



VALOR COLLEGIATE
Academy

**A proposed Metropolitan Nashville Public Charter School
Application for Charter
April 1, 2013**

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PART I – ACADEMIC PLAN DESIGN

SECTION I – MISSION AND GOALS

Describe the mission and goals of the proposed school.

Vision

Valor Collegiate Academy (VCA) will be a key contributor in helping MNPS be the highest performing urban school District in the nation. VCA is committed to developing and running a world-class middle and high school within MNPS, and also to being a collaborative partner in thinking systemically about how to help create District-wide success for all scholars in Nashville.

Mission

VCA prepares a diverse student population for success in college and to live inspired and purposeful lives. Our scholar's will graduate with academic skills, social-emotional skills, and positive character strengths that rival the outcomes of the best schools in the world.

Executive Summary

Valor Collegiate Academy (VCA) will be a 5-12 college preparatory charter school located in South Nashville that will build on the strengths of two highly successful charter organizations: Summit Public Schools in Redwood City, CA, and the Denver School of Science and Technology in Denver, CO. VCA hopes to be the first college preparatory charter school in Nashville that serves a truly diverse background of students.

Academic Overview: The academic focus of VCA will be a rigorous, college preparatory program in which students of all previous preparation levels will find success. In addition, significant time and resources will be invested into programs that develop student's social-emotional skills, character strengths, and physical health. A few of the **key features** of the academic program:

- 1. Diverse Community:** We believe in truly diverse schools where all students are challenged and supported to meet rigorous standards that will prepare them all for college and life in mind, body, and spirit. We believe that strong public schools must be more than simply demographically diverse in the hallways: they must also be diverse in the classrooms.
- 2. Community Based Intersessions:** Students at VCA will participate in 6 weeks of in-depth elective courses that are run in collaboration with community organizations. Students have the opportunity to explore an area of passion, guided by trained teachers and experts from the field. In addition, students who are struggling academically use these Intersession periods to get focused remediation assistance in order to continue on a positive, college ready trajectory.
- 3. World-class professional development for teachers:** VCA faculty will have an enormous opportunity to grow as educators in the VCA model, especially during Intersession, as they have those six weeks to focus on developing as professionals. VCA will coordinate personalized educator plans for each teacher, and will support each teacher to grow into a world-class educator during these nearly 620 hours of development time per year (120 before school starts, 250 during Intersession, and 250 in the afternoons of academic semesters), about 10x more time than a typical school spends developing great teachers.
- 4. World-class use of data:** VCA will be a leader in collecting, analyzing, presenting, and acting upon rich data with teachers, students, school leaders, and parents to optimize and accelerate learning for all stakeholders. Capitalizing on the leadership team's deep ties and experiences in Silicon Valley, we will partner with various leading education technologies companies to provide world-class data to our stakeholders.

5. **Mentoring:** Every VCA family will be paired with a school educator, who will stay with the family throughout their 8 years at the school. The mentor’s goal for their 16 students in their mentor group will be to a) make a deep, personal connection with the student and family, b) to be the main point of contact for the student and family throughout their time at VCA, and c) to ensure that the student stays on the college ready trajectory. The mentor meets with their mentor group for approximately 2 hours per week, and conducts Personalized Learning Plan meetings 2x year with each family to map out personal body, mind, and spirit goals for each student.

Articulate clear guiding purposes and priorities and how the school will know it is achieving them.

Organization Goals

VCA will be governed by a non-profit Board of Directors who will ensure the long-term success of the organization. In order to best steward the vision and mission of the school, the VCA Board will have the responsibility of defining, communicating, monitoring, and ultimately ensuring the success of the following Key Goals.

The overall VCA School Goals and the process for ensuring that VCA will meet its targeted Key Performance Indicators will be detailed in Section V: Academic Performance Standards.

The Key Goals for VCA are presented below. These Key Goals are a sub-set of the VCA Mission Outcomes and will be considered the highest priority of the Board of Directors, and consequently school leadership. Table 1 details the Key academic goals for 2014-15 and Table 2 details the long-term goals for the first graduating class of VCA in 2022-23.

