performance data, Lake Lure Classical Academy has been designated as eligible to apply for an Expansion subgrant for implementation beginning in the 2020-2021 school year. The Charter Schools Advisory Board (CSAB) will be notified of the eligibility status of all applicants on February 10, 2020.

Due to Lake Lure Classical Academy's designation as eligible, Lake Lure Classical Academy may move forward and submit the full subgrant application. As a reminder, completed applications are **due in Epicenter by 5:00pm (EST) on March 1, 2020**. The NC ACCESS team will ensure you have access to the application portal in Epicenter and will contact you if any additional information is needed.

Please reach out to the NC ACCESS team at NCACCESS@dpi.nc.gov or (919) 807-3981 if you have any additional questions and visit the NC ACCESS page of our website for application and guidance materials and training information.

Sincerely,

Dave Machado, Director
Office of Charter Schools

DM/JW

# Exhibit B: NC ACCESS Program Subgrant Application

# North Carolina Advancing Charter Collaboration and Excellence for Student Success (NC ACCESS) Program Request for Application

**Due by 5:00 pm (EST), March 1, 2020**

North Carolina Department of Public Instruction
Office of Charter Schools
301 N. Wilmington Street
Raleigh NC 27601-2825
919-807-3491

Mailing Address:
6307 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-6307

Updated September 2019

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## NC ACCESS PROGRAM OVERVIEW

In 2018, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) was awarded a Public Charter Schools Program (CSP) grant from the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) of approximately $26,600,000. The CSP grant will be used to implement the North Carolina Advancing Charter Collaboration and Excellence for Student Success (NC ACCESS) Program to:

- Increase the number of educationally disadvantaged students attending high-quality charter schools and expand the number of high-quality charter schools available to educationally disadvantaged students;
- Develop a cohort of 100 charter school leaders who can develop and demonstrate best practices in serving educationally disadvantaged students; and
- Broadly disseminate best practices in serving educationally disadvantaged students and foster collaboration in the charter school community and between charter schools and traditional public schools.

**The NC ACCESS Program and CSP define educationally disadvantaged students as students who are economically disadvantaged, homeless or unaccompanied youth, English learners, students with disabilities, immigrant students, and migrant students.**

## CHARTER SCHOOL PROGRAM (CSP) DESCRIPTION

The CSP State Entities program is newly authorized under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) (20 U.S.C. 7221-7221j). Prior to enactment of the ESSA, the ESEA, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), authorized the Secretary to make awards to state educational agencies to enable them to conduct charter school subgrant programs in their states. The CSP State Entities program is under new law and has different eligibility requirements, priorities, definitions, application requirements, and selection criteria.

The major purposes of the CSP are to expand opportunities for all students, particularly traditionally underserved students, to attend charter schools and meet challenging state academic standards; provide financial assistance for the planning, program design, and initial implementation of public charter schools; increase the number of high-quality charter schools available to students across the United States; evaluate the impact of charter schools on student achievement, families, and communities; share best practices between charter schools and other public schools; encourage states to provide facilities support to charter schools; and support efforts to strengthen the charter school authorizing process.

The CSP grants to state entities (CFDA number 84.282A) is a competitive grant program that enables state entities to award subgrants to eligible applicants in their State to open and prepare for the operation of new charter schools and to replicate and expand high-quality charter schools. Grant funds may also be used by the state entity to provide technical assistance to eligible applicants and authorized public chartering agencies in opening and preparing for the operation of new charter schools, or replicating or expanding high-quality charter schools; and to work with authorized public chartering agencies to improve authorizing quality, including developing capacity for, and conducting, fiscal oversight and auditing of charter schools.[1]

[1] Office of Innovation and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education

## SUBGRANT APPLICATION AND ELIGIBILITY REQUIRMENTS

### GENERAL INFORMATION

Subgrant applications will be due March 1st of each year for implementation starting the following school year. Subgrants will be awarded from school-year 2019-2020 through school year 2023-2024. The number of subgrants awarded each year and within each category will depend on the strength of the applications submitted. Generally, between eight to twelve (8-12) subgrants will be awarded in each subgrant cycle. Fifty (50) subgrants will be awarded over the course of five (5) years.

### ELIGIBILITY

The NC ACCESS Program will award subgrants in four (4) categories. Below are the eligibility requirements for each category. Prospective applicants may only apply for one subgrant type during each cycle. Each prospective applicant must meet the federal definition of a "charter school" and/or "developer". The federal definition of a "charter school" as outlined in the ESEA, P.L. 114–95, section 4310(2) is as follows:

a. In accordance with a specific State statute authorizing the granting of charters to schools, is exempt from significant State or local rules that inhibit the flexible operation and management of public schools, but not from any rules relating to the other requirements of this paragraph;
b. is created by a developer as a public school, or is adapted by a developer from an existing public school, and is operated under public supervision and direction;
c. operates in pursuit of a specific set of educational objectives determined by the school's developer and agreed to by the authorized public chartering agency;
d. provides a program of elementary or secondary education, or both;
e. is nonsectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations, and is not affiliated with a sectarian school or religious institution;
f. does not charge tuition;
g. complies with the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.), section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g) (commonly referred to as the "Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974"), and part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;
h. is a school to which parents choose to send their children, and that—
    a. admits students on the basis of a lottery, consistent with section 4303(c)(3)(A), if more students apply for admission than can be accommodated; or
    b. in the case of a school that has an affiliated charter school (such as a school that is part of the same network of schools), automatically enrolls students who are enrolled in the immediate prior grade level of the affiliated charter school and, for any additional student openings or student openings created through regular attrition in student enrollment in the affiliated charter school and the enrolling school, admits students on the basis of a lottery as described in clause (i);
i. agrees to comply with the same Federal and State audit requirements as do other elementary schools and secondary schools in the State, unless such State audit requirements are waived by the State;
j. meets all applicable Federal, State, and local health and safety requirements;
k. operates in accordance with State law;
l. has a written performance contract with the authorized public chartering agency in the State that includes a description of how student performance will be measured in charter schools pursuant to State assessments that are required of other schools and pursuant to any other

assessments mutually agreeable to the authorized public chartering agency and the charter school; and

m. may serve students in early childhood education programs or postsecondary students.

The federal definition of a "developer" as outlined in the ESEA, P.L. 114–95, section 4310(5) is as follows:

1. An individual or group of individuals (including a public or private nonprofit organization), which may include teachers, administrators and other school staff, parents, or other members of the local community in which a charter school project will be carried out.

Any eligible subgrant applicant that has entered into a contract to be managed by a for-profit charter management organization (CMO) or education management organization (EMO) should review Section B-13 of the nonregulatory guidance, issued by the USDOE in January 2014.

**In addition to meeting the federal definition of a "charter school" and/or "developer", applicants must meet the following criteria for the subgrant category for which it applies:**

*Category: Planning and Implementation*

Planning and Implementation subgrants will be available to charter operators entering their planning year. Since these schools will not have school accountability data to support their potential for success, applicants must demonstrate a strong commitment to and comprehensive plan for recruiting and effectively serving educationally disadvantaged students, as well as a desire to share best practices with both charter schools and traditional public schools.

The Planning and Implementation subgrant allows both planning and implementation activities but **planning activities may not last more than eighteen (18) months**.

A charter school or "developer" that has received a CSP grant directly from the USDOE through a separate competition is **ineligible** to receive a Planning and Implementation subgrant through the NC ACCESS Program.

*Category: Implementation Only*

Implementation Only subgrants will be available to charter operators in years one (1) to three (3) of operation. Since these schools will have limited data to support their potential for success, applicants must demonstrate a strong commitment to and comprehensive plan for recruiting and effectively serving educationally disadvantaged students, as well as a desire to share best practices with both charter schools and traditional public schools.

If state accountability data is available for a school applying for an Implementation Only subgrant, school accountability data will be evaluated. Eligible applicants must:

a. have maintained at least a "B" School Performance Grade (SPG), as determined by the NCDPI, for all years of data available;
b. have met or exceeded academic growth, as determined by EVAAS, for all years of data available; and
c. when applicable, have a graduation rate higher than the state average.

Additionally, eligible applicants must not have any unresolved academic, financial, or operational issues.

A charter school or "developer" that has received a CSP grant directly from the USDOE through a separate competition is **ineligible** to receive an Implementation Only subgrant through the NC ACCESS Program.

*Category: Expansion*

Expansion subgrants will be available to high quality charter schools interested in expanding access for educationally disadvantaged students through the addition of grade levels and/or a substantial increase in student enrollment. In order to maintain a commitment to quality, eligible applicants must meet one (1) of the following three (3) eligibility criteria:

1. "A/B" school and "Met/Exceed" growth for two (2) of the past three (3) years. Eligible schools must:
    a. have maintained at least a "B" SPG, as determined by the NCDPI, for at least two (2) out of the three (3) years prior to their application cycle;
    b. have met or exceeded academic growth, as determined by EVAAS, for at least two (2) out of the three (3) years prior to their application cycle; and
    c. when applicable, have a graduation rate higher than the state average.
2. "A/B" school for the past three (3) consecutive years. Eligible schools must:
    a. have maintained at least a "B" SPG, as determined by the NCDPI, for all three (3) years prior to their application cycle; and
    b. when applicable, have a graduation rate higher than the state average.
3. "C" school and "Met/Exceed" growth for the past three (3) consecutive years. Eligible schools must:
    a. have maintained at least a "C" SPG, as determined by the NCDPI, for all three (3) years prior to their application cycle;
    b. have met or exceeded academic growth, as determined by EVAAS, for all three (3) years prior to their application cycle; and
    c. when applicable, have a graduation rate higher than the state average.

Additionally, eligible applicants must not have any unresolved academic, financial, or operational issues.

If an applicant has received a previous subgrant under this funding or through a CSP grant directly from the USDOE through a separate competition, the school must provide at least three (3) years of improved educational results and expansion subgrant funds cannot not be used for the same activities as those that were funded under the previous subgrant.

*Category: Replication*

Replication subgrants will be available to high quality charter schools that exhibit academic, financial and operational success and a desire to replicate their successful school model to serve a greater number of educationally disadvantaged students. Eligible applicants must meet one (1) of the following three (3) eligibility criteria:

4. "A/B" school and "Met/Exceed" growth for two (2) of the past three (3) years. Eligible schools must:
    d. have maintained at least a "B" SPG, as determined by the NCDPI, for at least two (2) out of the three (3) years prior to their application cycle;
    e. have met or exceeded academic growth, as determined by EVAAS, for at least two (2) out of the three (3) years prior to their application cycle; and

f. when applicable, have a graduation rate higher than the state average.

5. "A/B" school for the past three (3) consecutive years. Eligible schools must:
   c. have maintained at least a "B" SPG, as determined by the NCDPI, for all three (3) years prior to their application cycle; and
   d. when applicable, have a graduation rate higher than the state average.
6. "C" school and "Met/Exceed" growth for the past three (3) consecutive years. Eligible schools must:
   a. have maintained at least a "C" SPG, as determined by the NCDPI, for all three (3) years prior to their application cycle;
   b. have met or exceeded academic growth, as determined by EVAAS, for all three (3) years prior to their application cycle; and
   c. when applicable, have a graduation rate higher than the state average.

Additionally, eligible applicants must not have any unresolved academic, financial, or operational issues.

*Please note, subgrant applicants must complete any and all necessary state processes (i.e. amendment request, "Fast-Track" replication, etc.) before receiving access to subgrant funds. Submitting an application for subgrant funds ***does not*** supplant requirements to complete state-required processes.

## SUBGRANT AWARDS

### GENERAL INFORMATION

Funding for the CSP grant is contingent on the receipt by the state of annual funding from the USDOE, and a grant award is not a guarantee of total funding. In order to receive continued funding, grantees must submit annual performance reports to demonstrate substantial progress in meeting the goals, objectives, and measures of their CSP project/grant and must demonstrate effectiveness in fiscal management, including reporting and reconciliation. Failure to do so may result in readjustment of award amounts, reallocation of funds to an alternate recipient, and/or termination of the award.

The use of a subgrant award may not exceed five (5) years. Funding will be provided on a reimbursement-only basis, which means recipients will be reimbursed following proof of expenditures on allowable, approved activities.

### SUBGRANT AWARD AMOUNTS

North Carolina's CSP subgrant competition is discretionary. The NCDPI reserves the right to make final determination of all subgrant awards and funding. Individual school subgrant awards may vary based on numerous factors including strength of the application, high-quality replication, plan to serve educationally disadvantaged students, and projected enrollment. All applicants will be scored according to the scoring rubric.

Prospective applicants may apply for any funding amount up to the stated maximum for each category. However, approval of a subgrant application does not guarantee a school will be fully funded at the requested level. Final budgets will be approved for subgrantees following State Board approval up subgrant applications. The maximum funding levels for each category are as follows:

1. Planning and Implementation: up to eight hundred thousand dollars ($800,000)
2. Implementation Only: up to eight hundred thousand dollars ($800,000)
3. Expansion: up to one million two hundred fifty thousand dollars ($1,250,000)
4. Replication: up to one million two hundred fifty thousand dollars ($1,250,000)

**DATA UNIVERSAL NUMBERING SYSTEM (DUNS) NUMBER & SAM REGISTRATION**

CFR 200.32 states a DUNS number is required "to apply for, receive, and report on a Federal award." In order for federal funds to be disseminated to the public charter school, grantees must have a DUNS number. To obtain a DUNS number you can visit the website or call Dun & Bradstreet at (866) 705-5711.

Subgrant awardees must also register in the System for Award Management (SAM). Subgrantees can complete the SAM registration here.

**ALLOWABLE USE OF FUNDS**

Charter schools may use CSP subgrant funds only for post-award planning and design of the educational program, and initial implementation of a charter school. Uniform Guidance Title 2 - Subtitle A - Chapter II - Part 200 Subpart E establishes principles for determining allowable costs for Federal grants to non-profit entities. As a general matter, costs must be reasonable, necessary, and allocable to meet the objectives of the grant.

Costs met through this grant must meet general criteria applicable to all federal grants. Section 4303(h) of the ESSA defines the types of activities that may be paid for through this grant. Please also review the nonregulatory guidance, issued by the USDOE in January 2014 and review in its entirety.

Per the federal regulations included in Section 4303(h) of the ESSA, an eligible applicant may use subgrant funds to support activities related to opening and preparing for the operation of a new charter school which can include:

1. Preparing teachers, school leaders, and specialized instructional support personnel, including through paying the costs associated with:
    a. providing professional development; and
    b. hiring and compensating, during the eligible applicant's planning period[2], one or more of the following:
        i. Teachers;
        ii. School leaders; and
        iii. Specialized instructional support personnel.
2. Acquiring necessary supplies, training, equipment (including technology), and educational materials (including developing and acquiring instructional materials).
3. Carrying out necessary renovations to ensure that a new school building complies with applicable statutes and regulations, and minor facilities repairs (excluding construction).
4. Providing one-time, startup costs associated with providing transportation to students to and from the charter school.
5. Carrying out community engagement activities, which may include paying the cost of student and staff recruitment.
6. Providing for other appropriate, non-sustained costs related to activities in opening and preparing for the operation of charter schools.

Applicants must ensure that all costs included in the proposed budget are allowable, reasonable, and necessary considering the goals and objects of the grant application. Any costs determined to be unallowable, unreasonable, or unnecessary will be removed from the final budget and a revised budget will be required.

[2] Hiring and compensating personnel is restricted to activities performed during the planning period.

Further details on allowable use of funds can be found in Appendix A of this application and in the NC ACCESS Subgrant Application Process Guidance Document, which serves as a resource companion for the this subgrant and program.

Budgets under this grant should be developed within the parameters created by applicable federal statutes and regulatory and nonregulatory guidance.

Applicants are expected to demonstrate how the proposed use of funds complies with the applicable statutory and regulatory requirements and to articulate how the proposed use of grant funds aligns with the mission and objectives of the charter school.

Applicants may find it helpful to use the following procedure in developing proposed budgets:

1. Review this document thoroughly.
2. Review the allowable costs outlined in the NC ACCESS Subgrant Application Process Guidance Document.
3. Review the Charter Schools Program nonregulatory guidance issued January 2014.
4. Review Uniform Guidance Title 2 - Subtitle A - Chapter II - Part 200 Subpart E for allowability of specific items generally. Please note that this document applies to all federal grants to non-profit organizations. It describes some expenses as allowable or unallowable generally, but it is not a list of expenses that are specifically allowable or unallowable under this grant. **This document also governs the record keeping requirements for grantees.**

## TIMELINE AND APPLICATION DEADLINE

The following timeline will be followed for the subgrant application and approval cycle. All deadlines are non-negotiable.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| NC ACCESS Application Released | November 15, 2019 | The NC ACCESS subgrant application is posted online at https://www.dpi.nc.gov/students-families/innovative-school-options/charter-schools/nc-access-program. |
| Technical Assistance Provided | November 15, 2019 – March 1, 2020 | A combination of in-person trainings, virtual technical assistance, and scheduled "office hours" are conducted to support applicants. |
| Letter of Intent Due | January 15, 2020 | A letter of intent to apply for a subgrant **must be received electronically at NCACCESS@dpi.nc.gov no later than 5:00 p.m. (EST)**. The letter of intent will be used to determine eligibility. If the letter of intent is not submitted, an application from the sponsor will not be accepted. The letter of intent should be no longer than two (2) pages and must include:<br>1. the specific subgrant category under which the applicant plans to apply;<br>2. a description of the applicant's desire and commitment to serve a greater number of educationally disadvantaged students; and<br>3. a brief summary of the strategies the applicant plans to implement to fulfill their commitment to serve a greater number of educationally disadvantaged students. |
| Application Due | March 1, 2020 | If deemed eligible, applicants **must submit a complete online application through Epicenter by 5:00 p.m. (EST)**. |
| Subgrant Applications Approved | June 6, 2020 | State Board of Education approves subgrant applications and awards are announced.[3] |
| NC ACCESS Subgrant Orientation | June 2020 | Subgrantees attend orientation for the NC ACCESS program and NC ACCESS Fellowship. |
| Subgrant Award Implementation Period | Begins July 1 after final approval | Subgrantees have five (5) years to implement an awarded subgrant. Implementation timelines may vary and are based on the approved budget submitted during the subgrant application process. |
| NC ACCESS Fellowship Begins | July 2020 | Leaders of schools awarded subgrants begin the year-long NC ACCESS Fellowship. |

[3] Additional requirements and timelines for schools awarded subgrants will be provided following approval.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA
State Board of Education | Department of Public Instruction

# NC ACCESS PROGRAM SUBGRANT APPLICATION

**Application Deadline**

**5:00 p.m. (EST) March 1, 2020**

## APPLICATION SPECIFICATIONS

### GENERAL INFORMATION

All applications must be submitted using the online portal and applicants are to use the following specifications:

1. Any required appendices should be clearly titled, include page numbers (i.e. Appendix A and page numbers as- A1, A2, B1...), and submitted with the rest of the application as a one, full PDF document.
2. Review all elements of your application for completeness before submitting. An incomplete application **will** result in the elimination of the application. There will not be any opportunity to correct and resubmit.
3. Late submissions **will not** be accepted. No exceptions.

Ensure the account credentials provided for Epicenter work and you understand the submission process prior to uploading your final application documents.

### SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The NC ACCESS Program team will provide technical assistance for applicants throughout November 2019 – March 2020. Please visit the Office of Charter Schools website for information about scheduled trainings and support. Applications must be filed electronically through Epicenter no later than 5:00 p.m. (EST) on March 1, 2020.

To apply, complete and submit the following application items in the order listed below in one combined PDF document:

I. Applicant Contact Information
II. Signed Assurances
III. Application Narrative (no more than twenty (20) pages)
    a. Enrollment Projections

b. Education Plan
c. Operations Plan
d. If applicable, a school closure plan (no more than five (5) additional pages)

IV. Budget, Budget Narrative, and Logic Model
a. Budget, using NC ACCESS Budget template
b. Budget Narrative (no more than five (5) pages)
c. Logic Model, using NC ACCESS Logic Model template

V. Competitive Preference Standards (optional)
VI. Priority Consideration Status (optional)
VII. Certification
VIII. Subgrant Application Appendices

**FORMATTING REQUIREMENTS**

Please adhere to the following formatting requirements:

1. Complete all application narrative, budget narrative, competitive preference standards, and priority consideration standards within the space provided in this application.
2. Use the NC ACCESS Program templates provided to complete the budget and logic model.
3. Number all pages of the application narrative and any supporting documents.
4. Use one-inch margins and a 11- or 12-point font for the narratives.
5. Narratives may be single-spaced.
6. Heed all page limits.
7. An electronic version of the budget template must be submitted in addition to a pdf copy which must be included in the completed application pdf.

Only those parts of the application within the page limits will be judged as part of the subgrant competition.

**MINIMUM SCORE AND RECOMMENDATION FOR APPROVAL**

Each application will be considered based on the totality of evidence provided. To pass the application review, applicants must (a) meet all criteria in sections (I), (II), and (VIII); and (b) score at least eighty (80) combined points between sections (III), (IV), (V), and (VI). Section (VII) will be used to determine priority if there are more eligible applications than subgrant awards. Passing the application review does not guarantee the awarding of a subgrant. The CSAB will make a recommendation to the State Board on subgrant awards and the State Board will determine final approval.

# SUBGRANT APPLICATION

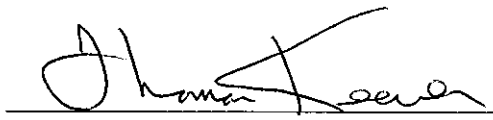
## I. APPLICATION CONTACT INFORMATION

| Charter School Information | |
|---|---|
| Name of charter school (Approved/Existing):<br>Lake Lure Classical Academy | |
| Mailing address (Street, City, State, Zip):<br>1058 Island Creek Rd. Lake Lure, NC 28746 | |
| Name of non-profit organization under which charter is/will be organized or operated: | |
| Name of contact person:<br>Thomas Keever | Title/Relationship to approved/existing school:<br>Executive Director |
| Primary telephone:<br>(828) 625-9292 | Alternative telephone: |
| E-Mail address:<br>tkeever@llcharter.org | Website (if applicable):<br>llcharter.org |
| Name of county and local education agency (LEA) in which charter school is/will reside:<br>County: Rutherford LEA: 81B | |
| Is or will the charter school be operated by an Education Management Organization (EMO) or Charter Management Organization (CMO): Yes ☐ No ☒<br><br>If so, please provide the name and list of all schools managed by the organization. | |

| **Please indicate the subgrant category for which you are applying:** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Planning and Implementation ☐ | Implementation Only ☐ | Expansion ☒ | Replication ☐ |

## II. ASSURANCES

I, the undersigned, do hereby agree to comply with all assurances stated on pages 15-16 of this application.



*Signature of Charter School Authorized Representative*

2/28/2020

*Date*

## Assurances

The charter school agrees to comply with all of the following provisions:

1. Recipients will (i) annually provide the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction such information as may be required to determine if the charter school is making satisfactory progress toward achieving the stated objectives and (ii) cooperate with the U.S. Department of Education and the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction in evaluating the entirety of the NC ACCESS program.

2. Recipients will, for the life of the subgrant, participate in all data reporting and evaluation activities as requested by the U.S. Department of Education and the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction; this includes participation in any federal or state funded charter school evaluations or studies, final grant report documentation, and financial statements.

3. Recipients will comply with federal laws including, but not limited to, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and sections 613(a)(5) and 613(e)(1)(B) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

4. Recipients will comply with all provisions of the Non-Regulatory Guidance—Public Charter Schools Program of the U.S. Department of Education, which includes the use of a lottery for enrollment if the charter school is oversubscribed.

5. Recipients operate (or will operate if not yet open) a charter school in compliance with all state and federal laws and that the charter school does not discriminate based on race, gender, national origin, color, disability, or age.

6. Recipients shall ensure that a student's records, and, if applicable, a student's individualized education program as defined in section 602(11) of the Individuals with Disabilities Act, will follow the student, in accordance with applicable law (P.L. 107-110, section 5208).

7. Recipients will comply with all provisions of ESSA, including but not limited to, provisions on school prayer, the Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act, the Armed Forces Recruiter Access to Students and Student Recruiting Information, the Unsafe School Choice Option, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and assessments [P.L. 107-110].

8. Internal Controls must ensure compliance with federal statutes, regulations, and terms of the award. Recipients will evaluate and monitor compliance, take prompt action when instances of noncompliance are identified, and safeguard protected personally identifiable information (PII).

9. Recipients possess the legal authority to apply for this grant; a resolution or motion has been adopted by the charter school's governing body that authorizes the submission of this application, including all understanding and assurances contained herein, directing and authorizing the "charter school contact person/administrator" to act in connection with the application and to provide such additional information as required.

10. Recipients will ensure that the awarded grant funds will be spent or encumbered in accordance with the guidance outlined in the *Allowable Use of Funds* section of this application.

11. Recipients shall maintain accounting records and other evidence pertaining to costs incurred, with the provision that the records shall be kept available by the grantee during the grant period and thereafter for five full years from the date of final payment. The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction must be permitted to audit, review, and inspect the grantee's activities, books, documents, papers and other records relating to the expenditures of grant proceeds. The recipient further agrees to comply with all federal and state audit requirements and ensures that arrangements have been made to finance those mandatory audits.

12. Recipients are required to keep and maintain all equipment purchased with grant funds in accordance with federal law and regulations.

13. Recipients will ensure equitable program participation, as required under section 427 of the *General Education Provision Act*.

14. Recipients will comply with the lower-tier certification covering lobbying and debarment/suspension in 34 CFR Parts 82 and 85.

15. Recipients understand that if any findings of misuse of grant funds are discovered, project funds must be returned to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and that the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction may terminate a grant award upon 30 days' notice if it deems that the recipient is not fulfilling the funded program as specified in the approved grant application.

16. Recipients shall attend all mandatory meetings/trainings required by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.

17. Recipients agree that the lead administrator and a board member of the charter school will participate fully in all required activities of the NC ACCESS Fellowship program.

18. Recipients agree to onsite monitoring by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction as necessary to ensure that the subgrant is used for authorized purposes, in compliance with Federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of the subgrant; and that subgrant performance goals are achieved.

19. Recipients agree to use financial management systems, including records documenting compliance with Federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of the Federal award, that are sufficient to permit the preparation of reports required by general and program-specific terms and conditions; and the tracing of funds to a level of expenditures adequate to establish that such funds have been used according to the Federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of the Federal award.

20. The applicant understands that, as articulated in the charter agreement, the renewal or revocation of the charter is based on the academic, operational, and financial performance of the school as outlined and reported through the NC Charter School Performance Framework.

21. The applicant understands that, as stated in the charter agreement, it has autonomy and flexibility in the planning, development, and implementation of the education program, including over budgetary and financial decisions.

## III. APPLICATION NARRATIVE

In twenty (20) pages or less (single-spaced), please answer the following questions. If some of the information is well-articulated in your approved charter application, you are welcome to refer to the application and attach relevant sections in appendix E to this subgrant application. This application section is worth up to seventy (70) points.

### A. Enrollment Projections (10 points)

Provide all projected enrollment estimates for the duration of the subgrant and explain the rationale supporting the enrollment projections. This application section is worth up to ten (10) points.

| Subgrant Year | Grade Levels Served | Total Student Enrollment | Number of ED* Students | Percentage of ED* Student Population |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2020-2021 | K-12 | 497 | 170 | 32% |
| 2021-2022 | K-12 | 530 | 179 | 34% |
| 2022-2023 | K-12 | 560 | 209 | 36% |
| 2023-2024 | K-12 | 595 | 226 | 38% |
| 2024-2025 | K-12 | 650 | 260 | 40% |

*Educationally Disadvantaged (ED) includes those who are economically disadvantaged, homeless or unaccompanied youth, English learners, students with disabilities, immigrant students, and migrant students.

A.1 Explain the rationale behind the projected enrollment figures above; specifically, how the projected numbers are both ambitious and feasible. (5 points)

The NC ACCESS Expansion Subgrant will allow Lake Lure Classical Academy (LLCA) to substantially increase the percentage of educationally disadvantaged (ED) students that we currently serve from 148 to 260 of our total enrollment within five years.

LLCA has been serving families in five counties for the past 10 years. We are committed to continuing to provide high-quality educational opportunities for all our students, and we are also committed to expanding our student population in order to increase our services to educationally disadvantaged students. Our mission is to create life-long learners through relevant academic curriculum and character education. Our approach in educating students allows for experiential, interdisciplinary units of study that are interwoven with literacy as the foundation. LLCA believes that through innovative, relevant, and research-based best practices we will be able to serve a greater number of ED students. Based on data from NCDPI 10-year ADM, our school has shown growth over time while Rutherford County Public Schools has had a steady decrease in their ADM. Polk County, a neighboring county to LLCA, also shows a decrease in ADM over this same 10-year period. According to NCDPI School of Business, charter school enrollment in Rutherford County has increased based on the 2017-2018 report compared to the previous 2014-2015 report (see NCDPI School Business Chart Appendix E). These indicators along with our strategic recruitment plan, our commitment to expanding our cluster bus stops, and our personalized educational program will allow LLCA to continue to increase enrollment over the next five years.

Each year we will graduate on average 50 students beginning in 2021 and will bring in an average of 50 kindergarten students. Our enrollment projections are ambitious yet also attainable and reflect our current building capacity of 650 students. LLCA is very mindful of how our increased enrollment and recruitment practices might impact other schools in Rutherford County, and we have begun the process of collaborating with the county's school system to ensure that we positively provide the students and

families of Rutherford County options to educational services (Appendix A). Our ED student enrollment projections will meet or exceed that of Rutherford County Schools by 2024-2025.

A.2 Describe how the school plans to implement a weighted lottery. (5 points)

As a proactive step toward increasing the number of educationally disadvantaged students who enroll in our school, LLCA presented to the Board of Directors (BOD) a request to approve a weighted lottery at its February 13, 2020 meeting. The BOD approved this request, and LLCA will submit a charter amendment request to implement a weighted lottery of a two times weight for educationally disadvantaged (ED) students. Our weighted lottery will be administered by *Lotterease* to ensure a secure, randomized, and online algorithm to guarantee weights for ED students are fair and consistent. If lack of internet or computer access is an issue for parents, or if transportation to complete paper copies of the enrollment application is also an issue our data manager will accept telephone requests for mailing applications to parents, or accept telephone enrollment into the weighted lottery system per parent instructions. LLCA will also provide the enrollment applicant to parents in Spanish, as well as provide a translator for assistance in the application process. The implementation of a weighted lottery will support the ambitious, yet realistic enrollment figures listed in Table 1. Based on enrollment trends over several years, we expect an increase in enrollment to continue over the next five years. With the weighted lottery we anticipate a steady increase of our ED student population to reflect both an ambitious yet realistic enrollment projection. We have analyzed our current school data to examine the current number of ED students: Students with disabilities (65), English Language Learners (11), economically disadvantaged (97), Homeless (4). We currently do not have migrant or immigrant students. These current figures demonstrate that we need to expand our enrollment of educationally disadvantaged students in order to provide them the same high-quality, unique, and relevant educational experience as their more-advantaged peers.

**B. Education Plan (30 points)**

B.1 Provide a General Education Provision Act (GEPA) statement demonstrating how the school has or will eliminate any and all barriers to enrollment for educationally disadvantaged students. (2 points)

Lake Lure Classical Academy (LLCA) will continue to seek solutions, programs, and practices to eliminate the barriers to education as we comply with Section 427 of General Education Provision Act (GEPA). LLCA will ensure to the fullest extent possible equitable access to, participation in, and appropriate educational opportunities for all students it serves, and will develop policies and practices that will eliminate types of barriers that can impede equitable access or participation in program activities including gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age. The following provides specific examples of how LLCA intends to address barriers that could potentially impede active participation of students, parents, and families:

- LLCA will schedule student, family, and community events during varying times in order to accommodate working families. During such program events LLCA will provide transportation services, childcare for programs, food and translation services to eliminate barriers.
- LLCA will provide access to all students with age-appropriate technology to provide a more equitable learning experience.
- LLCA will continue to improve access to consistent communication regarding any school related information through Constant Contact, school website, local radio and news channels, local newspapers, and other social media. Communications will be translated into languages other than English.
- LLCA will eliminate the barrier to higher education by partnering with Isothermal Community College. This partnership will provide high school students with the delivery of college-level

courses during the school day via Face-to-Face instruction, and technology through the College and Career Promise Program to eliminate distance and transportation barriers.

- LLCA will provide targeted cluster bus stops throughout its geographical region to eliminate transportation as a barrier to our high quality, student-focused charter school.

B.2 Provide at least three (3) school-specific subgrant program goals. Subgrant goals must be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, rigorous, and time-bound). (3 points)

**Goal 1**: By June 2021 all student subgroups in grades 3-8 will increase Math grade-level proficiency from 60% to 64%, and from 64% to 68% by June 2022; and Science grade-level proficiency 88% to 90% by June 2021 and from 90% to greater than 93% in 2020 through the implementation and expansion of our STEM initiative: Literacy & STEM and STEM labs.

**Goal 2**: All student subgroups in grades 3-8 will increase reading grade-level proficiency from 72.9% to 75% in 2021, and from 75% to 79% by 2022 through intensive reading interventions and integration of literacy in all subjects using Fountas & Pinnell's LLI as measured by Star 360 Assessments, NC Check-Ins, and End-of Grade tests.

**Goal 3:**Parent, family, community engagement and involvement will increase from less than 10% in 2020 to 25% in June 2021, from 25% to 35% in 2022, and from 35% to 50% in 2023 through the development of a parent-teacher organization and a parent-community support program that supports ED students as measured by an increase in the number of school volunteers, by an increase in attendance at school events, and by an increase in the number of community partnerships.

**Goal 4:** Decrease discipline referrals from 125 incidents to 75 incidents by June 2021, and from 75 incidents to less than 50 by June 2022 through the implementation and training of the Mindful School initiative and Restorative Justice practices in grades K-12 measured through discipline referral data and behavior logs.

B.3 Describe how the school's academic program is or will be specifically tailored to meet the needs of educationally disadvantaged students. Include specific strategies the charter school currently uses or plans to use to serve educationally disadvantaged students. (10 points)

Over the past several years, LLCA has been researching and analyzing its academic programs in order to continuously improve our educational offerings to all students with an intentional focus on serving EDS. We recognize that for our school to be the school of choice in Western, NC we must consistently and unceasingly provide a unique learning environment that supports the whole child. Therefore, we have taken proactive measures towards providing all students a relevant and real-world education. LLCA shaped its academic program through a personalized educational approach and includes a Balanced Literacy framework that integrates science, technology, engineering, math and the arts into applicable and rigorous differentiated instruction through interdisciplinary units of study. Our academic program is based on the belief that reading is the foundation of all subjects, and that building literacy skills (phonics, phonemic awareness, fluency, comprehension, vocabulary), and creating students who are life-long readers is critical to any future career. According to Kellet (2009), strong literacy skills are essential to getting out of poverty. However, schools need to do more than teach reading, writing and speaking using traditional methods. To be effective, reading instruction needs to leverage students' interests and capitalize on more active forms of learning (e.g., small groups discussions, multimedia presentations, dramatic performance). It should also be implemented in a manner that helps students find enjoyment in reading (Gorski, 2013).

Our K-3 reading program combines a "comprehensive, systematic design for high-impact literacy instruction" that uses research-based instructional practices with intentional scheduling of the literacy block to maximize whole group instruction, flexible grouping of students, small group instruction, and co-teaching. Research suggests that children with poor early reading skills continue to struggle with reading and writing in the later grades and are more likely to drop out of school (Alexander, Entwisle,

& Horsey, 1997; Tabors, Snow, & Dickinson, 2001). However, there is evidence that quality early intervention programs can prevent the development of long-term reading deficiencies (Heibert & Taylor, 1994; Wanzek & Vaughn, 2007). At LLCA we have taken ownership of the challenge to ensure that all students are reading at or above grade level.

Last year, after intense and ongoing research to determine how best to improve academic achievement and improve reading skills for students with disabilities, Tier 2 and Tier 3 students, and English Learner students our teachers, teacher assistants, and tutors received intensive professional development on the Fountas & Pinnell Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) program. We adopted this program for all students in grades K-6. Research shows "that LLI positively impacts student literacy achievement in rural and suburban settings... and that LLI is effective with ELL students, students with a special education designation, and minority students in both rural and suburban settings" (Fountas & Pinnell).

Our differentiated approach to literacy allows us to provide all K-6 students whole group instruction, small group instruction with multiple teachers in the classroom, and one-on-one pull out for those students identified as Tier 3. Our balanced literacy program also has a directed focus on early literacy skills for students in grades K-3. A recent report from the Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes stated that "Students who are reading at grade level at the end of third grade are more likely to succeed in other subjects and are more likely to graduate high school on time" (CEELO 2019).

Currently there are over 26 states including North Carolina that have implemented state laws regarding third grade reading. With North Carolina's Beginning of Grade 3 reading requirements, early literacy skills are becoming more important because research supports the positive effects of reading on or above grade level last throughout adulthood. Since implementing the Fountas & Pinnell program and the use of co-teaching, push-in, and small group instruction for K-3 students, our third graders have made huge gains in reading. Our third-grade teachers even received the state teacher bonus for exceeding growth in reading. According to the CEELO there is an "unacceptably large achievement and equity gap [that] persist, especially for historically underserved student subgroups, including low-income students, students of color, dual language learners, and students with developmental delays or disabilities" (2019) that will require our teachers and staff to not only continue to do what we are doing well, but also to improve through specific professional development that focuses on teaching and supporting ED students. The NC ACCESS grant will provide funding to expand our classroom libraries, provide additional Fountas & Pinnell instructional support materials, and professional development to support the increased enrollment of educationally disadvantaged students.

Our school has made a commitment to students and families that we will provide a personalized education program for every student. This is a core principle to our K-12 academic program. All students are provided personalized education plans (PEP) that focus on their unique academic and behavior goals. The PEP is an ongoing resource for teachers, parents, and our MTSS team. Students' short-term and long-term goals, assessment data, attendance, behavior, intervention or enrichment progress monitoring, and other pertinent information is used to ensure that each student is making academic progress, social-emotional growth, and personal goals are being met. Through setting specific academic and behavior goals in collaboration with the students and parents and providing flexible grouping, we are able to use focused, evidence-based interventions for struggling students, English Language learners, students with disabilities, and at the same time providing enrichment opportunities for our advanced learners. We adhere to a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) and our academic program and the use of PEPs is evaluated by the MTSS team and teachers. We will use funds from the NC ACCESS grant to equip teachers in the use of reading and math interventions, Orton-Gillingham

approach, and the process of language development in order to continue to use the MTSS model and PEPs with fidelity.

In addition to the personalized education approach, we provide co-teaching and push-in to all K-8 classes as well as to high school math and English classes. This allows for additional academic support for educationally disadvantaged students. Some of our teachers and support staff have had targeted training in the co-teaching model, as well as intervention training for Tier 2 and Tier 3 students. In striving to make our entire school an equitable education system, we believe that every student must have access to the resources and educational rigor they need for their own success regardless of disability, economic status, language, ethnicity, or race. This requires that all of our teachers continue to receive the training and support to teach ED students. Funding from this grant will provide the resources and training to equip teachers and staff on language development, literacy and math interventions, working with students living in poverty, and the social-emotional impacts on learning.

Our commitment to ensuring that all students receive a high-quality, equitable, and consistent education is another core value that we uphold. This commitment extends from our Kindergarten to high school. Our high school program provides educational equity to educationally disadvantaged students by providing three distinct and differentiated pathways to graduation. Currently, over 46% of our high school students are enrolled in college credit courses through Isothermal Community College (ICC). Freshman and Sophomores can earn CTE certifications, and then they are able to earn an Associate's degree prior to graduation. Our College and Career partnership with ICC provides face-to-face, direct instruction from college professors on our campus, which is not offered at other charter schools in this region. This face-to-face instruction from college professors at our school eliminates barriers for many educationally disadvantaged students because it removes transportation, financial, and social obstacles to attending college. All students K-12 are provided the opportunity to attend after school tutoring for reading or math; however, teachers do not receive compensation for tutoring and there has not been consistency with our program. The NC ACCESS grant will not only provide stipends for teachers, it will also expand the scope of our tutoring services to include science, social studies, and language development. Our after-school programs have been traditionally attended by more-advantaged students because transportation is a barrier for many ED students. Funding from this grant will alleviate transportation as a barrier, and the addition of a more robust and sustainable extended learning opportunities will offer ED students with a more equitable learning experience.
We have also tailored our educational program to provide educational experiences that are not available at other area schools. LLCA is implementing a focus on STEM education in order to attract and address the needs of educationally disadvantaged students by enriching our curriculum and instruction with a greater emphasis on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). STEM education provides numerous opportunities for problem-based learning, inquiry-based instruction, cooperative learning, vocabulary development, content area reading, and interdisciplinary connections while addressing state and national standards across the core curriculum (see STEM Info Appendix E). LLCA has begun to integrate STEM education into its balanced literacy framework to build "Awareness, Exploration, and Preparation" of the natural and human-made world. Our teachers are trained to use a variety of methods to meet the diverse needs of all the students while fostering success. In order to make reading even more meaningful, LLCA uses children's literature to study authentic stories about people, especially women and minorities, that made significant contributions in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. The pairing of non-fiction with hands-on learning activities enables students to explore relevant problems in the recent and distant past. The literacy & STEM initiative that we have begun this year uses the interdisciplinary approach in order to improve academic learning. However, in order to build on this program, it will require transforming classrooms into more

dynamic and connected learning spaces (see budget narrative). The blending of STEM and literacy instruction involves obtaining more books containing authentic stories about great problem solvers and establishing STEM labs that are stocked with resources for designing, building, testing, and presenting projects based on those presented in the children's literature. Funding from the grant will allow us to expand our literacy and STEM initiative, our computer lab, and our media center for all students.

Consistent with the National Middle School Association recommendations for curriculum and instruction for early adolescents, we provide students with engaging reading, thinking, and doing activities that enable them to examine how the natural and human-made world works. At this level the students utilize trade books and on-line resources to study how things like plants, ecosystems, chemicals, structures, mechanism, networks, materials, and energy work. Their explorations use inquiry-based instruction to uncover the laws of nature, mathematical patterns, social and environmental impacts, and interdisciplinary connections associated with each topic. Alston and Marshall (2017) examined the effects of inquiry-based learning over a 5-year period and found that there was "an increase in overall performance for all [student] groups, a narrowing of the achievement gap of minority students relative to Caucasian students... and when combined with other studies, this study affirms that ...inquiry-based instruction may benefit all students" including educationally disadvantaged students. Our middle school teachers have developed inquiry-based, interdisciplinary units of study that combine science, math, social studies, and English Language Arts that will allow ED students to explore

To continue to provide our middle and high school students with inquiry-based educational opportunities, we will use funding from this grant to expand our STEM program by equipping a multi-purpose STEM lab. This lab will provide high school students with an agricultural space, a robotics and coding area, and a makerspace area. Our focus for high school students is Preparation through knowledge, skills, and dispositions for post-secondary opportunities at the community colleges or university as well as careers in STEM. Our STEM curriculum will build upon current science and math courses by engaging students in case studies that focus on topics of enduring human concern (e.g., food and fiber production, energy utilization and conservation, communication and information processing, environmental protection and conservation, technological research and development, health and nutrition). We believe that a more hand-on, collaborative, and problem-solution learning experiences is more beneficial to students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged students, and minorities compared to lectures and working from textbooks. ED students will gain a greater understanding of the world around them through our educational approach. The NC ACCESS grant will allow us to have a STEM lab that features fabrication tools, data acquisition probe ware, hydroponic capabilities, simulation software, electronic and mechanical components, and more.