Table 1: Key Goals from VCA School Goals for 2014-15

Goal 1: Scholars will achieve mastery in Reading/English Language Arts	
Measure	65% of all scholars who have attended the school for two or more years will score in the Proficient or Advanced category in Reading/Language Arts on the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program. 75% of all scholars who have attended the school for three or more years will score in the proficient or advanced category. 85% of scholars who have attended the school for four or more years will score in the proficient or advanced category.
Measure	All scholars at Valor Collegiate who have attended the school for two or more years will, on average, attain a rate of proficiency at least five (5) percent higher than the surrounding district school average as measured by the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program.
Measure	In a cohort analysis of longitudinal growth, the average annual increase of percentiles among Valor Collegiate scholars on the Reading Comprehension section of the NWEA MAP, or similar nationally norm- referenced test, will average a minimum of five (5) percentiles of growth per year until the average percentile score reaches 75.
Measure	90% of 5th, 8th and 11th grade scholars will score at least a four (4) on the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program Writing Assessment.

Goal 2: Scholars will achieve mastery in Mathematics	
Measure	60% of all scholars who have attended the school for two or more years will score in the Proficient or Advanced category in Mathematics on the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program. 70% of all scholars who have attended the school for three or more years will score in the proficient or advanced category. 80% of scholars who have attended the school for four or more years will score in the proficient or advanced category. ¹⁷
Measure	All scholars at Valor Collegiate who have attended the school for two or more years will, on average, attain a rate of proficiency at least five (5) percent higher than the surrounding district schools average as measured by the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program.

Measure	In a cohort analysis of longitudinal growth, the average annual increase of percentiles among Valor Collegiate scholars on the NWEA MAP Test, or similar nationally norm-referenced test, will average a minimum of five (5) percentiles of growth per year until the average percentile score reaches 75.
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Goal 3: Scholars will achieve mastery in the Sciences	
Measure	65% of all scholars who have attended the school for two or more years will score in the Proficient or Advanced category in Science on the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program. 75% of all scholars who have attended the school for three or more years will score in the proficient or advanced category. 85% of scholars who have attended the school for four or more years will score in the proficient or advanced category.
Measure	All scholars at Valor Collegiate who have attended the school for two or more years will, on average, attain a rate of proficiency at least five (5) percent higher than the surrounding district average as measured by the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program.
Measure	In a cohort analysis of longitudinal growth, the average annual increase of percentiles among Valor Collegiate scholars on the NWEA MAP, or similar nationally norm-referenced test, will average a minimum of five (5) percentiles of growth per year until the average percentile score reaches 75.

Goal 4: Scholars will achieve mastery in the Social Studies	
Measure	70% of all scholars who have attended the school for two or more years will score in the Proficient or Advanced category in Social Studies on the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program. 80% of all scholars who have attended the school for three or more years will score in the proficient or advanced category. 90% of scholars who have attended the school for four or more years will score in the proficient or advanced category.
Measure	All scholars at Valor Collegiate who have attended the school for two or more years will, on average, attain a rate of proficiency at least five (5) percent higher than the surrounding district average as measured by the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program.
Measure	In a cohort analysis of longitudinal growth, the average annual increase of percentiles among Valor Collegiate scholars on the NWEA MAP, or similar nationally norm-referenced test, will average a minimum of five (5) percentiles of growth per year until the average percentile score reaches 75.

Goal 5: Valor Collegiate will maintain organizational strength by demonstrating fiduciary and financial responsibility.	
Measure	External, annual audit reports will demonstrate that Valor Collegiate meets or exceeds professional accounting standards.
Measure	Budgets for each academic year will demonstrate effective allocation of financial resources to ensure effective delivery of the school’s mission as measured by yearly balanced budgets submitted to Nashville City Schools. The Finance Committee of the Board of Directors will review this budget monthly.

Goal 6: Valor Collegiate will be fully enrolled and demonstrate high levels of daily attendance and scholar retention.	
Measure	85% of scholars who begin the school year at Valor Collegiate will remain in the school throughout the academic year.
Measure	90% of scholars who complete the school year at Valor Collegiate will re-enroll for the following school year. (Reasons for attrition will include geographic relocation, transportation, or illness)
Measure	Valor Collegiate will average 95% or higher daily scholar attendance in each school year.

Goal 7: Parents will demonstrate high satisfaction with the academic program and the clear and open communication of Valor Collegiate	
Measure	Parent satisfaction with the clear and open communication by the faculty and staff of Valor Collegiate, as measured by an annual survey at the conclusion of the school year, will on average exceed 85%. The percentage of parents completing the survey will average at least 75%.
Measure	Parent satisfaction with the academic program, as measured by an annual survey conducted at the conclusion of the school year, will on average exceed 85%. The percentage of parents completing the survey will average at least 75%.