Going beyond the academic and curriculum-based programs, LLCA will expand its commitment to serve ED students by building a support system that equips teachers and staff through intensive, practical professional development (see Section C6). LLCA has already begun the process of training and equipping teachers in the awareness and understanding needed to teach ED students, and in the challenges, they may experience in teaching ED students. This year alone teachers have received training in understanding the impacts of poverty, the social-emotional impacts on learning, and bridging the learning gap for students with disabilities through various workshops, staff training and teacher-led PD. We have partnered with Western Region Educational Service Alliance (WRESA) to continue to train teachers in how to teach and support the many needs that educationally disadvantaged students bring with them (see Appendix B). WRESA provides high-quality, research-based training that helps schools reach their professional development goals. We also believe that in any equitable education system, every student must have caring teachers that are willing to build relationships, and teachers willing to understand a student's unique ethnic background, learning styles, family situations, and the barriers faced in society. LLCA has created a Students of Concern team that consists of our two school

counselors, our full-time school nurse, administrators, and teachers. This team provides resources for teachers, support for parents and students, and ongoing professional development for our staff to fully meet the needs of the whole child. This team also seeks ways to provide eyeglasses, dental services, food packs, mental health services, translation services, and other community services for students and parents. As our ED student population continues to grow, we are committed to making our school a school of choice that is known for providing a personalized approach to education in order to graduate students that are ready for careers, college, and life. Funding from the NC ACCESS grant will equip teachers in targeted PD for supporting and teaching ED students, but it will also expand our capacity to create a school culture that is rooted in restorative justice practices and mindfulness to deal with external factors that impede learning.

As a school we have embraced character education as a vital part of our school culture. Several years ago, we recognized that our students were not responding to the "canned" character education curriculum. Teachers, administrators, guidance counselors, and students came together and developed a distinctive character education program that interweaves specific character traits, with social-emotional learning that is provided throughout classroom instruction and through extra-curricular activities. The school's core values are embedded into our character education program, SOAR (Safety, Organization, Accountability, and Respect), and define our school culture. SOAR is unique to our school and emphasizes a growth mindset model that as Raptors (our school mascot) we must soar above obstacles and challenges and develop ways to overcome them with support from teachers and parents(see Appendix E). SOAR also teaches students aspects of leadership, service and respect to others and to the environment through a positive response to minor discipline issues, and a school-wide incentive approach to positive behavior. In 2001, North Carolina passed the Student Citizen Act of 2001, that required all schools to include character education as part of an educational program. However, even if character education was not a requirement for schools, LLCA's mission is to teach the whole child. Secretary Margaret Spellings stated it clearly "Education at its best should expand the mind and build character." We have been able to make changes that are evident throughout our school. We currently have two school counselors that provide weekly push-into classes to teach students about social skills, handling emotions, peer pressure, bullying, and positive character traits. Our school counselors, along with our full-time school nurse, also provide training to students on health issues, self-care, and even sensory breaks for students.

Funding from the NC ACCESS grant will allow us to expand on our social-emotional learning support for educationally disadvantaged students through professional development opportunities (see Professional Development section). As a school of choice, we believe that we can provide educationally disadvantaged students in this region an impactful and well-rounded educational experience that is not available at other area schools. However, we are also aware that with an increase enrollment of educationally disadvantaged students comes challenges and opportunities. These challenges (an increase of students with academic, social, emotional, and physical needs) can strain a school, if staff and teachers are not taught how to recognize, deal, and support these challenges. It is imperative to our school that we provide training and support for our staff in order to better facilitate the change from challenges to opportunities for all members of our school community. As the dynamics of our school culture changes due to increased enrollment of educationally disadvantaged students, the need for teaching teachers how to deal with job stress and the possibility of more students with academic gaps and negative behavior patterns, it becomes even more important to equip, train, and support our teachers with professional learning in these areas.

B.4 Explain how the charter school's education plan compares to or differs from that of the local LEA(s). (5 points)

Lake Lure Classical Academy is located in Rutherford County. LLCA and Rutherford County Schools both follow the North Carolina Standard Course of Study (NCSCOS) for all subjects. However, our approach to teaching the NCSCOS differs greatly than our local PSU. Teachers at LLCA use the standards as guidelines to teach interdisciplinary units of study to maximize student learning and engagement. Students in our elementary school learn literacy skills through the integration of science and social studies standards. Our interdisciplinary approach builds core knowledge for students that we believe is essential to success in school and in life. Literacy practices are embedded throughout all classes including mathematics and the arts. Students in grades K-8 engage in field experiences through Chimney Rock State Park and Muddy Sneakers which allow them to investigate and discover how standards are applied to real world situations. K-6 students have art, music, library, P.E, and guidance every week. These classes are built into the elementary schedule to allow all students to participate in these enrichment activities. Students also participate in performances for the community. Music and art performances involve the entire elementary school, not just a select few students. In addition to in-school enrichment programs, LLCA offers an extensive after school enrichment classes for K-6 students. Sports, Arts & Crafts, Chess & Board Games, Hiking, Gardening, Photography, Running, Medical Aids, Yoga, Construction, Coding, Tap Dancing, Cooking & Nutrition, and Painting are after school clubs taught by certified teachers and volunteers. In addition to after school clubs, all teachers offer after school tutoring to provide additional academic support.

High school students take part in creative coursework that is specific to our ecoregion including courses such as the Hickory Nut Gorge Ecosystem, music of the Appalachia, and Equine studies. Our high school students are also offered three options to graduation including the opportunity to earn an Associate's degree through our partnership with Isothermal Community College (ICC). The difference between our high school program and that of other local high schools, is that we provide face-to-face college courses taught by ICC professors on our school campus, in addition to college courses taught online. We also provide our high school students opportunities to travel to ICC to take courses there. Freshman and Sophomores can begin taking college courses and earn certificates in specialized areas such as welding, auto mechanics, computer science, and agribusiness. Another difference between our high school and that of our local PSU, is that high school schedules are built to provide all high school students a 4th block elective. Elective courses provide three different tracks of enrichment opportunities that focus on providing students extended coursework in areas of interest based on student choice. The Arts Elective track provides courses in the visual arts, art history, music appreciation, band, guitar, music history, theatre, dance, and other performing arts. The Computer Science Elective track provides students with courses in coding, robotics, programming, and gaming. The Outdoor and Environmental Education Elective track provides students with courses such as horticulture, apiculture, Hickory Nut Gorge ecosystem, equine studies, agribusiness, and outdoor sports. As a charter school, we have the flexibility to build courses unique to our students' interests. This flexibility also allows for a personalized educational approach for each high school student that differs from our local PSU.

B.5 Describe the school's discipline and school climate philosophy and how it supports the development of educationally disadvantaged students. (5 points)

When all students are engaged and have their needs met, the entire school can reach all academic and culture goals for the school. Discipline and inappropriate or disruptive behaviors can directly impact the overall school climate and culture. With this as a guideline, the teachers and staff of LLCA have embraced a more proactive, positive approach to reframing with discipline issues as learning

opportunities. Our belief is that we must model correct behaviors, model school expectations, and teach then reteach these expectations. Teachers spend the first few weeks of school teaching and modeling appropriate behaviors based on our SOAR (safety, organization, accountability, and respect) matrix for the classroom, bus, hallways, restrooms, and outside areas. Then throughout the school year these expectations are revisited to ensure understanding and opportunities for reteaching. Our approach to discipline involves "Think-Time" that allows students to process their choices, consequences, alternatives to behaviors and ways to restore relationships with others. Then students conference with teachers or other support staff (guidance counselors, SRO, administrators) to assist students in working with an adult in learning how disruptive behaviors or minor discipline issues affects themselves, others, and the entire school. Teachers are also trained in using the SOAR acronym to embed the 10-character traits that we subscribe to as a school: integrity, trustworthiness, kindness, responsibility, courage, perseverance, self-discipline, good judgement, respect, and cooperation. These positive character traits are showcased each month during incentive days and recognition events. Our incentive days are especially productive in reducing discipline issues with middle and high school students. Incentive Days allows students to participate in cross-grade level activities that promote a healthy middle/high school culture.

We recognize that we could improve our discipline and school climate by employing attributes of restorative justice, peer mediation, and mindfulness practices (see Discipline Charts Appendix E). Research conducted on schools that utilize these approaches to discipline and disruptive behavior show a marked decrease in stress, anxiety, peer pressure, bullying, and depression. Sauffer (2011) stated that "there is a large body of evidence in the brain research field showing that attention, motivation and learning are driven and guided by emotion...a fundamental principle of restorative approach is that relationships are central to learning and development." Our goal is to begin to implement these practices into our school culture to directly lessen discipline referrals, and to increase our school's positive climate. These practices will not only promote unity within our school, they will provide teachers with additional ways of teaching students how to respond to each other and the world around them in a more nurturing, positive, and productive way. Funding from the NC ACCESS grant will provide the necessary training for our staff to implement the Mindful School program and a restorative justice curriculum.

B.6 Describe how the school's calendar supports the development of educationally disadvantaged students. (5 points)

Our school calendar is developed to support maximum learning time for all students; yet, it also provides teachers and staff multiple opportunities for professional development. Our school calendar reflects later start dates and end dates and allows for major holidays to closely parallel other area schools. We provide 176 student days plus 13 inclement weather days. The total number of instructional hours is 1109 which exceeds the minimum 1,025 hours required by NC calendar law. Ten teacher workdays are provided with designated time for staff orientation, professional development, and parent/student conferences. The calendar committee comprised of staff, board members, and parents carefully considered the impact on families and strategically placed teacher workdays on either Fridays or Mondays to provide longer weekends and less disruptions during weekly work and family schedules. Our leadership team has developed specific professional learning sessions for teacher workdays. WRESA has partnered with LLCA to provide training and resources during the teacher workdays in order to continue our professional learning capacity in meeting the needs of educationally disadvantaged students (see Appendix B).

To address the challenge of the "summer slump" and loss of academic learning, LLCA is planning on expanding its summer camps in order to support educationally disadvantaged students and families during this time. A study conducted by Quinn and Polikoff (2018) reported that "on average, students' achievement scores declined over summer vacation by one month's worth of school-year learning [and] declines were sharper for math than for reading, and concluded that income-based reading gaps grew over the summer, given that middle class students tended to show improvement in reading skills while lower-income students tended to experience loss." To address this barrier to education, our school will provide summer arts, music, and athletic camps, an enrichment schedule focused on reading, math, science and social studies, and an extensive summer field trip schedule that supports learning. With support from the NC ACCESS grant, the purchase of three school buses will allow us to provide transportation to cluster bus stops during the summer months to provide educationally disadvantaged students extended learning opportunities. The summer learning gap can be a barrier for children who live in poverty or come from families with limited educational backgrounds. Educationally disadvantaged students often do not have the same summer learning opportunities as their more-advantaged peers, therefore LLCA is committed to removing this barrier.

### C. Operations Plan (30 points)

C.1 Detail any partnerships the charter school maintains or plans to develop to support educationally disadvantaged students, including a description of the roles and responsibilities of the applicant, partner organizations, and CMO/EMO, including the administrative and contractual roles and responsibilities of such partners.[4] (2 points)

Lake Lure Classical Academy has developed many longstanding partnerships within the community to meet the needs of our school community, especially our EDS population. They include the following:

- Chimney Rock State Park: provides "Raptor Passes" to all students who attend our school; provides our families with free admission days; provides in-school and on-site learning opportunities for all grade levels; provides our hiking club with additional learning opportunities.
- Lake Lure Baptist Church and Hickory Nut Gorge Outreach: provide snacks, breakfast, and lunch for our food pantry program; provide take-home meal packs for low-income students on a weekly basis.
- Blue Ridge Community Health provides on-site mental health counseling, tele-med services, and sports physicals and screenings for students.
- Isothermal Community College provides face-to-face courses at LLCA for students to earn certificates or their Associate's degree.
- The Town of Lake Lure contributes to our community-wide musical festivals, allows golf course usage for our students, and hosts their Chamber meetings on our campus to provide us with additional networking opportunities.
- Backyard Sports, Trail Life USA, and Muddy Sneakers are partners that provide extended learning opportunities for our students.

Our partnerships help strengthen our school and eliminate barriers of lack of resources, time, transportation for many families (see MOUs Appendix B). As we continue to build and expand our community partnership, the Parent & Community Advisory Council will be responsible for researching partnership data to drive expansion of program services and to eliminate barriers to learning.

[4] Provide any contractual agreements as part of Appendix B.

C.2 Describe how the school's staffing structure, capacity, and diversity will be sufficient to meet the needs of all students, particularly educationally disadvantaged students. (3 points)

For a school of only 497 (current enrollment) students, our staff structure is built to provide relationships, support, and personalized education for every student (see Staff List Appendix E). Our teacher-student ratio is 1:17, we have a K-6 guidance counselor, a 7-12 guidance counselor, a full-time school nurse, a full-time SRO, three full-time EC teachers, five elementary teacher assistants, two middle/high school teacher assistants, a reading specialist, a mental health therapist, a full-time media center/librarian, a full-time technology director, and 4 administrators. The capacity and experience of our current staff not only can effectively support our current student population, but fully supports the expansion of educationally disadvantaged (ED) students (see Staff list Appendix C). Our staff works together as a team of professionals to ensure that students' needs are being met. As a charter school, we are not required to have 2 full-time guidance counselors or a full-time nurse; however, we believe in supporting and teaching the whole child. These staff members can serve our students with fidelity and with compassion. We have three physical education teachers that work with students on health and fitness. Our school nurse not only serves students' health and wellness issues, she works with health care providers to donate dental services, eyeglasses, hygiene supplies, food, clothing and therapy sessions for any student in need. Our school nurse also provides tele-med services for staff and students in partnership with Blue Ridge Community Health. This service allows for medical tests to be performed at school to support families. As we continue to expand our enrollment of ED students, we are examining our staff diversity and realize that we need to be more representative of a diverse society. Our staff consists of 1 Hispanic and 4 African Americans. This does not adequately represent our student population. We understand that to meet the needs of all students we need to recruit and retain a more diverse staff to represent all students. The school's recruitment plan will provide outreach to specific demographic areas and nearby colleges and universities to showcase ways that LLCA is a viable career option.

As we increase our ED student population, we are committed to hiring an ELL teacher to work specifically with students whose first language is other than English. Our current EL students are served by the reading specialist, the Curriculum Director, and teacher assistants as well as their core teachers. In order to fully serve these students, we must have a certified EL teacher as part of our school. We are also committed to hiring an AIG certified teacher to work with students that are academically gifted. This includes educationally disadvantaged students who may qualify for these extended services. In order to meet the needs of additional students with disabilities we will hire an EC teacher assistant to support our 3 EC teachers and students. As we continue to expand our student population, we are researching the possibility of hiring a Community Outreach/Social worker to work more directly with community partners and families to meet their physical, mental, emotional, and health needs. This staff member would be an important addition to our current staff to assist with meeting the needs of students, especially ED students. Beginning in the 2020/21 school year these positions will be a part of our school budget and not funded through this grant.

C.3 Describe the school's marketing and recruiting plan, with an emphasis on strategies to provide outreach to the families of educationally disadvantaged students, including efforts to overcome any potential language barriers. (5 points)

As we look toward increasing our school enrollment of Educationally Disadvantaged (ED) students, we have been very strategic in developing and implementing a marketing and recruitment plan that targets specific geographic regions and specific student groups. Our marketing plan was launched this year,

and has 6 specific goals: to increase the number of ED students from Rutherford, Polk, Henderson and McDowell counties; to improve brand awareness and recognition among key audiences in target markets; to build student, parent, community and media connection and interest by bringing targeted attention to the educational and life-enriching services offered by Lake Lure Classical Academy via the deeper, more inclusive niche stories or assets that are distinctive to our school; showcase Lake Lure Classical Academy as a tuition free public school of choice that is accessible, inviting, personalized, caring, and committed to drawing out the maximum potential in every student; consistently seek ways to enrich and enhance the 'student-teacher' and 'teacher-parent' experience at Lake Lure Classical Academy; and to market to specific regions, organizations, clubs, preschools, and middle schools to reach educationally disadvantaged students and families by creating campaigns, tours, outreach, and advertising that will convert first-time visitors to new students. Our marketing and recruiting plan delivers a strong message of the "why" families should choose LLCA. We emphasize that LLCA provides ED families with Choice & Access, Autonomy & Efficiency" and "Accountability & Inclusiveness." (see Marketing & Recruiting Plan Appendix C). We will measure outcomes and success of our marketing and recruiting plan by auditing the results of our weighted lottery to determine which recruiting strategy was most effective and examine demographic data to ascertain which areas are resulting in enrollment increases. Our marketing and recruiting strategies involve digital and traditional advertising; social media including Facebook ads that are targeted geographically in areas of the four counties where demographic information suggests higher population of ED students; radio spots and news interviews about our school; Campus Discovery Tours that are held every week with translators available for Spanish speaking families; School brochures, newsletter, and posters in English and Spanish, and community outreach to local preschools, churches, and community events. As a school, we believe that our aggressive and targeted marketing and recruiting campaign will result in an increase enrollment and a more diverse student body including a higher percentage of ED students.

C.4 Describe how the school currently does or will provide a transportation plan that accommodates and supports educationally disadvantaged students. (5 points)

Our school is committed to eliminating the "geographical opportunity gap" and be proactive in seeking innovative ways to ensure that the transportation barrier is eliminated for students desiring to attend LLCA. Our school is situated within a short driving distance of four counties, yet because of the rural location transportation to our school transportation has often been a barrier for many families. We currently operate 10 school buses with 17 cluster bus stops that provide transportation to approximately 70% of our students from Rutherford, Polk, and Henderson counties (see Cluster Bus Stops Appendix C). If we did not operate transportation to our students, our enrollment would not have increased over time as it has in the past few years. With the funding from the NC ACCESS Grant, we will purchase three additional buses to offer cluster stops at strategic locations that have been identified as areas where educationally disadvantaged students reside. For example, the Edneyville community in Henderson County is home to many migrant and immigrant families. We currently provide transportation to this area in Hendersonville; however, funding from this grant will allow for expansion of cluster bus stops in the Edneyville area with the intent to increase our enrollment of English Language Learners, migrant students, and economically disadvantaged students from this region. In addition to expanding our cluster bus stops in Hendersonville, LLCA will seek to recruit students from specific locations in Rutherford and Polk Counties. We will expand our cluster bus stops in these counties with intentional locations to maximize the ability of educationally disadvantaged students to attend LLCA. The Grahamtown area in Rutherford County is home to many economically disadvantaged students; however, we currently do not have a cluster bus stop in this area. We have an agreement with a local church in the Grahamtown area to allow us to begin a bus stop in their parking lot to provide

transportation for students living in this area to our school for the 2020-2021 year. Another area in Rutherford County that we plan on providing cluster bus stops is Spindale. This town is home to many low-income families and minorities. Having a bus stop that is in this area will help to eliminate the transportation barrier for educationally disadvantaged students. Our current enrollment of students from Spindale and Forest City is 23 students.

The school leadership team has worked diligently on creating a sustainable transportation plan to ensure that transportation is not a barrier for any student to attend LLCA. In addition to providing cluster bus stops for our students, LLCA is seeking to provide bus stops at area hotels and motels where homeless youth might reside. There are several hotels/motels in Rutherford County that provide housing for low-income and homeless families. Another way that we are seeking to eliminate the transportation barrier is to implement a ridesharing plan for parents to share rides to our cluster bus stops or to our school. We are currently reviewing rideshare apps such as GoKid. The ridesharing program will provide families an additional resource to enable them to attend LLCA. The purchase of three additional school buses will also allow us to expand opportunities for students in our extended learning opportunities.

LLCA believes that learning outside of the classroom, and enrichment opportunities after school are vital to the growth and development of children. Transportation limitations are often a key factor that prevents low-income families and minorities from participating in enrichment activities and extended learning opportunities thus contributing to the achievement gap. In order to provide our students (including those that are educationally disadvantaged) opportunities for extended learning funding from this grant will be used to provide after school transportation to specific cluster stops within Rutherford, Polk, and Henderson Counties. After school cluster bus stops will be made available for students to participate in clubs, athletics, tutoring, and service learning. We will also provide an afterschool bus route to attend ICC for students to participate in extracurricular activities and for advanced course work. These after school opportunities will provide educationally disadvantaged students with avenues to expand their learning outside of the classroom.

Our after-school program will provide all students opportunities to participate in a variety of clubs, athletic programs, enrichment activities, and extended learning opportunities. Research suggests that "students from rural areas and high-poverty schools, as well as minority students, typically show gains that are two to three times larger than those of their [advantaged peers] in critical thinking, historical empathy, tolerance, and becoming art consumers from field trips. extended learning opportunities, and exposure to the arts (Green, Kisida, Bowan).

C.5 Describe how the school currently does or will provide a school lunch plan that accommodates and supports educationally disadvantaged students. Provide information about participation in the National School Lunch Program or a comparable, comprehensive lunch program. (5 points)

Studies from the 2018 Roadmap of Need report show that Rutherford County ranks 86 out of 100 counties in NC in Child Food Insecurity. Statistics from this report also indicate that 26.40% of Rutherford County's children live in poverty, and 39% live in single-parent homes. The need to provide nutritious meals for our students has been on the forefront of our school goals for the last two years. We have an ongoing partnership with area faith-based ministries and with the Hickory Nut Gorge Outreach center. These partnerships provide breakfast, lunch, and snacks for our students who otherwise would not have food during the school day. Hickory Nut Gorge Outreach also provides weekend meal packs for families on a weekly basis. This service to our students is funded by Manna

Food Bank and has been operational at LLCA for the past three years. We operate two food closets - one for elementary students and one for middle and high school students. All students regardless of need are not denied food at our school. We developed a program that has been sustainable to meet the food needs of our current students. During lunch periods students can visit the food closet and request food. A local food truck provides hot meals to students twice a week, and the school offers pizza meals monthly. Our school provides these meals to students who cannot afford to pay. We offset the cost of these meals through staff and community donations. LLCA realizes that our current food program is not a long-term, sustainable solution to feeding an increase in the number of educationally disadvantaged students each year. The Board of Directors (BOD) has placed this need as a priority in the school's Strategic Plan for a Food Service Program. The goal is to "Create design and financial plans necessary for facilities to provide free and reduced-cost lunch options for our student population." Our commitment to students and families is to serve the needs of the whole child and this includes providing nutritional meals and reducing food insecurity in order to help students achieve their best in school and in life. The BOD is researching funding opportunities from the USDA, and other grants to sustain our food service program.

C.6 Describe how the school's professional development plan supports and is tailored to the development of educationally disadvantaged students. (5 points)

LLCA believes that student achievement depends on supporting and educating the whole student, and in order to have high standards for students, there must be high standards for the staff members who work with them. Over the past several years, we have been proactive in developing goals and outcomes for the requirements of professional development (PD)for all staff. At the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year we began using the "teacher-led" model in which teachers were the leaders in training other teachers on what they learned after attending outside professional development workshops or conferences. The impact of this model was measured through observation data from classroom walkthroughs and informal observations, as well as teacher surveys. Having the experts on staff, teachers became more confident and developed more expertise in the area that they had received training. Foster (2019) reported that teachers "appreciated the accessibility of their colleagues and their familiarity with students and the setting" in teacher-led PD and that "professional learning [that] is teacher- and student-centered underscores... that relationships are at the core and must be supported by a culture of collective responsibility and continuous improvement."

The administrators and the Board of Directors believe so strongly in continuous professional development for all teachers and staff that it is a goal of the Strategic Plan (see Appendix E). This past year alone, teachers attended workshops and conferences on Poverty 101, Creating Trauma Sensitive Schools, Mental Health Toolkit, Teaching Students with Disabilities, Interventions for Tier 2 and Tier 3 students, Co-teaching, Differentiated Grading, and Balanced Literacy and STEM to name a few. These PD workshops and conferences were attended by teacher teams and administrators, so that knowledge gained could be applied to teaching students. During grade-level meetings and afterschool, trained teachers led PD for the rest of the staff. Funding from the NC ACCESS grant will allow us to continue to provide our staff and teachers with high-quality, student-focused professional development. For the 2020-2021 school year we are partnering with WRESA to host several school-wide professional development workshops on our school campus that focus on supporting and teaching ED students. These include Disrupting Poverty in the Classrooms, The OCDE Project Glad, Literacy and STEM, and Tier 2 and Tier 3 Interventions. We will open these sessions to other charter schools in our area. Outcomes from professional development will be measured by an increase in academic proficiency for

educationally disadvantaged students, as well as a decrease in discipline referrals, and a more equitable learning environment for all students.

The NC ACCESS grant will also provide funding for our school to receive training on Restorative Justice practices, Social-Emotional Learning, and Mindful Schools to contribute and sustain a whole-child approach to teaching and learning. Discipline data from the past year, revealed that there was an increase in minor behavior offenses, and that teachers and students would benefit from training that is focused on reducing behavior issues with positive interventions rather than negative consequences. Providing alternatives to discipline and approaching negative behaviors with positive teaching and learning will offer educationally disadvantaged students a safe and caring learning environment. These training will be provided through the Mindful Schools organization. We have made a commitment to develop, equip, and uphold teachers and staff in order to directly impact student academic achievement, physical and mental growth, and social-emotional development. Our goal for students is to keep students engaged and learning by creating and supporting a healthy climate and culture within the school where all students can learn.

C.7 Describe the school's plan to engage families and implement a parent/community advisory council.[5] (5 points)

One of the most accurate predictors of student achievement is based on the extent to which families encourage learning at home and involve themselves in their child's education (National PTA). Our school staff and teachers realize that engaging parents and families in our school is vital to our continued growth and overall academic achievement. LLCA's Board of Directors has also recognized the need for parent and family involvement in our school. The BOD Strategic Plan outlines the goal of establishing and maintaining strong family and community partnerships fostering a network of support for each student and increasing the capacity of parents to participate in more decision-making activities (see BOD Strategic Plan Appendix E). One way that our school plans on increasing parent and family involvement is the creation of a Parent and Community Advisory Council. A major component of the council will be to ensure that our academic programs, extended learning opportunities, support services, and operational resources are reflective of ongoing and sustainable support for educationally disadvantaged students. Another component of the council is in alignment with the BOD Strategic Plan by establishing "collaborative partnerships with faith-based, business/industry, and community agencies that support student achievement and community connections." The creation of this council will begin in the summer of 2020, for it to be functional for the 2020-2021 school year. Membership will include parents that represent our educationally disadvantaged students, school personnel, board members, and community representatives who will be committed to ensuring an equitable educational experience at LLCA. A nominating and selection policy will be developed prior to the end of the 2020 school year to ensure equitable representation of council members. The council will have set meeting dates that will be published on our school website. The mission, goals, and outcomes will be measurable throughout the school year, and academic data, attendance data, and behavior data will be used to ensure that barriers to school attendance and academic growth are eliminated. The Parent and Community Advisory Council will be asked to provide reports to the BOD at least quarterly. The council will also be responsible for recruiting volunteers and resources to support the academic, social-emotional, financial, and physical needs of educationally disadvantaged students.

[5] See NC ACCESS Subgrant Application Process Guidance Document for more detail.

Research shows that parent involvement is lowest in families below the poverty line, or who do not speak English, or who did not graduate high school (Child Trends 2018). As a school, we are committed to changing this perception. We want parents and families to be engaged in their students' education. In order to provide the parents and families of educationally disadvantaged students more access to their child's education, we will use our class website, online school portals, parent-teacher apps (Class Dojo), and Google Classroom to connect parents and families with their students' academic progress. If parents and families do not have access to technology, we will provide computers for them to use at home. We will provide parents resources that are language specific to enable them to help their child at home. Parents and families will be invited to class and school activities, and parents will be offered classes to help them monitor their children's progress, set goals for their students, and find ways to eliminate barriers parents may face that prevents them from being engaged in their child's education. LLCA believes that when we engage parents in the learning process, our school and the teacher-student-parent relationship is more enriched for it.

| *This section is for Planning and Implementation, Implementation Only, and Replication subgrant applicants Only* |
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**D. Student Transition Planning**

In five (5) pages or less (single-spaced), please provide a school closure plan. This section will be scored as "Complete" or "Incomplete"; there is no numerical score associated with this section. Exemplary plans will utilize the following best practices established by NACSA and scholarship on charter school closure:

- Form a Student Transition Committee (STC) – This committee will consist of one NC ACCESS program staff member (in an advisory capacity), at least two members of the school's administrative team, at least three parents from the school, at least two members of the charter school's board, and if possible, one to two (1-2) members of the LEA district student reassignment office in which the school is geographically located. This committee will plan activities related to family and student support during the closure process. The committee will establish a Student Transition Plan (discussed below) that focuses on student reassignment into high quality schools as quickly as possible following a school closure. The STC will work with quality local charter and district schools to establish enrollment preferences for displaced students.
- Develop a Student Transition Plan (STP) – The Transition Plan must include a plan to provide written notices to parents, schedule multiple informational meetings at varied times so that all parents have an opportunity to attend, provide individualized assistance to parents, and collaborate with the broader educational community in the event of a school closure. The STC must also work diligently to identify and address any barriers to providing transitional support to parents and students (i.e. providing written materials in appropriate home languages and offering meetings at different times of day). Clear deadlines for key reassignment activities must be established in the STP.

| Please outline the proposed Student Transition Committee and Student Transition Plan below. |
|---|
| N/A |

BUDGET, BUDGET NARRATIVE, AND LOGIC MODEL

Applicants must submit a completed financial plan outlining the acceptable use of subgrant funds for the duration of the grant period. This application section is worth up to thirty (30) points.

**A. Budget**

Complete a proposed budget, using the template provided, outlining anticipated costs for the duration of the subgrant period. Please refer to the information provided in this RFA, the NC ACCESS Subgrant Application Process Guidance Document, nonregulatory guidance, and Uniform Guidance Title 2 - Subtitle A - Chapter II - Part 200 Subpart E when completing the budget.

Additionally, applicants should include the following provisions in the proposed budget:

1. Set aside three thousand dollars ($3,000) in "Support – Travel, Conferences, and Meetings" in year one (1) to cover travel costs associated with the NC ACCESS Fellowship;
2. No more than fifty percent (50%) of the total subgrant funding may be expended by the end of year one (1);
3. No more than seventy-five percent (75%) of subgrant funding may be expended by the end of year two (2); and
4. The entire subgrant cannot be expended in less than three (3) years.

This application section is worth fifteen (15) points.

**B. Budget Narrative**

In five (5) pages or less (single-spaced), complete a budget narrative that:

a. describes anticipated costs for the duration of the grant period, delineating planning and implementation expenditures;
b. demonstrates financial viability beyond the expiration of the grant period; and
c. describes how the applicant will have a high degree of autonomy over the budget and operations, including autonomy over personnel decisions.

This application section is worth ten (10) points.

| Please outline the budget narrative below. |
| --- |
| The NC ACCESS Expansion Grant will provide Lake Lure Classical Academy the ability to expand its educational program and services to educationally disadvantaged students living in Rutherford, Polk, Henderson and McDowell counties. The award amount of 1250,000.00 will be strategically utilized to expand its enrollment and enrich the school learning environment so it is a student centered, family supportive, and community enriched environment for all stakeholders. Upon award and receipt of the NC ACCESS no more than 50% of the total award amount will be utilized within the first year of the five-year award period. During year two of the grant cycle no more than an additional 25% of the total funds will be spent, and the remainder of the grant will be utilized during year three, year four, and year five of the grant period. Expenditures for the NC ACCESS Expansion Subgrant will be as follows:<br>*Professional Fees and Contracted Services -Instructional Support: Tutoring (Year One = $34,000; Year Two = $34,000; Year Three = $34,000; Year Four = $34,000; Year Five = $34,000 Project Total: $170,000)*<br>To extend the learning opportunities and reduce the academic achievement gaps between |

economically disadvantaged students and their more-advantaged peers, LLCA will use funds from the NC ACCESS grant to provide before/after school tutoring opportunities. All tutoring sessions will be led by certified teachers in their subject area. The hourly rate for tutors will not exceed $25/hour. Tutoring will be offered at all grade levels from Kindergarten through High School and will include tutoring for specific subject areas including math, reading, science, and social studies. Tutoring will also provide educationally disadvantaged students direct, intensive reteaching and reinforcing of skills, knowledge, and developmentally appropriate curriculum in order to provide equitable access to our academic program, as well as to increase the grade level proficiency for all subgroups each year of the grant funding. We will measure the success of our extended learning/tutoring program through pre-assessment data and progress monitoring data for all students who attend including educationally disadvantaged students. This data will allow members of our MTSS team and administrators to determine teacher effectiveness and student growth using the Star 360 program. We will also measure attendance data in our after school program, and compare attendance data with the specific targeted demographic regions where we provide after school cluster bus transportation. The monitoring of our after-school program with specific data will assist us to improve our program in order to best serve educationally disadvantaged students. Our goal in allocating NC ACCESS grant funds towards tutoring is to ensure that educationally disadvantaged students will meet or exceed expected growth on EOGs and EOCs as compared to our local PSU.

*Instructional Staff Training (Year One = $4303.10 Project Total: $4303.10)*

LLCA will contract with Mindful School, to create a more positive, relationship-centered, and supportive learning environment in order to directly impact students' social, emotional, mental health, and create a school climate that reflects our whole child approach to education. This training will provide 10 teachers/staff to participate, expand their learning, and then train other teachers in teacher-led professional development to eventually provide all teachers and staff with this training and knowledge, so that being a Mindful School is ingrained in our school culture. The outcomes of this training will be measured through data points including a reduction in minor discipline referrals, reduction in test anxiety for students, and a reduction is stress/anxiety of teachers and support staff as they serve and support a greater number of educationally disadvantaged student population. In order to determine exactly how stress and anxiety will be reduced through the Mindful School initiative, we will use survey responses, observations, and self-reporting to gauge the effectiveness of this program on our students and staff. These data points will be reviewed by our MTSS team which includes support staff. Changing behaviors, teaching students how to deal with stress, anxiety, and depression can increase a sense of well-being and will directly impact students' academic performance. In order to change our school culture, promote a positive school climate, and decrease the social-emotional barriers that prevent students from excelling, funding from this grant is vital in order to train our teachers and staff on creating a Mindful School.

**Instructional Staff Training & Instruction and Curriculum Development (Year One = $36,050; Year Two = $18328; Year Three = $20,000; Year Four = $20,000; Year Five = $20,000 Projected Total = $113,800)**

The NC ACCESS grant will provide LLCA the ability to expand the capacity of teachers and staff through targeted and measurable professional development over the course of the five-year grant cycle. During the 2019-2020 school year, we have been strategic with planning the scope and sequence of

professional development needs for the next several years. With input from teachers, support staff, administrators and board of directors, we identified precise areas for improvement that professional development will have direct effects on student achievement and student social, emotional, and mental health. We allocated a larger portion of this budget line to year one of the grant because we strongly believe that being proactive in preparing our teachers and staff in anticipation of an increase number of educationally disadvantaged students will assist in a smoother and more positive transition within our school culture by handling the challenges and obstacles that may present themselves when our student population/demographics changes. We do not want to wait until our enrollment numbers increase to train and equip our teachers. Therefore, we have partnered with Western Regional Education Service Alliance (WRESA) to provide in depth training on working with students living and learning in poverty. This training will be provided in year-one of the grant cycle, and will include all teachers and support staff. This will increase our capacity to support and serve students who are economically disadvantaged. In addition to this training, teachers and staff will take part in a book study conducted by WRESA on Disrupting Poverty in the Classroom. Understanding the effects of poverty on learning is essential to meeting the needs of the whole child. Another specific professional development training that we will use funds for is to train two Exceptional Children teachers on the Orton-Gillingham method in teaching students with disabilities. This training will meet a need that we currently have, as well as meet the need of any additional students we may recruit that have specific learning disabilities including dyslexia. This training provides intensive reading interventions for nonreaders and struggling readers. In addition, training provided by NC SIP including Foundations of Math and Reading Research to Classroom Practice will also be provided to teachers to support their knowledge of developmentally appropriate instruction, as well as intervention strategies for students with disabilities. We are allocating funds for several of our teachers to become trainers in order to continue this training past the grant cycle. Both professional development training also supports English Language Learners and Tier 2 and Tier 3 students. We will also use funds from this grant to provide training at our school on the OCDE Project Glad that trains teachers in research-based practices, guided practice and classroom demonstrations for working with English Language Learners. The OCDE Project Glad training will also equip our teachers to work with any student regardless of ability who is struggling with language acquisition. Other training for which funds from the NC ACCESS grant will be allocated toward is Literacy and STEM and Differentiated Instruction. Each of the professional development opportunities will build and strengthen our core instruction, as well as equip teachers in supporting struggling students. We are in the process of contracting with a Restorative Justice program with Peaceful Schools; however, this training will not be offered in year-one of the grant cycle due to the implementation of the Mindful School program. We recognize that to truly implement change in our school culture and climate, and to impact change in our discipline referrals we must work strategically in implementing new programs to foster success. Therefore, year one will focus on Mindful Schools, and then in year two or three we add the Restorative Justice model to our disciplinary plan.

In addition to the above-named professional development, we will provide social-emotional learning training for our school counselors, teachers, and administrators. This training is important to our overall support of all students. We recognize that students who are educationally disadvantaged may bring with them an increase need to additional social and emotional support to assist them in academic

performance as well as social interactions and emotional stability. These training sessions will impact our teachers to directly support educationally disadvantaged students with their social, emotional, and mental health. All professional development that will be offered to our staff and teachers is to effectively support and serve educationally disadvantaged students to the best extent possible. In order to serve students and meet their academic, behavior, and social-emotional needs these training sessions are imperative for LLCA. These training sessions will help us as a school eliminate barriers to learning and education, as well as provide a more equitable and peaceful school climate.

*Technology and Equipment -Instructional Computer Hardware: (Year One = $84,330.35; Year Two = $82231.48; Year Three = $ 47,224.07; Year Four = $20,669.04; Project Total =$234,454.94)*

Funding from the NC ACCESS grant will provide all students with access to technology in all grade levels and for specific STEM classes. Funds allocated for Chromebooks will be used in K-12 classrooms providing all students with technology for One-to-One access. Having access to Chromebooks will provide students access to online resources, assessments, collaborative work, Google Classroom and other online learning opportunities. High school students will be provided online classes through Isothermal Community College, NCVPS, and Khan Academy. High school students will also be able to integrate technology into their everyday learning through the ability to have one-to-one access to computers. Educationally disadvantaged students and their families will be provided computers to take home and use thus eliminating the barrier to technology. Using Google Classroom, students can upload resources and assignments if they do not have internet access at home. Google Classroom uploads do not require internet access at home in order to complete assignments thus eliminating a barrier that many educationally disadvantaged students may have. We are in the process of developing an inclement weather/school closing policy and procedures to enable students to continue learning while at home. In order to provide educational opportunities during those times of the year when inclement weather or other related school closings causes students to miss school, having access to computers at home is a crucial component of this policy especially for educationally disadvantaged students. Samsung tablets will be used for coding, robotics, art classes, and our outdoor education program. These tablets will provide the capacity for extending the learning of students in these classes. iPads will be used for elementary STEM classes and Lego Robotics for elementary schools. These tablets will also allow us to expand our middle and high school coding classes, as well as provide digital learning opportunities in art. In order for LLCA to provide computer access to all students, we have created a technology plan that will allow us to provide computers, tablets, and other equipment to our students beyond the five-year grant cycle. We understand that technology changes and as the school's technology needs change over time, our school budget will reflect a set aside amount each year to ensure that we continue to provide access to all our students. This budget line that is outside of the NC ACCESS grant has been approved by the Board of Directors.

*Instructional Equipment (Year One = $3866.00; Year Two = $7616.91 Project Total =11,482.91)* We have allocated a total of $11,482.91 over the course of two years of the grant cycle toward instructional equipment purchases. These purchases include equipment to properly provide Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics resources for our STEM lab and Literacy & STEM program including a 3-D printer, Interactive Projector, and graphing calculators. In addition to our STEM equipment, supplies and resources for our music classes, our robotics class, and general math classes. These purchases will

be used toward providing all students, but especially educationally disadvantaged students with hands-on, collaborative learning opportunities. Instructional equipment will provide educationally disadvantaged students a more equitable learning experience.

**Classroom Furniture (Year One = $36344.82; Year Two = $11,216.98 Project Total =$47,561.80)**

As our enrollment increases the need for classroom furniture also increases. The funds from the NC ACCESS grant will be used toward purchasing bookshelves for classroom libraries, specialized chairs for students with sensory issues, tables that are made for small group instruction, and furniture to outfit our STEM labs. The classroom furniture will provide students with a more welcoming environment when classroom items and books have proper shelves, and when the furniture meets students' physical needs such as the small group instruction tables and wobbly seats. These purchases will also provide a more collaborative learning environment for all students.

*School Library/Media Center Technology (Year One=$4767.54 Project Total=$4,767.54)*

Funding from this grant will allow us to expand our Library/Media Center's technology for student and staff use. We will purchase 12 Chromebox to support student learning, and to assess students on the Accelerated Reading program, as well as to provide technology in the Library/Media Center for parents to use. We hope that the 12 Chromebox with wireless mice will enable parents that do not have computer access the ability to check students grades on PowerSchool, to help with homework or research, or to just use this technology to assist them in other ways. We will provide this space in our library/media center for parents, students, and community members.

*School Library/Media Center Furniture (Year One = $29,676.11 Project Total =$29,676.11)*

The NC ACCESS grant will allow LLCA to expand its overall library/media center to meet the needs of all K-12 students, parents, staff, and community members. In order to expand we will need to purchase tables, chairs, bookshelves, and book displays. This expansion will provide all students a place where reading for enjoyment and reading to learn is the focus. These purchases will allow LLCA to adequately provide a learning environment that is equipped with furniture that is safe and attractive compared to having mismatched shelves and floor-only seating. These additions will also improve the school academic goals by creating a space that showcases the importance of reading and learning. These furniture purchases will sustain our library/media center for over the next five years.

*School Library/Media Center Equipment (Year Two = $712.30 Project Total =$712.30)*

NC ACCESS grant funds will be used in year two for the purchase of paper cutters and die cut sets to provide teachers with additional equipment they need to make their classrooms and hallways come alive with displays. These purchases will last for more than five years of the grant cycle and will continue to provide ways to make our school more welcoming.

*Supplies and Materials -Textbooks & Curriculum (Year One = $195,362.73; Year Two = $34784.56; Year Three = $57,759.53; Year Four = $ 0; Year Five = $ 0 Project Total =$287,906.82)*

LLCA believes that allocating funds from the NC ACCESS grant toward the purchases of textbooks and curriculum resources is essential to the academic development of students. In order to expand our literacy and STEM initiative and to expand our early literacy K-3 program we will use funds from this grant to equip all classes with the textbooks, supplies, and non-consumable resources needed to assist all students in becoming life-long readers and life-long learners. In addition to providing materials and books for our literacy program, we will also purchase books, non-consumable materials and

manipulatives for math and science classes. Our budget outlines the specifics for each purchase, and ensures that all purchases made will be for the benefit of enriching and enhancing our academic programs to provide all students equitable learning opportunities, and to also support the learning needs of students with disabilities, struggling students, and academically gifted students.

*School Library/Media Center or Classroom Library Books (Year Three = $50,486.18; Project Total =$50,486.18)* To continue the expansion of our library/media center in order to provide an adequate number of books for an increased enrollment by year three of the NC ACCESS grant, we allocated $50,486.18 to purchase fiction, non-fiction, book series, and professional books for teachers. These purchases will add to the existing library/media center collection but will provide newer published books to engage student interest and to align with classes being taught in the 2022-2023 school year and beyond. These purchases will be bound for library use in order to increase the number of years these books can be in circulation. We will also purchase books for parents to use as resources. Funding from this grant will provide our school with high-quality, high-interest, age-appropriate, and relevant books for our library/media center. In addition to increasing the number of books we will have in our library/media center we will allocate funds to be used for classroom libraries to support our Balanced Literacy Framework. This framework requires that all classes have fully stocked grade-level or developmentally appropriate books for students to read during independent reading time. In order to meet the needs of educationally disadvantaged students and to make our school a more equitable learning place, we must provide reading resources for all of our students to enjoy and to learn. Our goal is to expand our number of books both in classrooms and in the library/media center so that every student has access to books. Once the funds from the NC ACCESS grant are expended, we will continue to apply for grants that specifically provide funding for book purchases.