Goal 8: The Board of Directors will provide effective and sound oversight of the school. School governance and leadership will effectively support the essential work of the school to promote teaching and learning in schools.	
Measure	The Board of Directors will conduct a formal annual review to measure the effectiveness of the school’s leadership using one formal evaluation per year.
Measure	The Board of Directors will conduct an annual self-evaluation to assess strengths and weaknesses of the Board.
Measure	The Board of Directors will annually review the bylaws and update as necessary.
Measure	The Board of Directors will conduct an annual analysis of the school’s organizational strengths and weaknesses.

Table 2 shows the Key Goals for the first graduating class of VCA in the year 2023. These goals will likely be adjusted in the upcoming years as the school grows, reflects, and improves, but they are listed as a guide-post for the end goals for VCA graduates.

Table 2: Key Goals from VCA School Goals for 2022-23

Goal 1: VCA Graduates will be College Ready	
Measure	The average ACT score for VCA graduates will be a 24.5
Goal 2: VCA Graduates will be College Ready	
Measure	100% of VCA graduates will be accepted to a four year college or University
Goal 3: VCA Graduates will be College Ready	
Measure	90% of VCA graduates will pass an AP exam with a 3 or higher, or an equivalent exam (IB, College Level course)
Goal 4: VCA Graduates will be College Ready	
Measure	95% of VCA graduates will not need to take any remediation courses when entering a four year college or University
Goal 5: VCA Graduates will graduate from College	
Measure	75% of VCA graduates will finish college within 6 years with a degree

Potential Barriers to Scholar Achievement

Identify specific barriers and/or school needs that may impact student achievement. Explain how your school will help students overcome those specific barriers.

The VCA Board, through research into similar charter school models, knowledge of the local Nashville context, and experience in the field of education, has identified the following potential barriers to scholar achievement:

- 1. Family conditions outside of school**
 - a. Families living in poverty:** Large numbers of research studies have shown a direct link between a scholar’s socio-economic status and their likelihood of finding academic

success in school¹. Poverty has a large, negative impact on academic outcomes. Much of the charter application explains how VCA intends to help scholars and families overcome the effects of poverty as they strive for a world-class education.

- i. **Attendance and transportation:** VCA understands that transportation to and from school can be an inhibitor that affects attendance and learning for families living in poverty and for those attending schools of choice.² VCA will provide bussing service for all scholars who need it.
 - ii. **Hunger:** Many scholars, particularly low-income scholars, come to school hungry. Trying to learn effectively on an empty stomach is very difficult¹: VCA intends to ensure that all scholars are fed nutritious, well-balanced meals at breakfast and lunch in order that they are ready for optimal learning.
 - iii. **Physical and emotional safety:** Many scholars come to school feeling emotionally and physically unsafe due to their home and/or community environment. This charter application will detail many of the ways that VCA will ensure that all VCA community members feel physically and emotionally safe at all times.
- b. **Racial and socio-economic integration:** Creating a school that is socio-economically, racially, and culturally diverse is part of the VCA mission. This is a challenging goal and must be done exceptionally well in order to have the desired positive effects on all community members. Unfortunately, too many scholars today attend diverse schools that may *reinforce* the negative stereotypes that scholars and communities have about people that look different than them. It is VCA's goal to demonstrate that thoughtfully designed, well-executed integrated schools can in fact breakdown stereotypes for scholars and communities. The charter application will detail the many structures and cultural pieces that will be in place to ensure a successful diverse school.

2. Pipeline of excellent leaders and teachers

- a. **Teachers:** Schools are only as good as their teachers. Finding great teachers is every school's biggest obstacle to success. VCA is confident that it will execute a great talent attraction and development strategy to ensure that we attract, develop, and retain a world-class teaching faculty.
- b. **Leaders:** Even with great teachers, a great school needs to have clear, consistent, and inspiring leadership in order to ensure stable, long-term success for scholars. As research confirms, to learn well, students need access to high-quality instruction and a well-crafted curriculum. After that, they benefit most of all from the positive effects of strong school leadership.³ VCA is confident that its attraction, development, and retention plan for faculty will lead to a strong pipeline of internal leaders for the organization. In addition, we will utilize the large national network of high performing charter schools and support organizations to find and recruit top talent from schools around the country.

¹ While hundreds, maybe thousands of research studies have been conducted, showing the link between various socio-economic factors and academic performance, in his book *Teaching with Poverty in Mind*, Eric Jensen explains that the stressors related to the myriad challenges of living in poverty, including hunger, lack of adult supervision, exposure to abuse and neglect, insecure housing, low levels of parental education and more build up in children, making it very difficult to prepare and learn. The American Psychological Association lists studies linking low-SES to low academic performance here: <http://www.apa.org/pi/ses/resources/publications/factsheet-education.aspx>.

² Lack of transportation is frequently listed as one of the major barriers to school attendance for families living in poverty in myriad studies, including those conducted by Attendance Works, located here: <http://www.attendanceworks.org/?s=transportation>.

³ Leithwood, K. A., & Riehl, C. (2003). *What we know about successful school leadership*. Philadelphia, PA: Laboratory for Student Success, Temple University.

Needs Assessment / Rationale for Grades Served

Explain how the mission and vision of this school addresses any priorities set by the chartering authority

Priorities of MNPS district

As detailed in the Academic Program, much of the academic program for Valor Collegiate will be based on the highly successful Summit Public Schools charter in Redwood City, CA, where our Founder and CEO was as a founding teacher and served as Executive Director for the past six years. Summit Prep has demonstrated impressive results in the following MNPS priority focus areas:

- 1) **Focus on diversity:** The VCA vision for Nashville is to show that truly integrated public schools that have high academic outcomes for all scholars are possible.⁴ Summit Prep serves a student body that is approximately 35% Caucasian and 65% scholars of color.⁵ Approximately 45% of scholars come from low-income families. Despite the wide variety of backgrounds and preparation levels, all scholars are expected to meet rigorous college preparation standards. Over the past 10 years, Summit has successfully sent scholars from all different backgrounds on to success in college. The acceptance rate to four-year colleges of low-income scholars is nearly equal to that of their higher income partners (93% to 98%). VCA aims to improve upon these results here in Nashville with the addition of a middle school program in our school model.
- 2) **Success with ELL learners:** Summit Public Schools traditionally has served an ELL population of about 15-30% each year (ELL and LEP). These scholars have thrived in the model, with all of them taking AP courses by their 11th and 12th grade year, and 94% of them being accepted to a four year college or university after spending four years at Summit Prep. With eight years of preparation time in both a middle school and high school, we intend to improve upon these results in the VCA model here in Nashville.
- 3) **Proven success with limited resources:** Summit Prep has thrived in what many public education experts believe is the most difficult financial location in the country – the Bay Area in CA. In California, human capital costs are almost 40% higher and public education funding was almost 40% less than Tennessee, which has prepared the leadership of VCA to run high quality schools on a very tight budget. These experiences have produced innovative staffing models, use of time, and mission based budgeting strategies that will be used as models for Valor Collegiate Academy in Nashville and possibly as scalable solutions for MNPS.
- 4) **Closing the achievement gap for scholars with disabilities:** Summit Public Schools generally serves an equal or higher Special Education population than neighboring schools (on average 12% versus 10% the past two years). Through innovative use of mainstreaming, resource classes, and school-wide support systems, the SPED population at Summit Prep thrives. As Thomas Hehir has found through extensive research, "...in general, most kids with disabilities do better in inclusive settings, particularly if they get the supports they need, [they do] significantly better". (Hehir & Sanchez, 2012) The idea is to be inclusive to all, no matter what challenges a scholar may face. Nearly all Summit Prep SPED scholars (about 96%) take the mainstream college prep course load, and they have the same college acceptance rate (96%) as their fellow Summit

⁴ Richard Kahlenberg, often referred to as "the intellectual father of the economic integration movement", in *"From All Walks of Life: New Hope for School Integration"*, published in *American Educator*, discusses myriad research proving that total integration can work, notably, he explains, " integration is not a zero-sum game: low-income students can benefit from economically integrated schools, and middle-class achievement does not decline so long as a strong core of middle class children is present".

⁵ As cited in Kahlenberg (2012), " one of the largest studies analyzing school integration and achievement used math exams required under the NCLB Act from 22,000 schools enrolling 18 million students. The study [conducted by David Harris for the Center for American Progress in 2006] found minority students have greater gains in racially integrated schools "

graduates. We are excited to continue this tradition of exceptional SPED service in our school model at VCA in Nashville, and aim to improve upon those outcomes with the addition of grades 5-8 to the model.

The mission and vision of VCA states that it intends to provide a world-class college preparatory education to scholars of all backgrounds. This includes scholars with learning and language challenges. We also intend to be a model for how to produce outstanding results for a diverse group of learners on the state funds allowed for public education. As evidenced by the results of Summit Public Schools in CA, we are confident that schools are currently in existence that are able to address the priorities areas identified by MNPS, and VCA intends to use the blueprint from these schools in order to ensure similar successes.

General Needs Assessment

Include a rationale for the grades served. Identify the targeted student population and the demographics of the community to be served.