*Support Technology and Equipment (Year One = $196,176.00; Year Two = $98,088 .00 Project Total = $294,264.00)* Funding from this grant will enable LLCA to purchase two new school buses in year one, and 1 new school bus in year two of the grant cycle in order to expand our cluster bus stops to targeted geographical regions in Rutherford, Polk, and Henderson Counties. These additional cluster bus stops will eliminate the barrier of transportation to and from school as well as transportation for extended learning opportunities for educationally disadvantaged students that live in communities that traditionally segregated by economic status, language, or region. The addition to our already existing bus transportation program will directly impact the ability for educationally disadvantaged students to attend our school. We will use daily and monthly bus ridership counts to provide data that demonstrates the need for additional cluster bus stops. We will also use data from our marketing and recruiting services to determine response rates from demographic areas relevant to our school.

### C. Logic Model

Complete a Logic Model (see appendix B for template) demonstrating how actions and expenditures are expected to lead to specific outcomes. This application section is worth five (5) points.

## APPENDIX B – LOGIC MODEL TEMPLATE

**Objectives**

1. Educationally disadvantaged students will represent at least 32% of the total student enrollment at LLCA by the end of the 2020-2021 school year.
2. Educationally disadvantaged students will demonstrate academic proficiency at or above grade-level on End-of-Grade tests (math, science, and reading) that are greater than the Local PSU's by 5% in year one of the grant cycle, and will increase to 10% in year two of the grant cycle with steady increases in proficiency scores for each year after.
3. Build positive, productive relationships among students, parents, teachers, and community members to directly impact the support services and extended learning opportunities for all educationally disadvantaged students by a 15% increase in parent engagement and community partnerships in the 2020-2021 school year.

| Inputs | Outputs | | Outcomes and Impact | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Activities* | *Participation* | Short | Medium | Long |
| Funding from the NC ACCESS grant<br><br>Interdisciplinary, inquiry-based teaching and learning strategically designed, monitored, and results orientated to increase academic proficiency in EDS through integration of literacy and STEM<br><br>Time, effort, and commitment from all members of the school community including administrators, teachers, support staff, Board of Directors, and parents to effectively teach, serve, and support EDS | Purchase 2 new school buses in year one, and 1 additional school bus in year 2 and Purchase of Instructional Materials to expand the Literacy & STEM program, STEM Lab, and Computer access for EDS<br><br>PD for teachers, staff, and appropriate stakeholders in the areas of reading and math interventions, language development, social-emotional learning, restorative justice and mindful schools<br><br>Establish the Parent & Community Advisory Committee | Students, parents, staff<br><br>Students, teachers, tutors, teacher assistants, support staff, administrators<br><br>Administrators, Teachers, Tutors, Teacher Assistants, Board of Directors, Parent & Community Advisory Committee<br><br>Parents, teachers, support staff, volunteers, and community partners | Increase in the number of cluster bus stops at demographically strategic locations to increase in the number of EDS riding buses<br><br>Progress monitoring and academic proficiency rates improve – literacy among all subgroups shows increases in state assessments<br><br>Teachers and staff are prepared to support and serve a greater number of EDS<br>Increase engagement in school activities, number of volunteers, and community partners increases by 10% | Increase in the number of additional cluster bus stops that reflect geographic areas of need<br><br>Academic proficiency rates of EDS increase to 10% or more as compared to the local PSU in reading, math, and science EOG tests<br><br>School-wide Mindful School and restorative justice practices improve student discipline referrals, and increase teacher effectiveness to support and serve EDS<br>Involvement in school activities of volunteers and community members increases to 15% by yr 2 | Significant increase in the number of EDS riding school buses from targeted geographical areas in all counties served<br><br>EDS exceed the academic proficiency rates of local PSU<br><br>School-wide support services for EDS that include mental health behavior, physical, and social support are fully functional and monitored for fidelity using data analyzed<br>Fully established and results oriented P&CA committee that is sustainable over time |

**Assumptions**

Marketing and recruiting, with additional cluster bus stops, and an academically and enriching educational environment will attract and retain a higher percentage of educationally disadvantaged students to our school.
All staff and teachers will be equipped and trained to serve and support an increase number of educationally disadvantaged student population at our school.

**External Factors**

Academic proficiency changes of educationally disadvantaged subgroups at the local PSU. Changes in demographics and population movements among Rutherford, Polk, Henderson, and McDowell.

## IV. COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE STANDARDS

Indicate if any of the following competitive preference standards apply to your existing/approved school. Please outline how the school meets any of the criteria outlined below and provide any additional evidences to support each selected status in Appendix C.

Applicants providing detailed plans for the following items may receive up to an additional three (3) points per standard.

| | |
|---|---|
| Opening, expanding, or replicating a school in a rural or underserved urban area (i.e. without a high-quality school within fifteen (15) miles). | Yes ☐ No ☒ |
| | |
| Increasing the racial and ethnic diversity in their new, expanded, or replicated school. | Yes ☒ No ☐ |
| We are committed to increasing our racial and ethnic diversity through targeted demographic recruitment, cluster bus stops that are in ethnic/racial geographical locations, and marketing strategies that are translated into languages other than English. | |
| The inclusion of high school (9-12) grade levels. | Yes ☒ No ☐ |
| We currently have grades 9-12. | |
| Develop or manage a charter school focused on dropout recovery and academic reentry. | Yes ☐ No ☒ |
| | |

## V. PRIORITY CONSIDERATION STATUS

Indicate if any of the following applies to your existing/approved school. Applicants meeting at least two of the following conditions will receive priority consideration designation, which may impact the distribution of subgrant awards when the number of applications receiving a passing score on the application rubric exceeds the number of subgrants to be awarded. Please outline how the school meets any of the criteria outlined below and provide any additional evidences to support each selected status in Appendix D.

| | |
|---|---|
| Currently serve a forty percent (40%) or higher economically disadvantaged population. | Yes ☐ No ☒ |
| | |
| Economically disadvantaged students, English learners, and students with disabilities have proficiency rates higher than the state average for their subgroup. | Yes ☒ No ☐ |
| According to our NC School Report Card data from 2018-2019, all reportable subgroups exceeded the state averages. | |
| As evidence of participation in applicable federal programs, have Title I status. | Yes ☒ No ☐ |
| We are a Title I school, located in a Title I county. | |
| Maintained an "A" or "A+NG" SPG, as determined by the NCDPI, and met or exceeded growth, as determined by EVAAS, for three consecutive years prior to the application. | Yes ☐ No ☒ |
| | |

## VI. CERTIFICATION

I certify that I have the authority to submit this application on behalf of the authorized charter school listed above. All information contained herein is complete and accurate. I realize that any misrepresentation will result in disqualification from the application process or termination after an award. I understand that incomplete applications will not be considered. The person named as the contact person for the application is so authorized to serve as the primary contact for this application on behalf of the authorized charter school listed above.

*Signature of Charter School Authorized Representative*

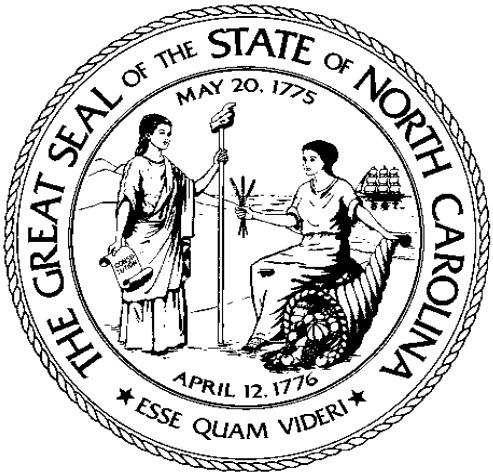
2/28/2020
*Date*

## VII. SUBGRANT APPLICATION APPENDICES

Please submit all applicable appendices as part of a completed application.

A. If applicable, up to the last three years of available student assessment data for the school addressed in this application and, if applicable, all schools operated by the CMO/EMO overseeing the school addressed in this application. Include (if available):
   i. NC State Report Card Letter Grade
   ii. Student Achievement Percentages (including subgroup data)
   iii. EVAAS Composites
   iv. Graduation Rates
B. Contractual Agreements with Partner Organizations (See item 7 of the application narrative)
C. Evidence of Competitive Preference Standards
D. Evidence of Priority Consideration Status
E. Additional Supplementary Documentation

# Exhibit C: NC ACCESS Program Subgrant Application Evaluation Rubrics




# North Carolina Advancing Charter Collaboration and Excellence for Student Success (NC ACCESS) Program Subgrant Application Rubric

Applicant: **Lake Lure**

Reviewer Name: **Barbara O'Neal**

Updated September 2019

## Overview of the NC ACCESS Subgrant Program

In 2018, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) was awarded a Public Charter Schools Program (CSP) grant from the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) of approximately $26,600,000. The CSP grant will be used to implement the North Carolina Advancing Charter Collaboration and Excellence for Student Success (NC ACCESS) Program to:

1. Increase the number of educationally disadvantaged students attending high-quality charter schools and expand the number of high-quality charter schools available to educationally disadvantaged students;
2. Develop a cohort of 100 charter school leaders who can develop and demonstrate best practices in serving educationally disadvantaged students; and
3. Broadly disseminate best practices in serving educationally disadvantaged students and foster collaboration in the charter school community and between charter schools and traditional public schools.

The NC ACCESS Program and CSP define educationally disadvantaged students as students who are economically disadvantaged, homeless or unaccompanied youth, English learners, students with disabilities, immigrant students, and migrant students.

The NC ACCESS program has allocated the majority of the CSP funds to advance Priority 1 listed above through school-level subgrants, though subgrant recipients must also demonstrate a desire to share best practices with both charter schools and traditional public schools. For each of the five (5) years of the federal CSP award, the NC ACCESS Program will run a competitive subgrant competition and award subgrants to North Carolina charter schools that propose a comprehensive plan to increase the number of educationally disadvantaged students attending high quality charter schools and expand the number of high quality charter schools available to educationally disadvantaged students.

## Ratings and Criteria

The NC ACCESS Subgrant Program is a competitive application process designed to award funding for schools that propose to serve an increased number of educationally disadvantaged students. Each subgrant application will be reviewed by a team of NC ACCESS Program team members and external evaluators. All evaluations will be considered, and a recommendation will be made to the Charter School Advisory Board (CSAB). The CSAB will take all recommendations, application reviews, and due diligence into account and make a recommendation for the approval of subgrants to the State Board of Education (State Board). The State Board will determine the final approval of all subgrant awards.

A subgrant application that merits a recommendation for approval should present a clear, realistic picture of how the school expects to successfully implement the proposed plans to increase the number of educationally disadvantaged students attending high quality charter schools and expand the number of high quality charter schools available to educationally disadvantaged students. In addition to meeting the criteria that are specific to each section, each part of the proposal should align with the overall mission, budget, and goals of the application and NC ACCESS Program.

Recommendations for approval or denial will be based on the completed application which includes school information, signed assurances, enrollment projections, application narrative, budget, budget narrative, logic model, and appendices. The enrollment projections, application narrative, budget, budget

narrative, and logic model are scored out of a possible one hundred (100) points. Applicants must score are least eighty (80) points to meet the standard.

Applications that do not meet standard in all sections as evidenced by the summary review ratings will be deemed not ready for approval.

## Instructions for Reviewers

Reviewers should complete each rubric section based on the evidence provided in the application. There are seven (7) total rating sections to complete:

I. Applicant Contact Information
II. Signed Assurances
III. Application Narrative (70 points possible)
    a. Enrollment Projections (10 points)
    b. Education Plan (30 points)
    c. Operations Plan (30 points)
    d. If applicable, a school closure plan (check for completeness)
IV. Budget, Budget Narrative, and Logic Model (30 points possible)
    a. Budget (15 points)
    b. Budget Narrative (10 points)
    c. Logic Model (5 points)
V. Competitive Preference Standards (optional; up to 12 points possible)
VI. Priority Consideration Status (optional; up to 4 standards possible)
VII. Certification
VIII. Appendices (there is no scoring associated with section VII; information will supplement sections III, IV, V, and VI)

Please note that there may be appendices to support information provided in the above sections. When evaluating an application, reviewers should both rate each section and provide comments, if applicable. Reviewers should look for responses that reflect a thorough understanding of key issues and barriers for educationally disadvantaged students. Responses should clearly align with the mission, goals, and budget of the proposed plan. Each response should include specific and accurate information that shows thorough preparation and understanding of school operations and serving educationally disadvantaged students. Reviewers should use objective language and complete sentences in their comments on the strengths and weaknesses/areas of concern of each section of the application. The comments and evidence provided are as significant as the rating. Below are examples of specific and detailed comments:

**Strengths of the application:**

- "The plan aligns with the overall mission and goals because…"
- "The education and discipline plans are research based and proven effective with the targeted population of students because…"
- "The lunch program is comparable to the National School Lunch Program and will support an educationally disadvantaged population by..."
- "The marketing plan clearly outlines how the school will recruit and enroll a higher educationally disadvantaged population by…"
- "The budget uses sound assumptions and is consistent with the goals of the proposed plan."

**Weaknesses/areas of concern of the application:**

- "The curriculum and school calendar do not align with the mission and goals because . . ."
- "The discipline plan does not include provisions for students with disabilities."
- "The budget assumptions include the unallowable use of funds for construction."
- "The plan proposes two buses, but there is no accompanying line item in the budget that allocates funds for purchasing buses."

Once all seven (7) rating sections are scored individually, the evaluator should complete the summary ratings page with all final ratings and scores. In order to pass the review, applicants must (a) meet all criteria in sections (I), (II), and (VII); and (b) score at least eighty (80) combined points between sections (III), (IV), and (V). Section (VI) will be used to determine priority if there are more eligible applications than subgrant awards. The CSAB will make a final recommendation to the State Board on subgrant awards. The State Board will determine the final approval of all subgrant awards.

**Please remember that all documents, including your individual review, will be available to the public.*

**Application Scoring Rubric**

## Section I – Application Contact Information

| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• All applicant contact information is complete and accurate. | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Status:** | Complete ☒ | Incomplete ☐ |
| **Comments (if applicable)** | | |
| All applicant contact information is complete and accurate. | | |

## Section II – Assurances

| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Assurances are signed. | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Status:** | Complete ☒ | Incomplete ☐ |
| **Comments (if applicable)** | | |
| All assurances are signed. | | |

## Section III – Application Narrative

| A. Enrollment Projections | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| A.1 Explain the rationale behind the projected enrollment figures; specifically, how the projected numbers are both ambitious and feasible. | | | |
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Enrollment projections are complete, ambitious, and realistic.<br>• Enrollment projections demonstrate a significant increase of educationally disadvantaged students, including economically disadvantaged, homeless or unaccompanied youth, English learners, students with disabilities, immigrant students, and migrant students. | | | |
| **Points Possible:** | 5 | **Points Earned:** | 4 |
| **Strengths** | | | **Page** |
| The applicant is proposing to increase the enrollment of economically and educationally disadvantaged students from the current 148-260 over five years. The percentages would be from 32%-40%. The applicant indicated that they graduate 50 per year and would add 50 at the Kindergarten level each year. They are proposing to build capacity from 497-650. | | | 2 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | | | **Page** |
| The applicant is not proposing growth in enrollment of economically and educationally disadvantaged over all grade levels. The applicant did not make clear if the 50 students to be recruited each year for kindergarten would be EC or ED students. | | | 2 |

| A.2 Describe how the school plans to implement a weighted lottery. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Clear description of the process and mechanism for implementing a weighted lottery.<br>• Clearly articulated subgroup category weights and/or enrollment percentage goals.<br>• Rationale for the applied weights are reasonable and justified. | | | |
| **Points Possible:** | 5 | **Points Earned:** | 5 |
| **Strengths** | | | **Page** |
| The applicant is proposing to implement a weighted lottery that has been discussed and approved by the Board. The weighted lottery will provide two additional weights for EC and ED students. The school will use Lotterease and parents needing computer access to complete the application will have access through several sources. | | | 3 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | | | **Page** |
| No weaknesses noted. | | | N/A |

## Section III – Application Narrative (cont.)

| B. Education Plan | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| B.1 Provide a General Education Provision Act (GEPA) statement demonstrating how the school has or will eliminate any and all barriers to enrollment for educationally disadvantaged students. | | | |
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Statement clearly articulates the school's desire and plan to eliminate any and all barriers to enrollment for all students, especially educationally disadvantaged students. | | | |
| **Points Possible:** | 2 | **Points Earned:** | 2 |
| **Strengths** | | | **Page** |
| The applicant provided a reasonable GEPA statement that demonstrated their commitment to eliminate barriers to enrollment and participation to economically and educationally disadvantaged families. | | | 3 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | | | **Page** |
| No weaknesses noted. | | | N/A |

| B.2 Provide at least three (3) school-specific subgrant program goals. Subgrant goals must be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, rigorous, and time-bound). | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• All goals are specific, measurable, achievable, rigorous, and time-bound.<br>• Goals are aligned to the NC ACCESS Program and activities in the subgrant application. | | | |
| **Points Possible:** | 3 | **Points Earned:** | 3 |
| **Strengths** | | | **Page** |
| The applicant provided four clearly defined and measurable SMART goals that are relevant to the NC ACCESS mission and purposes. For example, the applicant indicated one goal is to reduce discipline referral to less than 50 by June 2022. The applicant will do so by implementing the Mindful School Initiative and Restorative Justice programs. The results will be measured by a decrease in referrals. | | | 4 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | | | **Page** |
| No weaknesses noted. | | | N/A |

| B.3 Describe how the school's academic program is or will be specifically tailored to meet the needs of educationally disadvantaged students. Include specific strategies the charter school currently uses or plans to use to serve educationally disadvantaged students. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Clear and comprehensive description of the strategies being utilized to serve educationally disadvantaged students, especially intervention, differentiation, and support services.<br>• A robust and quality curriculum overview, supported by research, with a plan for implementation.<br>• Evidence the proposed academic plan will be appropriate and effective for growing all students while at the same time closing achievement gaps. | | | |
| **Points Possible:** | 10 | **Points Earned:** | 10 |
| **Strengths** | | | **Page** |

| | |
|---|---|
| The applicant clearly demonstrated that the school will implement several research-based instructional practices to ensure the educational program is appropriate to meet the needs of all students, and especially those who might need additional supports. The applicant will use strategies such as whole group instruction, flexible grouping, small group, co-teaching and differentiated instruction. The applicant has adopted the Fountas & Pinnell Leveled Literacy Intervention Program that has provided support for all students and has been most effective with the ELL student population. | |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | **Page** |
| No weaknesses noted. | N/A |

| B.4 Explain how the charter school's education plan compares to or differs from that of the local LEA(s). | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Clear articulation of the services and programs offered by the school that are similar and/or different from offerings in the local LEA. | | | |
| **Points Possible:** | 5 | **Points Earned:** | 5 |
| **Strengths** | | | **Page** |
| The applicant indicated that there are several ways in which their program is different than the local LEA. For example, they follow the NC Course of Student. This approach to teaching is different in that they use the standards as a guide to teach inter-disciplinary units of study to maximize student learning and engagement. In addition, the high school program offers three options to graduation. One of the options is to participate in the program to get the Associate's Degree through Isothermal Community College. Courses are offered face-to-face and online. | | | 6 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | | | **Page** |
| No weaknesses noted. | | | N/A |

| B.5 Describe the school's discipline and school climate philosophy and how it supports the development of educationally disadvantaged students. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• A clear vision for school culture or climate that will promote a positive and supportive academic environment and is inclusive for a diverse student body.<br>• Coherent plan for creating and/or sustaining the intended culture for students, teachers, administrators, and parents.<br>• Discipline plan that has clear policies and procedures and has thoughtful consideration of the needs and rights of educationally disadvantaged students, especially students with disabilities. | | | |
| **Points Possible:** | 5 | **Points Earned:** | 5 |
| **Strengths** | | | **Page** |
| The applicant clearly demonstrated that processes and procedures are in place to ensure a positive learning environment; school climate is a priority. The applicant will utilize Think Time to allow students to process their actions and the teachers are trained in SOAR. The applicant realizes they want to decrease discipline referrals and one of their goals is to | | | 7 |

| | |
|---|---|
| implement the Mindful School Initiative and Restorative Justice programs. The results will be measured by a decrease in referrals. | |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | **Page** |
| No weaknesses noted. | N/A |

| B.6 Describe how the school's calendar supports the development of educationally disadvantaged students. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Calendar and schedule support implementation of the academic plan, including supporting the development of educationally disadvantaged students and aligning with the mission, vision, and goals of the school. | | | |
| **Points Possible:** | 5 | **Points Earned:** | 5 |
| **Strengths** | | | **Page** |
| The applicant clearly demonstrated that the school calendar is supportive to the development and learning of all students. The applicant indicted that students will receive 1109 of instructional time, which is over the NC required minimum. The students will begin and end with early start dates. The summer camp will be expanded to give students an opportunity for extending learning over the summer; transportation will be provided. | | | 9 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | | | **Page** |
| No weaknesses noted. | | | N/A |

## Section III – Application Narrative (cont.)

| C. Operations Plan | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| C.1 Detail any partnerships the charter school maintains or plans to develop to support educationally disadvantaged students, including a description of the roles and responsibilities of the applicant, partner organizations, and CMO/EMO, including the administrative and contractual roles and responsibilities of such partners. | | | |
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Clear delineation of roles and responsibilities between the school and CMO/EMO.<br>• Articulation of budgetary and decision-making autonomy of the board or directors.<br>• Evidence of contractual agreements provided in appendix A. | | | |
| **Points Possible:** | 2 | **Points Earned:** | 2 |
| **Strengths** | | | **Page** |
| The applicant clearly demonstrated that partnerships are in place to support students. For example, the Blue Ridge Community Health will partner to provide mental health counseling and sports physicals for students. The Isothermal Community College partners with the applicant for the face-to-face classes for high school students. | | | 10 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | | | **Page** |
| No weaknesses noted. | | | N/A |

| C.2 Describe how the school's staffing structure, capacity, and diversity will be sufficient to meet the needs of all students, particularly educationally disadvantaged students. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Staffing levels for each year are robust and aligned with the educational program and conducive to the school's success.<br>• There is clear capacity to support the specialized needs of students, particularly students with disabilities and English learners.<br>• Comprehensive plan to support student's non-academic needs, including through counselors, behavior specialists, psychologists, etc.<br>• Clear plan to recruit, retain, and support a diverse teaching staff. | | | |
| **Points Possible:** | 3 | **Points Earned:** | 3 |
| **Strengths** | | | **Page** |
| The applicant clearly demonstrated that the school has the faculty and staff to support their current 479 students. However, the applicant indicated as the projected enrollment increases, they will include in the school budget other positions such as a Community Outreach and Social Worker, an ELL teacher and a certified AG teacher. | | | 11 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | | | **Page** |
| No weaknesses noted. | | | N/A |

| C.3 Describe the school's marketing and recruiting plan, with an emphasis on strategies to provide outreach to the families of educationally disadvantaged students, including efforts to overcome any potential language barriers. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Compelling student outreach plan that includes community, family, and student involvement, and that is realistic and likely to foster student retention and community support.<br>• Emphasis on strategies that will provide equal access to educationally disadvantaged students. | | | |
| **Points Possible:** | 5 | **Points Earned:** | 5 |
| **Strengths** | | | **Page** |
| The applicant provided a clear plan for marketing and recruiting students and families. The plan includes a focus on geographically targeting four counties, such as Henderson, Rutherford, Polk and McDowell. The applicant will use digital advertising as well as radio. The marketing plan will include information in English and Spanish. | | | 12 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | | | **Page** |
| No weaknesses noted. | | | N/A |

| C.4 Describe how the school currently does or will provide a transportation plan that accommodates and supports educationally disadvantaged students. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Clear description of transportation plan that includes anticipated routes, extracurricular activities, before- and after-school care, etc.<br>• Description of how the school will arrange transportation for special needs students where necessary.<br>• Clear articulation of how the proposed plan will eliminate transportation barriers for educationally disadvantaged students. | | | |
| **Points Possible:** | 5 | **Points Earned:** | 5 |
| **Strengths** | | | **Page** |
| The applicant provided an in-depth plan for transportation that shows a commitment to eliminating transportation as a barrier to enrollment. The applicant currently offers transportation and has 10 buses and 17 cluster stops that pick up over 70% of the student population. The grant will provide 3 more buses that will specifically address the geographical gap in the rural area. The buses will specifically provide transportation in areas where economically disadvantaged students live. A local church has agreed to let them use the church parking lot as a cluster stop. Transportation will be provided for students who want to participant in after school activities. | | | 13 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | | | **Page** |
| No weaknesses noted. | | | N/A |

| C.5 Describe how the school currently does or will provide a school lunch plan that accommodates and supports educationally disadvantaged students. Provide information about participation in the National School Lunch Program or a comparable, comprehensive lunch program. |
|---|
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• A clear description of how the school will offer food service to all students, adhering to all nutritional guidelines.<br>• Specific strategies to ensure educationally disadvantaged students receive daily meals and are not identifiable as qualifying for free or reduced-price lunch. |

- A plan to collect free and reduced-price lunch information, including procedures to receive reimbursement.

| Points Possible: | 5 | Points Earned: | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|

| Strengths | Page |
|---|---|
| The applicant clearly demonstrated that currently all students have an opportunity to get breakfast, lunch and a snack through partnerships. The applicant indicated that the county is considered a NC Food Insecurity area and 26.40% of students live in poverty. The school operated two food closets and students can take home week-end food supplements. While there are opportunities for each child to get meals, the applicant realizes that the addition of more economically disadvantaged students may increase their need to seek the USDA program. | 13 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | **Page** |
| No weaknesses noted. | N/A |

C.6 Describe how the school's professional development plan supports and is tailored to the development of educationally disadvantaged students.

Characteristics of a strong response:

- Professional development standards, opportunities, leadership, and calendar/scheduling effectively support the education program and are likely to maximize success in improving student achievement, particularly for educationally disadvantaged students.
- Thoughtful plan for professional development in the areas of special education, English learners, and serving low-income students, including implementation of IEP's or personalized learning plans, discipline, and communication with families.

| Points Possible: | 5 | Points Earned: | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|

| Strengths | Page |
|---|---|
| The applicant provided clear plans for ensuring the staff has sufficient professional development throughout the year. | 14 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | **Page** |
| No weaknesses noted. | N/A |

C.7 Describe the school's plan to engage families and implement a parent/community advisory council.

Characteristics of a strong response:

- Clear plan for informing and educating parents on school policies, procedures, and programming.
- A sound and compelling plan for engaging parents and community partners in the design and life of the school through the advisory council, including recruitment strategies, duties, and authority.

| Points Possible: | 5 | Points Earned: | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|

| Strengths | Page |
|---|---|
| The applicant clearly demonstrated that the school is proposing to develop the Parent Advisory Council. All parents will have equal opportunities to participate. | 14 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | **Page** |

| | |
|---|---|
| No weaknesses noted. | N/A |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Application Narrative Total** *(70 points possible)*: | 69 |

## Section III – Application Narrative (cont.)

| D. Student Transition Planning | |
|---|---|
| Outline the proposed Student Transition Committee and Student Transition Plan. | |
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Clear and specific plan to recruit, develop, and retain a Student Transition Committee.<br>• Comprehensive Student Transition Plan that outlines timelines, communication strategies, clear transition and closure plans, and strategies for informing families of their options. | |
| **Status:** | Complete ☐ Incomplete ☐ |
| **Strengths** | **Page** |
| Not applicable. | N/A |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | **Page** |
| Not applicable. | N/A |

## Section IV – Budget, Budget Narrative, and Logic Model

| A. Budget | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Complete a proposed budget outlining anticipated costs for the duration of the subgrant period. | | | |
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Outlines complete, realistic, and viable costs for the duration of the grant period.<br>• All operational costs and major expenditures are accounted for and are realistic.<br>• There is clear alignment between the budget, budget narrative, and the proposed plan to support educationally disadvantaged students. | | | |
| **Points Possible:** | 15 | **Points Earned:** | 15 |
| **Strengths** | | | **Page** |
| The budget is reasonable and aligned with the proposed program activities expressed in the narrative. The budget outlines complete, realistic, and viable costs for the duration of the grant period. All operational costs and major expenditures are accounted for and are realistic. There is clear alignment between the budget, budget narrative, and the proposed plan to support educationally disadvantaged students. | | | 20-26 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | | | **Page** |
| No weaknesses noted. | | | N/A |

| B. Budget Narrative | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Complete a budget narrative explaining anticipated costs for the duration of the subgrant period. | | | |
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Clearly explains reasonable, well-supported cost assumptions anticipated for the duration of the grant.<br>• Demonstrates financial viability beyond the expiration of the grant period.<br>• There is clear alignment between the budget, budget narrative, and the proposed plan to support educationally disadvantaged students. | | | |
| **Points Possible:** | 10 | **Points Earned:** | 10 |
| **Strengths** | | | **Page** |
| There is clear alignment between the budget, budget narrative, and the proposed plan to support educationally disadvantaged students. | | | 20-26 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | | | **Page** |
| No weaknesses noted. | | | N/A |

| C. Logic Model | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Complete a Logic Model demonstrating how actions and expenditures are expected to lead to specific outcomes. | | | |
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Clearly articulates how actions and expenditures are expected to lead to specific outcomes.<br>• Aligns clearly and directly to the application narrative. | | | |
| **Points Possible:** | 5 | **Points Earned:** | 5 |
| **Strengths** | | | **Page** |

| | |
|---|---|
| The logic model is clearly aligned with the program goals and objectives. The logic model is reflective of the inputs, outputs and outcomes espoused in the SMART Goals. | 21 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | **Page** |
| No weaknesses noted. | N/A |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Budget, Budget Narrative, and Logic Model Total** *(30 points possible)*: | 30 |

## Section V – Competitive Preference Standards

| Opening, expanding, or replicating a school in a rural or underserved urban area (i.e. without a high-quality school within fifteen (15) miles). | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Points Possible:** | 3 | **Points Earned:** | 0 |
| **Comments (if applicable)** | | | **Page** |
| Not applicable. | | | N/A |

| Increasing the racial and ethnic diversity in their new, expanded, or replicated school. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Points Possible:** | 3 | **Points Earned:** | 3 |
| **Comments (if applicable)** | | | **Page** |
| Will expand school to increase racial and ethnic diversity. | | | 2 |

| The inclusion of high school (9-12) grade levels. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Points Possible:** | 3 | **Points Earned:** | 3 |
| **Comments (if applicable)** | | | **Page** |
| The school will include 9-12 grades. | | | 3 |

| Develop or manage a charter school focused on dropout recovery and academic reentry. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Points Possible:** | 3 | **Points Earned:** | 0 |
| **Comments (if applicable)** | | | **Page** |
| Not applicable. | | | N/A |

| **Competitive Preference Standards Total** *(12 points possible)*: | 6 |
|---|---|

## Section VI – Priority Consideration Status

| | |
|---|---|
| Currently serve a forty percent (40%) or higher economically disadvantaged population. | Yes ☐ No ☒ |
| **Comments (if applicable)** | **Page** |
| Not applicable. | |
| Economically disadvantaged, English learners, and students with disabilities have proficiency rates higher than the state average for their subgroup. | Yes ☒ No ☐ |
| **Comments (if applicable)** | **Page** |
| According to the NC Report Card, all subgroups exceed the state averages. | |
| As evidence of participation in applicable federal programs, have Title I status. | Yes ☒ No ☐ |
| **Comments (if applicable)** | **Page** |
| The school is a Title I school in a Title I County. | |
| Maintained an "A" or "A+NG" SPG, as determined by the NCDPI, and met or exceeded growth, as determined by EVAAS, for three consecutive years prior to the application. | Yes ☐ No ☒ |
| **Comments (if applicable)** | **Page** |
| Not applicable. | |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Priority Consideration Status Total** *(4 standards possible)*: | 2 |

## Section VIII – Certification

| | |
|---|---|
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Application is signed and certified. | |
| **Status:** | Complete ☒ Incomplete ☐ |
| **Comments (if applicable)** | |
| Application is signed and certified. | |

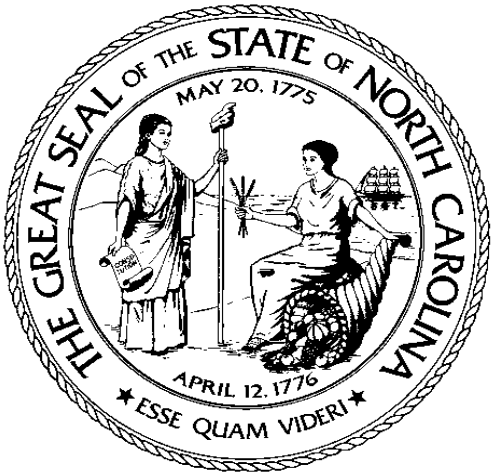
**Summary Ratings**

| General Standards | Status |
|---|---|
| Section I – Application Contact Information | ☒Complete ☐Incomplete |
| Section II – Assurances | ☒Complete ☐Incomplete |
| Section VIII – Certification | ☒Complete ☐Incomplete |
| **Total** *(all sections must be **complete** to pass)* | ☒**Pass** ☐**Fail** |

| Technical Standards | Points Possible | Points Earned |
|---|---|---|
| Section III – Application Narrative | 70 | 69 |
| Section III (D) – Student Transition Plan ( Not Applicable) | ☐Complete ☐Incomplete | |
| Section IV – Budget, Budget Narrative, and Logic Model | 30 | 30 |
| Section V – Competitive Preference Standards | Up to 12 | 6 |
| **Total** *(must receive at least **80 points** to pass)* | **100** | 105 |

| Priority Standards | Standards Possible | Standards Met |
|---|---|---|
| Section VI – Priority Consideration Status | **4** | **2** |

| Overall Application Status | Rating |
|---|---|
| In order to pass, the application must (a) achieve a rating of "Pass" for the General Standards and (b) score at least eighty (80) points on the Technical Standards. The Priority Standards will be used to determine priority if there are more eligible applications than available awards. | ☒**Pass with Priority** |
| | ☒**Pass** |
| | ☐**Fail** |




# North Carolina Advancing Charter Collaboration and Excellence for Student Success (NC ACCESS) Program Subgrant Application Rubric

Applicant: **Lake Lure**

Reviewer Name: **Darian C. Jones, Ph. D.**

Updated September 2019

## Overview of the NC ACCESS Subgrant Program

In 2018, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) was awarded a Public Charter Schools Program (CSP) grant from the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) of approximately $26,600,000. The CSP grant will be used to implement the North Carolina Advancing Charter Collaboration and Excellence for Student Success (NC ACCESS) Program to:

1. Increase the number of educationally disadvantaged students attending high-quality charter schools and expand the number of high-quality charter schools available to educationally disadvantaged students;
2. Develop a cohort of 100 charter school leaders who can develop and demonstrate best practices in serving educationally disadvantaged students; and
3. Broadly disseminate best practices in serving educationally disadvantaged students and foster collaboration in the charter school community and between charter schools and traditional public schools.

The NC ACCESS Program and CSP define educationally disadvantaged students as students who are economically disadvantaged, homeless or unaccompanied youth, English learners, students with disabilities, immigrant students, and migrant students.

The NC ACCESS program has allocated the majority of the CSP funds to advance Priority 1 listed above through school-level subgrants, though subgrant recipients must also demonstrate a desire to share best practices with both charter schools and traditional public schools. For each of the five (5) years of the federal CSP award, the NC ACCESS Program will run a competitive subgrant competition and award subgrants to North Carolina charter schools that propose a comprehensive plan to increase the number of educationally disadvantaged students attending high quality charter schools and expand the number of high quality charter schools available to educationally disadvantaged students.

## Ratings and Criteria

The NC ACCESS Subgrant Program is a competitive application process designed to award funding for schools that propose to serve an increased number of educationally disadvantaged students. Each subgrant application will be reviewed by a team of NC ACCESS Program team members and external evaluators. All evaluations will be considered, and a recommendation will be made to the Charter School Advisory Board (CSAB). The CSAB will take all recommendations, application reviews, and due diligence into account and make a recommendation for the approval of subgrants to the State Board of Education (State Board). The State Board will determine the final approval of all subgrant awards.

A subgrant application that merits a recommendation for approval should present a clear, realistic picture of how the school expects to successfully implement the proposed plans to increase the number of educationally disadvantaged students attending high quality charter schools and expand the number of high quality charter schools available to educationally disadvantaged students. In addition to meeting the criteria that are specific to each section, each part of the proposal should align with the overall mission, budget, and goals of the application and NC ACCESS Program.

Recommendations for approval or denial will be based on the completed application which includes school information, signed assurances, enrollment projections, application narrative, budget, budget narrative, logic model, and appendices. The enrollment projections, application narrative, budget, budget

narrative, and logic model are scored out of a possible one hundred (100) points. Applicants must score are least eighty (80) points to meet the standard.

Applications that do not meet standard in all sections as evidenced by the summary review ratings will be deemed not ready for approval.

## Instructions for Reviewers

Reviewers should complete each rubric section based on the evidence provided in the application. There are seven (7) total rating sections to complete:

I. Applicant Contact Information
II. Signed Assurances
III. Application Narrative (70 points possible)
    a. Enrollment Projections (10 points)
    b. Education Plan (30 points)
    c. Operations Plan (30 points)
    d. If applicable, a school closure plan (check for completeness)
IV. Budget, Budget Narrative, and Logic Model (30 points possible)
    a. Budget (15 points)
    b. Budget Narrative (10 points)
    c. Logic Model (5 points)
V. Competitive Preference Standards (optional; up to 12 points possible)
VI. Priority Consideration Status (optional; up to 4 standards possible)
VII. Certification
VIII. Appendices (there is no scoring associated with section VII; information will supplement sections III, IV, V, and VI)

Please note that there may be appendices to support information provided in the above sections. When evaluating an application, reviewers should both rate each section and provide comments, if applicable. Reviewers should look for responses that reflect a thorough understanding of key issues and barriers for educationally disadvantaged students. Responses should clearly align with the mission, goals, and budget of the proposed plan. Each response should include specific and accurate information that shows thorough preparation and understanding of school operations and serving educationally disadvantaged students. Reviewers should use objective language and complete sentences in their comments on the strengths and weaknesses/areas of concern of each section of the application. The comments and evidence provided are as significant as the rating. Below are examples of specific and detailed comments:

**Strengths of the application:**

- "The plan aligns with the overall mission and goals because…"
- "The education and discipline plans are research based and proven effective with the targeted population of students because…"
- "The lunch program is comparable to the National School Lunch Program and will support an educationally disadvantaged population by..."
- "The marketing plan clearly outlines how the school will recruit and enroll a higher educationally disadvantaged population by…"
- "The budget uses sound assumptions and is consistent with the goals of the proposed plan."

**Weaknesses/areas of concern of the application:**

- "The curriculum and school calendar do not align with the mission and goals because . . ."
- "The discipline plan does not include provisions for students with disabilities."
- "The budget assumptions include the unallowable use of funds for construction."
- "The plan proposes two buses, but there is no accompanying line item in the budget that allocates funds for purchasing buses."

Once all seven (7) rating sections are scored individually, the evaluator should complete the summary ratings page with all final ratings and scores. In order to pass the review, applicants must (a) meet all criteria in sections (I), (II), and (VII); and (b) score at least eighty (80) combined points between sections (III), (IV), and (V). Section (VI) will be used to determine priority if there are more eligible applications than subgrant awards. The CSAB will make a final recommendation to the State Board on subgrant awards. The State Board will determine the final approval of all subgrant awards.

**Please remember that all documents, including your individual review, will be available to the public.*

**Application Scoring Rubric**

## Section I – Application Contact Information

| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• All applicant contact information is complete and accurate. | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Status:** | Complete ☒ | Incomplete ☐ |
| **Comments (if applicable)** | | |
| Applicant contact information is complete and accurate. | | |

## Section II – Assurances

| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Assurances are signed. | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Status:** | Complete ☒ | Incomplete ☐ |
| **Comments (if applicable)** | | |
| Assurances are signed. | | |

## Section III – Application Narrative

| A. Enrollment Projections | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| A.1 Explain the rationale behind the projected enrollment figures; specifically, how the projected numbers are both ambitious and feasible. | | | |
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Enrollment projections are complete, ambitious, and realistic.<br>• Enrollment projections demonstrate a significant increase of educationally disadvantaged students, including economically disadvantaged, homeless or unaccompanied youth, English learners, students with disabilities, immigrant students, and migrant students. | | | |
| **Points Possible:** | 5 | **Points Earned:** | 5 |
| **Strengths** | | | **Page** |
| The enrollment projections are robust and ambitious given the surrounding LEA. Projections over the length of grant indicate adding 153 with 90 of them being ED – this represents 66% of growth. The plan speaks of a collaboration with the LEA in working to mitigate any challenges in impact in growth. | | | 17 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | | | **Page** |
| No weaknesses noted. | | | N/A |

| A.2 Describe how the school plans to implement a weighted lottery. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Clear description of the process and mechanism for implementing a weighted lottery.<br>• Clearly articulated subgroup category weights and/or enrollment percentage goals.<br>• Rationale for the applied weights are reasonable and justified. | | | |
| **Points Possible:** | 5 | **Points Earned:** | 5 |
| **Strengths** | | | **Page** |
| There is a clear description of the process and two times weight for the lottery for the ED students. The plan includes a breakdown of present ED subgroups and a need to expand services. | | | 18 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | | | **Page** |
| No weaknesses noted. | | | N/A |

## Section III – Application Narrative (cont.)

| B. Education Plan | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| B.1 Provide a General Education Provision Act (GEPA) statement demonstrating how the school has or will eliminate any and all barriers to enrollment for educationally disadvantaged students. | | | |
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Statement clearly articulates the school's desire and plan to eliminate any and all barriers to enrollment for all students, especially educationally disadvantaged students. | | | |
| **Points Possible:** | 2 | **Points Earned:** | 2 |
| **Strengths** | | | **Page** |
| The plan is comprehensive and hits all key indicators for a successful mitigation of barriers, varying meeting times, transportation, translation, and person to person. | | | 18-19 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | | | **Page** |
| No weaknesses noted. | | | N/A |

| B.2 Provide at least three (3) school-specific subgrant program goals. Subgrant goals must be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, rigorous, and time-bound). | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• All goals are specific, measurable, achievable, rigorous, and time-bound.<br>• Goals are aligned to the NC ACCESS Program and activities in the subgrant application. | | | |
| **Points Possible:** | 3 | **Points Earned:** | 3 |
| **Strengths** | | | **Page** |
| The plan includes 4 specific goals aimed directly at the ED population in raising achievement and minimizing discipline referrals. | | | 19 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | | | **Page** |
| No weaknesses noted. | | | N/A |

| B.3 Describe how the school's academic program is or will be specifically tailored to meet the needs of educationally disadvantaged students. Include specific strategies the charter school currently uses or plans to use to serve educationally disadvantaged students. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Clear and comprehensive description of the strategies being utilized to serve educationally disadvantaged students, especially intervention, differentiation, and support services.<br>• A robust and quality curriculum overview, supported by research, with a plan for implementation.<br>• Evidence the proposed academic plan will be appropriate and effective for growing all students while at the same time closing achievement gaps. | | | |
| **Points Possible:** | 10 | **Points Earned:** | 10 |
| **Strengths** | | | **Page** |
| The plan was clear and comprehensive of all subgroups within the ED population for what services are provided and what needs to be extended upon. The plan provided a very | | | 20-23 |

| | |
|---|---|
| thorough curriculum review with relevant research specific to the targeted student population. | |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | **Page** |
| No weaknesses noted. | N/A |

B.4 Explain how the charter school's education plan compares to or differs from that of the local LEA(s).

Characteristics of a strong response:

- Clear articulation of the services and programs offered by the school that are similar and/or different from offerings in the local LEA.

| **Points Possible:** | 5 | **Points Earned:** | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|

| **Strengths** | **Page** |
|---|---|
| The plan provides a thorough review in approaches to learn and delivery that differ from the LEA. The plan offers a detailed description of enrichment and support options that are different in kind, expectation, and intensity from the LEA. | 24 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | **Page** |
| No weaknesses noted. | N/A |

B.5 Describe the school's discipline and school climate philosophy and how it supports the development of educationally disadvantaged students.