The following section describes District-wide need for middle and high schools that serve a diverse student body. VCA specifically does not target one specific type of student in our needs analysis. Instead, we hope to address the need for high-performing, diverse schools that serve all types of students well. In addition, VCA does not target one specific target community to serve. Instead, we hope to serve a slice of South Nashville that is representative of the richly diverse group of community members that reside there.

Nearly all education experts agree that the United States has fallen behind the rest of the industrialized world in providing world-class public education to its citizens. Forty years ago, graduating with a high school diploma in the United States meant a middle-class job for 75% of graduates; however, in less than 9 years, 2/3 of all jobs will require post-secondary education or training (Litow, 2012). By most international measures the U.S. is somewhere in the middle to lower range of the 40+ industrialized countries in the world in academic achievement for our K-12 public schools (Programme for International Student Assessment, 2009). Within the United States, the state of Tennessee is often ranked in the bottom 5 States in most academic measures, as documented in National studies including Annie E. Casey’s *Kids Count* Data Book and the *Nation’s Report Card*. In the most recent National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) results for math, reading, and writing, Tennessee was ranked 48 out of 51 states (including the District of Columbia). Specifically, every sub-category of scholar demographic ranked (i.e., White, African-American, Low-Income, etc.) ranked near the bottom of the national rankings. (see Table 3 for results for Math and Reading). It is important to note that even outcomes for scholars in Tennessee *who are not low-income* are among the lowest in the nation.

Table 3: 2011 TN NAEP Results for Math and Reading (Ranking out of 51 States)

	Grade 4 Math	Grade 4 Reading	Grade 8 Math	Grade 8 Reading	
All	47	42	46	42	44.25
White	51	50	50	50	50.25
Black	40	38	43	42	40.75
Hispanic	32	43	38	20	33.25
FRL	43	40	47	40	42.5
Non FRL	49	40	46	42	44.25
Average	43.67	42.17	45.00	39.33	

Within Tennessee, there are 135 school Districts. Of these Districts, Metro Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) ranks in the bottom 25% in performance in nearly all demographic categories. Table 4 shows results for MNPS in comparison to other Districts within Tennessee. VCA will help create a nationally

leading District that, within 10 years, has risen to become one of the leading urban Districts in the country (in the top 10%), as measured by scholar achievement on nationally normed assessments such as the NAEP. This will only be possible if we set our collective sights at the highest international levels of performance for all scholars within the MNPS District and then provide well designed and well executed school models for teachers and families.

Table 4: Data for TN School District Results in Math and English (out of 135 Districts)

	Davidson	Rank	Williamson	Rank
% Prof Adv Math	39%	109	74%	1
% Prof Adv ELA	42%	119	83%	2
% Adv Math	13%	96	38%	1
% Adv ELA	8%	84	29%	1

Local Needs Assessment

Valor Collegiate intends to target scholars in the Cane Ridge, Overton, Antioch, Glencliff, and Hillsboro clusters. The ideal location for the school will be in the Crieve Hall and/or Nolensville Road area.

Listed below are four areas of need within MNPS (beyond the MNPS Priorities identified above) we believe Valor Collegiate can prove to be an effective partner in addressing:

1. **Low academic achievement**
2. **Diverse Schools**
3. **Overcrowding**

Low Academic Achievement

When compared nationally and internationally, all middle and high schools within MNPS (except the academic magnets) are achieving low academic results. Table 5 below shows data for MNPS middle and high schools from GreatSchools.org, a national resource that collects data on public schools around the country. Great Schools evaluates schools on their performance on all State assessments in all subgroups (TCAP for TN) and then gives a single value to each school on a scale of 1 to 10. While a single number certainly does not tell the complete story of a school, it is a useful tool for an overall academic comparison of schools, especially in different states. Listed are all of the middle and high schools in the Overton, Cane Ridge, Glencliff, and Hillsboro clusters of Nashville.

Table 5: GreatSchools.com Rating for MNPS Middle and High Schools

School	Great Schools Rating
Overton High School	4
Hillsboro High School	4
Antioch High School	3
Glencliff High School	3
Cane Ridge High School	NR
Oliver Middle School	6
Croft Middle School	6
McMurray Middle School	2
JT Moore Middle School	7
Wright Middle School	2
Marshall Middle School	2
Apollo Middle School	2

Antioch Middle School	2
Average MS*	3.6
Average HS*	3.5
MNPS Overall Rating	4

As shown, the average score for middle schools in these 4 clusters is 3.6 out of 10. For high schools, the number is a 3.5 out of 10. Even the highest performing middle school is only scoring a 7 out of 10. The highest performing traditional high school scores only a 4 out of 10. Unfortunately, these clusters are among the higher rated clusters within the MNPS District.