Characteristics of a strong response:

- A clear vision for school culture or climate that will promote a positive and supportive academic environment and is inclusive for a diverse student body.
- Coherent plan for creating and/or sustaining the intended culture for students, teachers, administrators, and parents.
- Discipline plan that has clear policies and procedures and has thoughtful consideration of the needs and rights of educationally disadvantaged students, especially students with disabilities.

| **Points Possible:** | 5 | **Points Earned:** | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|

| **Strengths** | **Page** |
|---|---|
| The plan provides a description of what is being done, the need, and the type of support and process for discipline. The plan indicates an awareness to get better and the corrective actions taken in preparation for that adult growth. The plan indicates a model that is in alignment with the vision for the school, as well as liberating the desired character traits from specific ED students. The plan is consistent with forward thinking and sensitivity to disparities in responding to behavioral challenges. | 25 and Appendix E |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | **Page** |
| No weaknesses noted. | N/A |

B.6 Describe how the school's calendar supports the development of educationally disadvantaged students.

Characteristics of a strong response:

- Calendar and schedule support implementation of the academic plan, including supporting the development of educationally disadvantaged students and aligning with the mission, vision, and goals of the school.

| **Points Possible:** | 5 | **Points Earned:** | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|

| **Strengths** | **Page** |
|---|---|
| The plan provides robust detail about the calendar, schedule, and awareness of impact on Ed population. The plan includes a summer program utilizing the buses purchased with the grant funding. The plan indicates almost 100 more instructional hours than the local LEA and state requirements. | 25-26 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | **Page** |
| No weaknesses noted. | N/A |

## Section III – Application Narrative (cont.)

| C. Operations Plan | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| C.1 Detail any partnerships the charter school maintains or plans to develop to support educationally disadvantaged students, including a description of the roles and responsibilities of the applicant, partner organizations, and CMO/EMO, including the administrative and contractual roles and responsibilities of such partners. | | | |
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Clear delineation of roles and responsibilities between the school and CMO/EMO.<br>• Articulation of budgetary and decision-making autonomy of the board or directors.<br>• Evidence of contractual agreements provided in appendix A. | | | |
| **Points Possible:** | 2 | **Points Earned:** | 2 |
| **Strengths** | | | **Page** |
| The plan is clear and provides contractual evidence and descriptions of partnerships specifically nurtured to support ED students and mitigate barriers for success. | | | 26 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | | | **Page** |
| No weaknesses noted. | | | N/A |

| C.2 Describe how the school's staffing structure, capacity, and diversity will be sufficient to meet the needs of all students, particularly educationally disadvantaged students. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Staffing levels for each year are robust and aligned with the educational program and conducive to the school's success.<br>• There is clear capacity to support the specialized needs of students, particularly students with disabilities and English learners.<br>• Comprehensive plan to support student's non-academic needs, including through counselors, behavior specialists, psychologists, etc.<br>• Clear plan to recruit, retain, and support a diverse teaching staff. | | | |
| **Points Possible:** | 3 | **Points Earned:** | 3 |
| **Strengths** | | | **Page** |
| The plan demonstrates an awareness of opportunities to grow in relation to staff being more representative of student population. The plan indicates a school funded increase and acquisition of support staff targeted directly at ED populations with ELL teacher, EC assistants, and SW. The plan includes a recruitment plan. | | | 27 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | | | **Page** |
| No weaknesses noted. | | | N/A |

| C.3 Describe the school's marketing and recruiting plan, with an emphasis on strategies to provide outreach to the families of educationally disadvantaged students, including efforts to overcome any potential language barriers. |
|---|
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Compelling student outreach plan that includes community, family, and student involvement, and that is realistic and likely to foster student retention and community support. |

- Emphasis on strategies that will provide equal access to educationally disadvantaged students.

| Points Possible: | 5 | Points Earned: | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|

| Strengths | Page |
|---|---|
| The plan is comprehensive and has already begun. The plan indicates 6 specific strategies and goals related to marketing. | 28 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | **Page** |
| No weaknesses noted. | N/A |

C.4 Describe how the school currently does or will provide a transportation plan that accommodates and supports educationally disadvantaged students.

Characteristics of a strong response:

- Clear description of transportation plan that includes anticipated routes, extracurricular activities, before- and after-school care, etc.
- Description of how the school will arrange transportation for special needs students where necessary.
- Clear articulation of how the proposed plan will eliminate transportation barriers for educationally disadvantaged students.

| Points Possible: | 5 | Points Earned: | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|

| Strengths | Page |
|---|---|
| The plan indicates the presence of 10 buses with 17 cluster stops, and the grant providing an additional 3 buses which will greatly expand the number of cluster stops. The plan indicates that despite being central to 4 counties, the rural nature of the area makes transportation a huge limiting factor for ED populations and they are aware and working on it. The plan indicates the development of a ridesharing program and adding stops at area hotels and motels as they are aware of low-income families residing in this communities. The administration has worked to provide enrichment opportunities for students that are not inaccessible due to transportation. | 29 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | **Page** |
| No weaknesses noted. | N/A |

C.5 Describe how the school currently does or will provide a school lunch plan that accommodates and supports educationally disadvantaged students. Provide information about participation in the National School Lunch Program or a comparable, comprehensive lunch program.

Characteristics of a strong response:

- A clear description of how the school will offer food service to all students, adhering to all nutritional guidelines.
- Specific strategies to ensure educationally disadvantaged students receive daily meals and are not identifiable as qualifying for free or reduced-price lunch.
- A plan to collect free and reduced-price lunch information, including procedures to receive reimbursement.

| Points Possible: | 5 | Points Earned: | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|

| Strengths | Page |
|---|---|
| The BOD has made Food Service a priority in the strategic plan long-term. | 30 |

| | |
|---|---|
| The plan's research indicates the LEA ranks 86 out of 100 in food scarcity in the state, and through partnerships, they provide free breakfast, lunch, and snacks to students. The plan also indicates they have two food closets for students and families. | |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | **Page** |
| No weaknesses noted. | N/A |

C.6 Describe how the school's professional development plan supports and is tailored to the development of educationally disadvantaged students.

Characteristics of a strong response:

- Professional development standards, opportunities, leadership, and calendar/scheduling effectively support the education program and are likely to maximize success in improving student achievement, particularly for educationally disadvantaged students.
- Thoughtful plan for professional development in the areas of special education, English learners, and serving low-income students, including implementation of IEP's or personalized learning plans, discipline, and communication with families.

| **Points Possible:** | 5 | **Points Earned:** | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|

| **Strengths** | **Page** |
|---|---|
| The plan provides comprehensive details of the type of PD that was provided this past year, and is alignment with the vision of the school and the student population. The plan indicates three key grant funding trainings desired this year by the staff to include restorative justice, mindfulness, and SEL. | 31 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | **Page** |
| No weaknesses noted. | N/A |

C.7 Describe the school's plan to engage families and implement a parent/community advisory council.

Characteristics of a strong response:

- Clear plan for informing and educating parents on school policies, procedures, and programming.
- A sound and compelling plan for engaging parents and community partners in the design and life of the school through the advisory council, including recruitment strategies, duties, and authority.

| **Points Possible:** | 5 | **Points Earned:** | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|

| **Strengths** | **Page** |
|---|---|
| The plan indicates the research to support the development of a PCAC which will make reports to the BOD, and be responsible in part for outreach of services and volunteers to support the ED students. | 31 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | **Page** |
| No weaknesses noted. | N/A |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Application Narrative Total** *(70 points possible)*: | 70 |

## Section III – Application Narrative (cont.)

| D. Student Transition Planning | |
|---|---|
| Outline the proposed Student Transition Committee and Student Transition Plan. | |
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Clear and specific plan to recruit, develop, and retain a Student Transition Committee.<br>• Comprehensive Student Transition Plan that outlines timelines, communication strategies, clear transition and closure plans, and strategies for informing families of their options. | |
| **Status:** | Complete ☐ Incomplete ☐ |
| **Strengths** | **Page** |
| Not applicable. | N/A |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | **Page** |
| Not applicable. | N/A |

## Section IV – Budget, Budget Narrative, and Logic Model

| A. Budget | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Complete a proposed budget outlining anticipated costs for the duration of the subgrant period. | | | |
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Outlines complete, realistic, and viable costs for the duration of the grant period.<br>• All operational costs and major expenditures are accounted for and are realistic.<br>• There is clear alignment between the budget, budget narrative, and the proposed plan to support educationally disadvantaged students. | | | |
| **Points Possible:** | 15 | **Points Earned:** | 15 |
| **Strengths** | | | **Page** |
| There is a clear alignment between the budget, the budget narrative, and the proposed plan to support the vision and ED students. The budget is complete, viable, and with proper implementation over the course of the grant, and sustainable afterwards. | | | |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | | | **Page** |
| No weaknesses noted. | | | N/A |

| B. Budget Narrative | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Complete a budget narrative explaining anticipated costs for the duration of the subgrant period. | | | |
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Clearly explains reasonable, well-supported cost assumptions anticipated for the duration of the grant.<br>• Demonstrates financial viability beyond the expiration of the grant period.<br>• There is clear alignment between the budget, budget narrative, and the proposed plan to support educationally disadvantaged students. | | | |
| **Points Possible:** | 10 | **Points Earned:** | 10 |
| **Strengths** | | | **Page** |
| The budget narrative was comprehensive and detailed aligning directly to the supports for the ED population, but towards a long term vision of the school as well. The plan is supported by documented research and strategic planning. | | | 31-37 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | | | **Page** |
| No weaknesses noted. | | | N/A |

| C. Logic Model | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Complete a Logic Model demonstrating how actions and expenditures are expected to lead to specific outcomes. | | | |
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Clearly articulates how actions and expenditures are expected to lead to specific outcomes.<br>• Aligns clearly and directly to the application narrative. | | | |
| **Points Possible:** | 5 | **Points Earned:** | 5 |
| **Strengths** | | | **Page** |

| | |
|---|---|
| The LM has the appropriate an aligned inputs that are predictive of the expected outcomes. | 38 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | **Page** |
| No weaknesses noted. | N/A |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Budget, Budget Narrative, and Logic Model Total** *(30 points possible)*: | 30 |

## Section V – Competitive Preference Standards

| Opening, expanding, or replicating a school in a rural or underserved urban area (i.e. without a high-quality school within fifteen (15) miles). | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Points Possible:** | 3 | **Points Earned:** | 0 |
| **Comments (if applicable)** | | | **Page** |
| | | | |

| Increasing the racial and ethnic diversity in their new, expanded, or replicated school. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Points Possible:** | 3 | **Points Earned:** | 3 |
| **Comments (if applicable)** | | | **Page** |
| | | | |

| The inclusion of high school (9-12) grade levels. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Points Possible:** | 3 | **Points Earned:** | 3 |
| **Comments (if applicable)** | | | **Page** |
| | | | |

| Develop or manage a charter school focused on dropout recovery and academic reentry. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Points Possible:** | 3 | **Points Earned:** | 0 |
| **Comments (if applicable)** | | | **Page** |
| | | | |

| **Competitive Preference Standards Total** *(12 points possible)*: | 6 |
|---|---|

## Section VI – Priority Consideration Status

| | |
|---|---|
| Currently serve a forty percent (40%) or higher economically disadvantaged population. | Yes ☐ No ☒ |
| **Comments (if applicable)** | **Page** |
| | |
| Economically disadvantaged, English learners, and students with disabilities have proficiency rates higher than the state average for their subgroup. | Yes ☒ No ☐ |
| **Comments (if applicable)** | **Page** |
| | |
| As evidence of participation in applicable federal programs, have Title I status. | Yes ☒ No ☐ |
| **Comments (if applicable)** | **Page** |
| | |
| Maintained an "A" or "A+NG" SPG, as determined by the NCDPI, and met or exceeded growth, as determined by EVAAS, for three consecutive years prior to the application. | Yes ☐ No ☒ |
| **Comments (if applicable)** | **Page** |
| | |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Priority Consideration Status Total** *(4 standards possible)*: | 2 |

## Section VIII – Certification

| | |
|---|---|
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Application is signed and certified. | |
| **Status:** | Complete ☒ Incomplete ☐ |
| **Comments (if applicable)** | |
| Application is signed and certified. | |

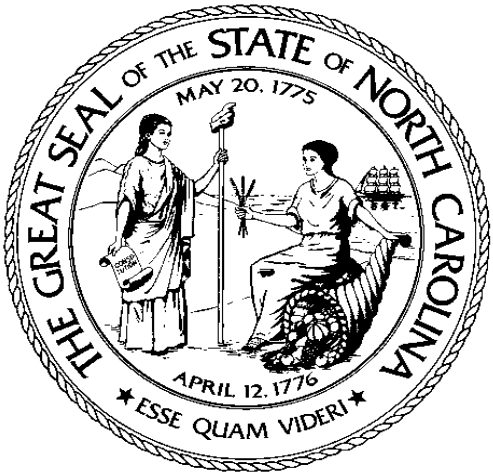
**Summary Ratings**

| General Standards | Status |
|---|---|
| Section I – Application Contact Information | ☒Complete ☐Incomplete |
| Section II – Assurances | ☒Complete ☐Incomplete |
| Section VIII – Certification | ☒Complete ☐Incomplete |
| **Total** *(all sections must be **complete** to pass)* | ☒**Pass** ☐**Fail** |

| Technical Standards | Points Possible | Points Earned |
|---|---|---|
| Section III – Application Narrative | 70 | 70 |
| Section III (D) – Student Transition Plan | ☐Complete ☐Incomplete | |
| Section IV – Budget, Budget Narrative, and Logic Model | 30 | 30 |
| Section V – Competitive Preference Standards | Up to 12 | 6 |
| **Total** *(must receive at least **80 points** to pass)* | **100** | 106 |

| Priority Standards | Standards Possible | Standards Met |
|---|---|---|
| Section VI – Priority Consideration Status | **4** | **2** |

| Overall Application Status | Rating |
|---|---|
| In order to pass, the application must (a) achieve a rating of "Pass" for the General Standards and (b) score at least eighty (80) points on the Technical Standards. The Priority Standards will be used to determine priority if there are more eligible applications than available awards. | ☒**Pass with Priority** |
| | ☐**Pass** |
| | ☐**Fail** |




# North Carolina Advancing Charter Collaboration and Excellence for Student Success (NC ACCESS) Program Subgrant Application Rubric

Applicant: **Lake Lure Classical Academy**

Reviewer Name: **Danielle Allen**

Updated September 2019

## Overview of the NC ACCESS Subgrant Program

In 2018, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) was awarded a Public Charter Schools Program (CSP) grant from the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) of approximately $26,600,000. The CSP grant will be used to implement the North Carolina Advancing Charter Collaboration and Excellence for Student Success (NC ACCESS) Program to:

1. Increase the number of educationally disadvantaged students attending high-quality charter schools and expand the number of high-quality charter schools available to educationally disadvantaged students;
2. Develop a cohort of 100 charter school leaders who can develop and demonstrate best practices in serving educationally disadvantaged students; and
3. Broadly disseminate best practices in serving educationally disadvantaged students and foster collaboration in the charter school community and between charter schools and traditional public schools.

The NC ACCESS Program and CSP define educationally disadvantaged students as students who are economically disadvantaged, homeless or unaccompanied youth, English learners, students with disabilities, immigrant students, and migrant students.

The NC ACCESS program has allocated the majority of the CSP funds to advance Priority 1 listed above through school-level subgrants, though subgrant recipients must also demonstrate a desire to share best practices with both charter schools and traditional public schools. For each of the five (5) years of the federal CSP award, the NC ACCESS Program will run a competitive subgrant competition and award subgrants to North Carolina charter schools that propose a comprehensive plan to increase the number of educationally disadvantaged students attending high quality charter schools and expand the number of high quality charter schools available to educationally disadvantaged students.

## Ratings and Criteria

The NC ACCESS Subgrant Program is a competitive application process designed to award funding for schools that propose to serve an increased number of educationally disadvantaged students. Each subgrant application will be reviewed by a team of NC ACCESS Program team members and external evaluators. All evaluations will be considered, and a recommendation will be made to the Charter School Advisory Board (CSAB). The CSAB will take all recommendations, application reviews, and due diligence into account and make a recommendation for the approval of subgrants to the State Board of Education (State Board). The State Board will determine the final approval of all subgrant awards.

A subgrant application that merits a recommendation for approval should present a clear, realistic picture of how the school expects to successfully implement the proposed plans to increase the number of educationally disadvantaged students attending high quality charter schools and expand the number of high quality charter schools available to educationally disadvantaged students. In addition to meeting the criteria that are specific to each section, each part of the proposal should align with the overall mission, budget, and goals of the application and NC ACCESS Program.

Recommendations for approval or denial will be based on the completed application which includes school information, signed assurances, enrollment projections, application narrative, budget, budget narrative, logic model, and appendices. The enrollment projections, application narrative, budget, budget

narrative, and logic model are scored out of a possible one hundred (100) points. Applicants must score are least eighty (80) points to meet the standard.

Applications that do not meet standard in all sections as evidenced by the summary review ratings will be deemed not ready for approval.

## Instructions for Reviewers

Reviewers should complete each rubric section based on the evidence provided in the application. There are seven (7) total rating sections to complete:

I. Applicant Contact Information
II. Signed Assurances
III. Application Narrative (70 points possible)
    a. Enrollment Projections (10 points)
    b. Education Plan (30 points)
    c. Operations Plan (30 points)
    d. If applicable, a school closure plan (check for completeness)
IV. Budget, Budget Narrative, and Logic Model (30 points possible)
    a. Budget (15 points)
    b. Budget Narrative (10 points)
    c. Logic Model (5 points)
V. Competitive Preference Standards (optional; up to 12 points possible)
VI. Priority Consideration Status (optional; up to 4 standards possible)
VII. Certification
VIII. Appendices (there is no scoring associated with section VII; information will supplement sections III, IV, V, and VI)

Please note that there may be appendices to support information provided in the above sections. When evaluating an application, reviewers should both rate each section and provide comments, if applicable. Reviewers should look for responses that reflect a thorough understanding of key issues and barriers for educationally disadvantaged students. Responses should clearly align with the mission, goals, and budget of the proposed plan. Each response should include specific and accurate information that shows thorough preparation and understanding of school operations and serving educationally disadvantaged students. Reviewers should use objective language and complete sentences in their comments on the strengths and weaknesses/areas of concern of each section of the application. The comments and evidence provided are as significant as the rating. Below are examples of specific and detailed comments:

**Strengths of the application:**

- "The plan aligns with the overall mission and goals because…"
- "The education and discipline plans are research based and proven effective with the targeted population of students because…"
- "The lunch program is comparable to the National School Lunch Program and will support an educationally disadvantaged population by..."
- "The marketing plan clearly outlines how the school will recruit and enroll a higher educationally disadvantaged population by…"
- "The budget uses sound assumptions and is consistent with the goals of the proposed plan."

**Weaknesses/areas of concern of the application:**

- "The curriculum and school calendar do not align with the mission and goals because . . ."
- "The discipline plan does not include provisions for students with disabilities."
- "The budget assumptions include the unallowable use of funds for construction."
- "The plan proposes two buses, but there is no accompanying line item in the budget that allocates funds for purchasing buses."

Once all seven (7) rating sections are scored individually, the evaluator should complete the summary ratings page with all final ratings and scores. In order to pass the review, applicants must (a) meet all criteria in sections (I), (II), and (VII); and (b) score at least eighty (80) combined points between sections (III), (IV), and (V). Section (VI) will be used to determine priority if there are more eligible applications than subgrant awards. The CSAB will make a final recommendation to the State Board on subgrant awards. The State Board will determine the final approval of all subgrant awards.