Table 6 below shows some comparison charter school organizations in the United States.

Table 6: Average GreatSchools.com Ratings for top CMO Organizations

School	Great Schools Rating
Summit Public Schools	9
DSST Schools	9
Noble Street	8
UnCommon Schools	9
Achievement First	8
YES Prep	9
Average CMO Rating	8.3

In general, the very best charter organizations greatly outperform typical urban school Districts like MNPS. Using a simple measure such as GreatSchools, it can be seen that a few great charter organizations have generally been able to produce over double the achievement results of typical urban public schools systems. VCA intends to produce similar ratings in MNPS, and to help collaboratively solve the difficult questions and dilemmas around how to take the successes in the charter world to scale in an urban school system.

Diverse Schools

The MNPS School Board recently passed a resolution to encourage diversity in their schools. VCA applauds this important effort. VCA intends to be a model for how to execute an integrated school model that provides a college preparation education for all scholars. Running excellent diverse schools is challenging because so many scholars and families come having very different needs to address in order to ensure their success. In less diverse settings a school can focus its efforts on fewer strategies, therefore increasing their likelihood of success. Educating a truly diverse population does not afford this type of simplification. Instead, diverse public schools must execute a wide range of strategies well. Unfortunately, most public schools are not able to do this effectively. In MNPS, there are approximately 28 middle and high schools with a truly diverse mixture of scholars (defined as having more than 40% low-income scholars, and at least 33% of more than two races). In these schools, the average GreatSchools.com ranking for low income versus non-low income scholars is 8 and 2, respectively. For White scholars versus minority scholars, the average ranking difference is very similar: 9 and 2. In general, diverse public schools do a good job with the White and middle income scholars, and do poorly with low-income and minority scholars. This type of large achievement gap is particularly worrisome for low-income scholars, as they are often achieving as poorly as their colleagues in less heterogeneous schools (i.e., 80%+ low-income scholars), but because the overall school's results are not as poor they are not considered as high a priority in most reform and improvement efforts within Districts.

VCA intends to show that it is possible to have diverse schools that provide outstanding educations to all scholars. At Summit Public Schools and Denver School of Science and Technology (DSST), the two

charter organizations that VCA will be modeled after, the average GreatSchools.com ratings are compared to the most diverse MNPS schools in Table 7 below:

Table 7: GreatSchools.com Ratings for MNPS Clusters and SPS/DSST Charters

	Low Income	Non Low Income	White	Minority* (Avg)
Overton	3	7	6	2.5
Hillsboro	2	7	9	3.5
Glencliff	3	5	5	2
JT Moore	2	10	10	3
Oliver	3	8	7	4
MNPS Average	2.5	7.4	7.4	3
Summit Public Schools	7	9	10	7
DSST	8	10	10	8

* Minority = average of all minorities with subgroup data

As the data reveals, Summit and DSST have found ways to raise academic achievement of all scholars. **They have found effective strategies that allow them to educate low income and minority scholars at a level equal to most public schools' White and non low-income scholars, as well as raising the academic levels of achievement for their non low-income and White scholars.**

VCA intends to achieve similar or better results, and is committed to partnering with MNPS to share effective strategies and lessons learned. It is our sincere desire to help MNPS become the national leader in creating world-class integrated schools.

Overcrowding

MNPS growth projections for the Cane Ridge cluster show that by 2016-17 there will be approximately 973 additional 5-12 scholars to serve from the projected numbers for the 2012-13 school year.

Cane Ridge High Zone 2011-12											
	Historical Enrollment					Projected Enrollment					Avg. % Survival
	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	
K	398	423	473	564	654	698	782	860	928	997	
01	389	426	458	483	568	589	636	685	734	771	104.53%
02	376	443	456	457	477	507	512	531	551	567	104.87%
03	366	388	438	435	460	488	508	524	551	572	99.53%
04	393	380	416	435	438	456	477	487	502	520	102.76%
05	318	400	339	398	439	451	466	510	528	550	96.90%
06	274	343	400	350	381	416	416	422	451	461	101.71%
07	270	298	359	397	336	401	413	415	427	457	102.17%
08	278	284	296	369	394	419	463	504	531	570	101.64%
09	331	397	434	449	490	531	558	591	629	661	145.03%
10	303	339	377	377	359	396	398	400	412	426	91.05%
11	255	277	293	335	333	363	384	404	420	446	88.76%
12	185	209	204	269	273	299	325	356	372	402	82.23%
K-4	1922	2060	2241	2374	2597	2738	2916	3087	3266	3427	
5-8	1140	1325	1394	1514	1550	1687	1758	1851	1937	2038	
9-12	1074	1222	1308	1430	1455	1589	1665	1751	1834	1935	
K-12	4136	4607	4943	5318	5602	6014	6339	6689	7036	7399	

For the Overton cluster, MNPS projections show an additional 737 middle and high school scholars by the year 2016-17.