**Please remember that all documents, including your individual review, will be available to the public.*

## Application Scoring Rubric

### Section I – Application Contact Information

| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• All applicant contact information is complete and accurate. | |
|---|---|
| **Status:** | Complete ☐ Incomplete ☒ |
| **Comments (if applicable)** | |
| Doesn't list name of non-profit under which the school is operated. | |

### Section II – Assurances

| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Assurances are signed. | |
|---|---|
| **Status:** | Complete ☒ Incomplete ☐ |
| **Comments (if applicable)** | |
| Assurances are signed. | |

## Section III – Application Narrative

| A. Enrollment Projections | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| A.1 Explain the rationale behind the projected enrollment figures; specifically, how the projected numbers are both ambitious and feasible. | | | |
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Enrollment projections are complete, ambitious, and realistic.<br>• Enrollment projections demonstrate a significant increase of educationally disadvantaged students, including economically disadvantaged, homeless or unaccompanied youth, English learners, students with disabilities, immigrant students, and migrant students. | | | |
| **Points Possible:** | 5 | **Points Earned:** | 5 |
| **Strengths** | | | **Page** |
| Applicant proposes to increase the ED population from 148 to 170 in year 1 of the grant, an increase of 22 students. The applicant proposes to increase the ED population to 260 within five years. These projections are complete and ambitious, especially given the rural location of the school. ED student enrollment will exceed that of the LEA by 2024-2025. | | | 17 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | | | **Page** |
| The school has shown steady growth while the LEA has experienced a decrease in enrollment over the past ten years. Applicant will need to have a strong recruitment plan to ensure that they will be able to meet these projections. This is not a weakness per se, but an area to which the applicant should pay special attention. | | | 17 |

| A.2 Describe how the school plans to implement a weighted lottery. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Clear description of the process and mechanism for implementing a weighted lottery.<br>• Clearly articulated subgroup category weights and/or enrollment percentage goals.<br>• Rationale for the applied weights are reasonable and justified. | | | |
| **Points Possible:** | 5 | **Points Earned:** | 4 |
| **Strengths** | | | **Page** |
| Applicant proposes to implement 2x weight for ED students. Applicant proposes to use Lotterease to implement weighted lottery. Applicant will provide application in Spanish, as well as a translator to assist parents with the enrollment process. | | | 18 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | | | **Page** |
| Applicant proposes to allow parents to submit applications for the weighted lottery via phone. The desire to eliminate barriers to enrollment is applauded. However, how do they propose to keep families' socioeconomic and other information confidential if it's provided over the phone? This is not a weakness, but a potential trouble spot that the applicant should keep in mind. Will students receive 2x the weight for each ED category they fall into? Will there be multiple lotteries drawn (one weighted, and one not weighted)? Or just one? If the threshold is reached prior to the end of the lottery, will students qualifying as ED still receive additional weight? Many questions remain about the implementation of the weighted lottery. | | | 18 |

## Section III – Application Narrative (cont.)

| B. Education Plan | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| B.1 Provide a General Education Provision Act (GEPA) statement demonstrating how the school has or will eliminate any and all barriers to enrollment for educationally disadvantaged students. | | | |
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Statement clearly articulates the school's desire and plan to eliminate any and all barriers to enrollment for all students, especially educationally disadvantaged students. | | | |
| **Points Possible:** | 2 | **Points Earned:** | 1 |
| **Strengths** | | | **Page** |
| Applicant proposes to schedule events during varying times to accommodate working families; to provide transportation, food, childcare, and translators to eliminate barriers.<br>Applicant proposes to translate communication into languages other than English.<br>Applicant proposes to eliminate barriers to IHEs by partnering with Isothermal Community College. | | | 18 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | | | **Page** |
| Applicant proposes to implement cluster stops to eliminate transportation barriers. Is applicant confident that families will be able to get their student(s) to the cluster stop in order to catch the bus to school? | | | 18 |

| B.2 Provide at least three (3) school-specific subgrant program goals. Subgrant goals must be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, rigorous, and time-bound). | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• All goals are specific, measurable, achievable, rigorous, and time-bound.<br>• Goals are aligned to the NC ACCESS Program and activities in the subgrant application. | | | |
| **Points Possible:** | 3 | **Points Earned:** | 2 |
| **Strengths** | | | **Page** |
| Goals are specific, measurable, and timebound. | | | 19 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | | | **Page** |
| To what does the applicant attribute current parental involvement numbers? To increase from less than 10% to 25% in one year is certainly rigorous, but it is unclear what current practices are contributing to this current level of parent involvement. | | | 19 |

| B.3 Describe how the school's academic program is or will be specifically tailored to meet the needs of educationally disadvantaged students. Include specific strategies the charter school currently uses or plans to use to serve educationally disadvantaged students. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Clear and comprehensive description of the strategies being utilized to serve educationally disadvantaged students, especially intervention, differentiation, and support services.<br>• A robust and quality curriculum overview, supported by research, with a plan for implementation.<br>• Evidence the proposed academic plan will be appropriate and effective for growing all students while at the same time closing achievement gaps. | | | |
| **Points Possible:** | 10 | **Points Earned:** | 7 |

| Strengths | Page |
|---|---|
| School supports whole child instructional model with a focus on reading instruction. School has provided intensive PD on Fountas & Pinnell Leveled Literacy Intervention program. School is providing a personalized education plan for every student and adheres to a MTSS for struggling students. School provides co-teaching and push-in to all K-8 classes as well as high school math and English classes. School provides three pathways to graduation. Applicant proposes to provide stipends for teachers for additional tutoring and transportation for afterschool programs. This portion of the educational plan appears to be specifically tailored to meet the needs of ED students. Teachers have received PD on the impacts of poverty, the socioemotional impacts on learning, and bridging the learning gap for SWD. Applicant has created a Students of Concern team that addresses students' socioemotional needs and provides other wraparound services. | 19-23 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | **Page** |
| Very little about the educational plan is specifically tailored to meet the needs of ED students. Strength appears to be the socioemotional and wraparound supports that the school plans to provide, additional tutoring, and transportation for after school. All other aspects of the education plan appear to be generally suited to the needs of all students, not any particular subgroup. Given the statewide focus on the science of reading (as opposed to earlier models of literacy instruction), how does the school plan to ensure that its teachers are prepared to deliver literacy instruction supported by the most recent research on effective literacy instruction? Applicant proposes using STEM to attract and address the needs of ED students. It's unclear how STEM education is related to the needs of ED students. | 19-23 |

B.4 Explain how the charter school's education plan compares to or differs from that of the local LEA(s).

Characteristics of a strong response:

- Clear articulation of the services and programs offered by the school that are similar and/or different from offerings in the local LEA.

| Points Possible: | 5 | Points Earned: | 4 |
|---|---|---|---|

| Strengths | Page |
|---|---|
| School offers extensive field experiences, after school enrichment, and after school tutoring. HS students take part in creative coursework specific to the Lake Lure ecoregion, and have the opportunity to take courses at Isothermal Community College. School provides elective tracks and extended coursework in areas of interest based on student choice. | 24 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | **Page** |
| Much of the school's education plan is similar to the district. This is not necessarily a weakness. The applicant has fewer devices, fewer book titles, and fewer wireless access points than the district, according to the school report card provided in the appendix. This is concerning. Is the applicant confident that ED students will fare better in their school than in the district? | |

B.5 Describe the school's discipline and school climate philosophy and how it supports the development of educationally disadvantaged students.

Characteristics of a strong response:

- A clear vision for school culture or climate that will promote a positive and supportive academic environment and is inclusive for a diverse student body.
- Coherent plan for creating and/or sustaining the intended culture for students, teachers, administrators, and parents.
- Discipline plan that has clear policies and procedures and has thoughtful consideration of the needs and rights of educationally disadvantaged students, especially students with disabilities.

| **Points Possible:** | 5 | **Points Earned:** | 4 |
|---|---|---|---|

| **Strengths** | **Page** |
|---|---|
| School prioritizes modeling correct behaviors, school expectations, and teaching/reteaching expectations. This is a clear vision for school culture that promotes a positive and supportive academic environment. School has implemented Incentive Days to promote healthy middle/high school culture. School has identified areas for improvement by employing attributes of restorative justice, peer mediation, and mindfulness practices. Applicant intends to use ACCESS funding to provide training for staff to implement restorative justice and Mindful School program. | 25 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | **Page** |
| The school's discipline plan is unclear. Further, it is unclear how students with disabilities have been taken into consideration. The applicant currently has 4-5 times as many criminal acts than Rutherford and Henderson County Schools, according to the school report card data provided in the appendix. This is concerning. Outside of identifying areas for improvement, what efforts has the school made to date to rectify this? Is the applicant confident that they can address this disproportionately high occurrence of criminal acts prior to enrolling a much higher ED population? | Appendix A |

B.6 Describe how the school's calendar supports the development of educationally disadvantaged students.

Characteristics of a strong response:

- Calendar and schedule support implementation of the academic plan, including supporting the development of educationally disadvantaged students and aligning with the mission, vision, and goals of the school.

| **Points Possible:** | 5 | **Points Earned:** | 4 |
|---|---|---|---|

| **Strengths** | **Page** |
|---|---|
| Applicant proposes to extend summer camps to combat "summer slump" and the loss of learning. This is specifically suited to meet the needs of ED students and their families. Summer enrichment program has emphasis on core classes but also includes arts, music, and sports. | 26 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | **Page** |
| Little detail provided about the location of cluster stops and families' ability to access those during summer enrichment. What are the hours of the summer program? Pickups? Unclear how the school calendar itself supports the development of ED students. | 26 |

## Section III – Application Narrative (cont.)

| C. Operations Plan | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| C.1 Detail any partnerships the charter school maintains or plans to develop to support educationally disadvantaged students, including a description of the roles and responsibilities of the applicant, partner organizations, and CMO/EMO, including the administrative and contractual roles and responsibilities of such partners. | | | |
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Clear delineation of roles and responsibilities between the school and CMO/EMO.<br>• Articulation of budgetary and decision-making autonomy of the board or directors.<br>• Evidence of contractual agreements provided in appendix A. | | | |
| **Points Possible:** | 2 | **Points Earned:** | 2 |
| **Strengths** | | | **Page** |
| Partnering with WRESA to train teachers in meeting the needs of ED students. The applicant intends to partner with NC state parks, local churches, community health center, town government and local small businesses/nonprofits that are aligned with the school's mission and vision to support educational disadvantaged students. MOUs included in Appendix B including a description of the roles and responsibilities of the partner organizations and the applicant. | | | 22-26<br><br>Appendix B |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | | | **Page** |
| | | | |

| C.2 Describe how the school's staffing structure, capacity, and diversity will be sufficient to meet the needs of all students, particularly educationally disadvantaged students. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Staffing levels for each year are robust and aligned with the educational program and conducive to the school's success.<br>• There is clear capacity to support the specialized needs of students, particularly students with disabilities and English learners.<br>• Comprehensive plan to support student's non-academic needs, including through counselors, behavior specialists, psychologists, etc.<br>• Clear plan to recruit, retain, and support a diverse teaching staff. | | | |
| **Points Possible:** | 3 | **Points Earned:** | 2 |
| **Strengths** | | | **Page** |
| Applicant currently has a staff with a diverse skillset that is prepared to provide wraparound services for students' nonacademic needs. Applicant has multiple mental health professionals on staff in addition to a full-time SRO. While this is a strength, the applicant's high rate of criminal incidences (compared to the two closest LEAs) remains in question. Does the applicant have plans to hire behavior specialists? Is the full-time SRO a response to the high rate of criminal incidents or perhaps the cause? School is committed to hiring an ELL teacher as the ED student population increases. Current EL students are being served by the reading specialist. Applicant is planning to hire an EC teacher assistant to support the current EC staff. More detailed projections about the anticipated increase in EC students would be helpful in determining whether this is sufficient staffing. | | | 27 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | | | **Page** |

| | |
|---|---|
| Racial diversity of the staff is not representative of the student body and the staff recruitment plan of providing outreach to specific demographic areas and nearby colleges and universities to showcase the ways that LLCA is a viable career option is insufficient. Applicant is committed to hiring an AIG certified teacher, an ELL teacher, and an EC teacher assistant, but is only "researching the possibility" of hiring a Community Outreach/Social worker. Given that the percentage of economically disadvantaged students is certainly projected to increase, and that these students will be accompanied by greater challenges, the lack of commitment to this position is concerning. | 27 |

C.3 Describe the school's marketing and recruiting plan, with an emphasis on strategies to provide outreach to the families of educationally disadvantaged students, including efforts to overcome any potential language barriers.

Characteristics of a strong response:

- Compelling student outreach plan that includes community, family, and student involvement, and that is realistic and likely to foster student retention and community support.
- Emphasis on strategies that will provide equal access to educationally disadvantaged students.

| **Points Possible:** | 5 | **Points Earned:** | 4 |
|---|---|---|---|

| **Strengths** | **Page** |
|---|---|
| School has created a marketing plan with multiple specific goals. Marketing plan includes the use of multiple types of advertising and will be delivered in targeted areas with higher populations of ED students. Marketing materials will be translated into Spanish and English. | 28 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | **Page** |
| One of the goals outlined earlier in the application and also in the marketing plan is increasing parent/community participation in the school. It is unclear exactly how the school plans to build community, and what opportunities parent/community members will have to serve and participate in creating/contributing to the culture of the school. | 27 |

C.4 Describe how the school currently does or will provide a transportation plan that accommodates and supports educationally disadvantaged students.

Characteristics of a strong response:

- Clear description of transportation plan that includes anticipated routes, extracurricular activities, before- and after-school care, etc.
- Description of how the school will arrange transportation for special needs students where necessary.
- Clear articulation of how the proposed plan will eliminate transportation barriers for educationally disadvantaged students.

| **Points Possible:** | 5 | **Points Earned:** | 4 |
|---|---|---|---|

| **Strengths** | **Page** |
|---|---|
| The school currently provides transportation for 70% of its student enrollment. This indicates that the school already has much of the infrastructure necessary to transport additional students with ACCESS funding. Applicant intends to purchase three additional buses to offer cluster stops in strategic locations with large percentages of ED students, including neighboring towns, hotels/motels where homeless youth might reside, etc. Transportation plan makes provisions for enrichment, extracurricular, after school, and extended learning opportunities. | 28-29 |

| Weaknesses/Areas of Concern | Page |
|---|---|
| The transportation plan does not discuss arranging transportation for special needs students. Cluster stops mean that parents will still need to find a way for their child to get to the central location. Ridesharing is a start, but the applicant should consider additional ways to remove the barrier of parents being able to get their child to the cluster stop. | 28-29 |

C.5 Describe how the school currently does or will provide a school lunch plan that accommodates and supports educationally disadvantaged students. Provide information about participation in the National School Lunch Program or a comparable, comprehensive lunch program.

Characteristics of a strong response:

- A clear description of how the school will offer food service to all students, adhering to all nutritional guidelines.
- Specific strategies to ensure educationally disadvantaged students receive daily meals and are not identifiable as qualifying for free or reduced-price lunch.
- A plan to collect free and reduced-price lunch information, including procedures to receive reimbursement.

| Points Possible: | 5 | Points Earned: | 1 |
|---|---|---|---|

| Strengths | Page |
|---|---|
| The school has partnered with local organizations to provide breakfast, lunch, and snacks for economically disadvantaged students. Partner organizations also provide weekend meal packs for families. | 29 |

| Weaknesses/Areas of Concern | Page |
|---|---|
| It's unclear which meals are provided by the community partner and which are provided by the school. Which students get lunch from the pantry vs. hot lunch? The school does not propose a viable, long-term, sustainable solution to feeding an increase in the number of ED students at the school. It is unclear how the school intends to collect free- and reduced-price lunch information from students, or how they intend to receive reimbursement. | 30 |

C.6 Describe how the school's professional development plan supports and is tailored to the development of educationally disadvantaged students.

Characteristics of a strong response:

- Professional development standards, opportunities, leadership, and calendar/scheduling effectively support the education program and are likely to maximize success in improving student achievement, particularly for educationally disadvantaged students.
- Thoughtful plan for professional development in the areas of special education, English learners, and serving low-income students, including implementation of IEP's or personalized learning plans, discipline, and communication with families.

| Points Possible: | 5 | Points Earned: | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|

| Strengths | Page |
|---|---|
| The school has adopted a teacher led professional development model. School staff members have participated in several workshops on poverty, trauma sensitive schools, mental health, etc., all topics that support ED students. It intends to open PD sessions to other charter schools in the area. | 30 |

| Weaknesses/Areas of Concern | Page |
|---|---|
| No weaknesses noted. | N/A |

| C.7 Describe the school's plan to engage families and implement a parent/community advisory council. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Clear plan for informing and educating parents on school policies, procedures, and programming.<br>• A sound and compelling plan for engaging parents and community partners in the design and life of the school through the advisory council, including recruitment strategies, duties, and authority. | | | |
| **Points Possible:** | 5 | **Points Earned:** | 4 |

| **Strengths** | **Page** |
|---|---|
| Applicant proposes creating a parent and community advisory council with membership from a diverse subset of students, school personnel, board members and community reps, etc. The outcomes of PCAC will be monitored to ensure that barriers to school attendance and academic growth are eliminated. Parents and community members can serve as volunteers for the PCAC. The school plans to use multiple modes of communication to share student progress. | P. 31 |

| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | **Page** |
|---|---|
| Membership on the parent and community advisory council appears to be limited to those parents who are nominated and then selected. How might this be a barrier to participation for some parents, particularly those with less social capital or familiarity with other parents? It is unclear exactly how the school plans to engage parents (particularly those who may not be on the PCAC) in the life of the school. What will these opportunities look like? At what time of day (or evening) will they be offered? | P. 31 |

| **Application Narrative Total** *(70 points possible)*: | 50 |
|---|---|

## Section III – Application Narrative (cont.)

| D. Student Transition Planning | |
|---|---|
| Outline the proposed Student Transition Committee and Student Transition Plan. | |
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Clear and specific plan to recruit, develop, and retain a Student Transition Committee.<br>• Comprehensive Student Transition Plan that outlines timelines, communication strategies, clear transition and closure plans, and strategies for informing families of their options. | |
| **Status:** | Complete ☐ Incomplete ☐ |
| **Strengths** | **Page** |
| Not applicable; applicant is applying for expansion funds. | N/A |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | **Page** |
| Not applicable. | N/A |

## Section IV – Budget, Budget Narrative, and Logic Model

| A. Budget | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Complete a proposed budget outlining anticipated costs for the duration of the subgrant period. | | | |
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Outlines complete, realistic, and viable costs for the duration of the grant period.<br>• All operational costs and major expenditures are accounted for and are realistic.<br>• There is clear alignment between the budget, budget narrative, and the proposed plan to support educationally disadvantaged students. | | | |
| **Points Possible:** | 15 | **Points Earned:** | 14 |
| **Strength** | | | **Page** |
| The budget includes funding for three buses, as stated in the education plan. Classroom technology is included in budget across most years of the subgrant, which is important given the STEM focus of the education plan. School climate and discipline PD included in budget. Funds for additional tutoring are included. | | | Budget template |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | | | **Page** |
| The applicant should be sure that all PD is teaching skills supported by current research. | | | |

| B. Budget Narrative | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Complete a budget narrative explaining anticipated costs for the duration of the subgrant period. | | | |
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Clearly explains reasonable, well-supported cost assumptions anticipated for the duration of the grant.<br>• Demonstrates financial viability beyond the expiration of the grant period.<br>• There is clear alignment between the budget, budget narrative, and the proposed plan to support educationally disadvantaged students. | | | |
| **Points Possible:** | 10 | **Points Earned:** | 9 |
| **Strengths** | | | **Page** |
| The narrative explains funding for tutoring set aside in each year of the subgrant; this will specifically help ED students. Mindful School is included in the budget to assist with school culture. PD specifically tailored to the needs of EL students is included in the budget narrative. The applicant is implementing a train the trainer model, which will help with sustainability after the subgrant period ends. Applicant intends to use subgrant funds to implement a 1 to 1 initiative in K-12 classrooms. ED students will be provided with computers to take home in order to eliminate barriers to access. Applicant has approved a budget line to continue providing technology for students after the conclusion of the subgrant period. The applicant intends to expand the library/media center and classroom libraries, which is critical. The applicant currently has fewer book titles per student than does the LEA. | | | 35-38 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | | | **Page** |
| School is proposing to wait until year 2 or 3 to implement restorative justice practices. This choice should be further supported, especially in light of the high rate of criminal incidents at the school. | | | 36-37 |

| | |
|---|---|
| School is providing ED students with a computer to take home which is a significant step in eliminating barriers. Internet access is another critical piece – does the applicant have plans to assist ED students in eliminating that barrier as well? | |

| **C. Logic Model** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Complete a Logic Model demonstrating how actions and expenditures are expected to lead to specific outcomes. | | | |
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Clearly articulates how actions and expenditures are expected to lead to specific outcomes.<br>• Aligns clearly and directly to the application narrative. | | | |
| **Points Possible:** | 5 | **Points Earned:** | 5 |
| **Strengths** | | | **Page** |
| The Logic model includes inputs that should lead to the intended short, medium, and long term outcomes. | | | 38 |
| **Weaknesses/Areas of Concern** | | | **Page** |
| No weaknesses noted. | | | N/A |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Budget, Budget Narrative, and Logic Model Total** *(30 points possible)*: | 28 |

## Section V – Competitive Preference Standards

| Opening, expanding, or replicating a school in a rural or underserved urban area (i.e. without a high-quality school within fifteen (15) miles). | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Points Possible:** | 3 | **Points Earned:** | 0 |
| **Comments (if applicable)** | | | **Page** |
| | | | |

| Increasing the racial and ethnic diversity in their new, expanded, or replicated school. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Points Possible:** | 3 | **Points Earned:** | 2 |
| **Comments (if applicable)** | | | **Page** |
| Applicant offered relatively strong evidence for their desire to increase ED populations, however, racial/ethnic diversity was less explicitly discussed in the application, and the recruitment plan for diversifying the staff by race was underdeveloped. | | | 41 |

| The inclusion of high school (9-12) grade levels. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Points Possible:** | 3 | **Points Earned:** | 3 |
| **Comments (if applicable)** | | | **Page** |
| School currently has grades 9-12 | | | 41 |

| Develop or manage a charter school focused on dropout recovery and academic reentry. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Points Possible:** | 3 | **Points Earned:** | 0 |
| **Comments (if applicable)** | | | **Page** |
| | | | |

| **Competitive Preference Standards Total** *(12 points possible)*: | 5 |
|---|---|

## Section VI – Priority Consideration Status

| | |
|---|---|
| Currently serve a forty percent (40%) or higher economically disadvantaged population. | Yes ☐ No ☒ |
| **Comments (if applicable)** | **Page** |
| | |
| Economically disadvantaged, English learners, and students with disabilities have proficiency rates higher than the state average for their subgroup. | Yes ☒ No ☐ |
| **Comments (if applicable)** | **Page** |
| | |
| As evidence of participation in applicable federal programs, have Title I status. | Yes ☒ No ☐ |
| **Comments (if applicable)** | **Page** |
| Applicant states that they are a Title 1 school located in a Title 1 county. | |
| Maintained an "A" or "A+NG" SPG, as determined by the NCDPI, and met or exceeded growth, as determined by EVAAS, for three consecutive years prior to the application. | Yes ☐ No ☒ |
| **Comments (if applicable)** | **Page** |
| | |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Priority Consideration Status Total** *(4 standards possible)*: | 2 |

## Section VIII – Certification

| | |
|---|---|
| Characteristics of a strong response:<br>• Application is signed and certified. | |
| **Status:** | Complete ☒ Incomplete ☐ |
| **Comments (if applicable)** | |
| Application is signed and certified. | |

## Summary Ratings

| General Standards | Status |
|---|---|
| Section I – Application Contact Information | ☐ Complete ☒ Incomplete |
| Section II – Assurances | ☒ Complete ☐ Incomplete |
| Section VIII – Certification | ☒ Complete ☐ Incomplete |
| **Total** *(all sections must be **complete** to pass)* | ☐ **Pass** ☒ **Fail** |

| Technical Standards | Points Possible | Points Earned |
|---|---|---|
| Section III – Application Narrative | 70 | 53 |
| Section III (D) – Student Transition Plan | ☐ Complete ☐ Incomplete | |
| Section IV – Budget, Budget Narrative, and Logic Model | 30 | 28 |
| Section V – Competitive Preference Standards | Up to 12 | 5 |
| **Total** *(must receive at least **80 points** to pass)* | **100** | **86** |

| Priority Standards | Standards Possible | Standards Met |
|---|---|---|
| Section VI – Priority Consideration Status | **4** | **2** |

| Overall Application Status | Rating |
|---|---|
| In order to pass, the application must (a) achieve a rating of "Pass" for the General Standards and (b) score at least eighty (80) points on the Technical Standards. The Priority Standards will be used to determine priority if there are more eligible applications than available awards. | ☒ **Pass with Priority** |
| | ☐ **Pass** |
| | ☐ **Fail** |