Overton High Zone 2011-12											
	Historical Enrollment					Projected Enrollment					Avg. % Survival
	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	
K	607	541	707	758	828	886	987	1040	1117	1191	
01	559	592	596	700	721	763	815	869	903	955	100.46%
02	524	512	578	570	674	679	732	771	823	853	95.29%
03	476	488	525	558	530	569	584	592	603	626	96.30%
04	441	461	468	534	508	545	565	585	595	624	96.38%
05	409	413	469	467	512	532	563	584	617	641	97.76%
06	439	391	404	505	468	493	533	554	559	595	100.33%
07	390	411	397	436	485	488	516	552	574	596	99.78%
08	388	402	398	377	428	415	421	433	446	445	98.26%
09	513	462	512	570	619	631	692	732	768	808	138.46%
10	375	404	390	432	405	428	430	440	439	453	79.65%
11	329	321	397	326	369	374	381	374	397	396	88.22%
12	231	258	247	315	282	314	328	345	349	373	80.30%
K-4	2607	2594	2874	3120	3261	3441	3683	3857	4041	4250	
5-8	1626	1617	1668	1785	1893	1928	2033	2123	2197	2276	
9-12	1448	1445	1546	1643	1675	1747	1831	1891	1953	2029	
K-12	5681	5656	6088	6548	6829	7117	7546	7871	8191	8555	

VCA intends to collaborate with the District to help alleviate this capacity issue. We hope that the majority of the scholars that VCA draws will not significantly affect enrollment at current MNPS schools.

It is for the reasons stated above (low academic achievement in current middle and high schools, overcrowding, and lack of truly diverse schools of choice) that VCA would like to open a middle school in South Nashville.

Grades Served and Enrollment Growth Plan

Include a rationale for the grades served, grades upon opening and an enrollment growth plan

The proposed enrollment growth plan for the school is detailed in Table 10 below:

Table 10: Enrollment Growth Plan for VCA

Grade	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
5	145	145	145	145	145	145	145	145
6		120	120	120	120	120	120	120
7			115	115	115	115	115	115
8				105	105	105	105	105
MS Total	145	265	380	485	485	485	485	485
9					200	200	200	200
10						170	170	170
11							150	150
12								140
HS Total					200	370	420	560

Note: We will accept scholars into the model in 5th and 6th grade. If we have space in older grade levels we will hold lotteries for those grade levels as well and accept new students. It will be our goal to retain every single scholar possible within the model, therefore retaining larger numbers in each class than is projected here. The high school enrollment will jump to 200 students. It is VCA's intention to apply for a second charter school to open in 2015 that will feed a single high school. We anticipate having approximately 200 of the students from both middle schools attend the high school.

SECTION II – SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT

Model Development

Describe how the concept of your proposed school emerged and detail the process/steps taken to develop your plan from abstract idea to concrete proposal

The core principles and design elements for the Valor Collegiate model are based on two successful charter school models: Summit Preparatory Charter High School (Redwood City CA) and Denver School of Science and Technology (DSST): Stapleton (Denver CO). For over 10 years, VCA CEO and Founder Todd Dickson worked as a teacher, mentor, school leader, and CMO level leader for Summit Public Schools. During that time, he learned in depth all of the strengths and areas of opportunity of the highly successful Summit Prep model, which is best known for its extraordinary success at getting a diverse population of scholars prepared for success in college and life. In addition, Mr. Dickson, a native of Denver, was also involved in collaborating with the highly regarded DSST in Denver. Over the past 3 years, Mr. Dickson has spent considerable time visiting and collaborating with the leadership at DSST, originally as a means of strengthening both Summit and DSST models, and more recently as part of the TN Charter School Incubator Senior Fellowship in order to learn more about the strengths and opportunities of their middle and high school models. Both school models are considered by many education experts to be among the very best in the country at preparing all scholars in diverse communities for success in college and life.

Detail who participated on the design team and explain the specific roles, responsibilities and contributions of each design team member

In July 2012, Mr. Dickson began a Senior Fellowship with the Tennessee Charter School Incubator. The fellowship allowed Mr. Dickson to visit over 20 high performing schools around the country in order to further develop the VCA model. Over the course of the fellowship, a VCA Design Team was formed in order to get expert input on the academic plan. The Design Team spent hundreds of hours from Aug 2012 until April 2013 developing the academic plan for the VCA model. Listed in Table 11 below are the names of the members of the Design Team as well as the areas of the design in which they most contributed.

Table 11 : Design Team for Valor Collegiate Academy

<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Main area of contribution</u>
Todd Dickson	Valor Collegiate Academies	CEO	Integrated high schools
Alex Hernandez	Charter School Growth Fund	Partner – Next Generation Schools	Achievement gap, blended learning
Adam Carter	Summit Public Schools	Chief Academic Officer	ELA, competency based learning
Bill Kurtz	DSST	CEO	Charter leadership, school culture
Jeff Greenfield / Vince Durnan	USN	MS and HS Principals	MS/HS rigor, Nashville context
Melissa Zaikos	Intrinsic Schools (Chicago)	CEO	Next generation school design
Jason Grissom	Peabody, Vanderbilt	Professor	School leadership
Linda Darling Hammond	Stanford University	Professor	Common Core assessment
Claude Goldenburg	Stanford University	Professor	English Language learning
Kieran McMillen	Summit Public	Director of Math	Competency Based Math,

	Schools	Instruction	Next generation learning
Mary Catherine Bradshaw	LEAD	Dean of Instruction	IB, Common Core, TN TEAM, Nashville context
Anthony Kim	Education Elements	CEO	Blended learning
Rachel Lotan	Stanford University	Director of Teacher Education Program	Heterogeneous classrooms
Seneca Rosenberg	PhD Michigan		Professional Development, ELL
Rebecca Lieberman	Tennessee Charter School Incubator	Director of Talent	Talent Recruitment
Justin Testerman	Tennessee Charter School Incubator	COO	General model design
Yetta Lewis	Gestalt Memphis	CAO	Blended learning model
Bob Hannon	Valor Board	Lawyer, BABC	Legal structure
Dave Goetz	Valor Board	Former Finance Dir for Bredesen	Finances, organization structure
Katherine Cigarran	Valor Board	Parent	Parent engagement
Sylvia Flowers	Valor Board	Director of Talent, TN Department of Education	Organizational structure, Talent pipeline development
Keith Meacham	Valor Board	Parent / Fund For Public Schools NYC / Ex-ED Harlem Day School	Community Engagement
Malika Anderson	Valor Board	Chief Portfolio Officer Achievement School District	Organizational culture, assessment design

SECTION III – ACADEMIC FOCUS AND PLAN

Academic Program – Key Design Elements and Curriculum

Describe the academic focus of the school. Tennessee law describes an academic focus as “a distinctive, thematic program such as math, science, arts, general academics, or an instructional program such as Montessori or Paideia.” T.C.A. § 49-13-104.

Outline the school’s academic plan, defined by the law as “a platform that supports the academic focus of the charter school and will include instructional goals and methods for the school, which, at a minimum, shall include teaching and classroom instruction methods, materials and curriculum that will be used to provide students with knowledge, proficiency and skills needed to reach the goals of the school.” T.C.A. § 49-13-104. In your outline,

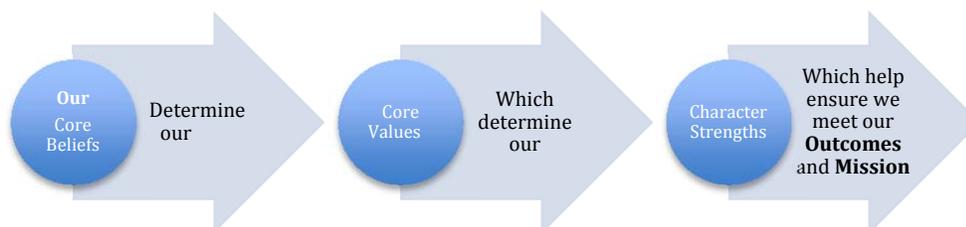
- Articulate how the academic focus supports the school’s mission.
- Describe research supporting the academic plan.
- Detail the proposed instructional goals and methods.
- List specific requirements for implementing the particular approach.
- Explain why the strategies are appropriate for the targeted student population.
- Explain how the program aligns with CC Standards and TN Performance Indicators.
- Describe the proposed class size and structure for the plan.

Overview

The Academic Program will be detailed in the following order:

1. **Outcomes:** the Outcomes for Valor scholars will be the central guiding framework for the academic program and is, therefore, described first through the over-arching College and Career Ready Outcomes (CCO) framework.
2. **Educational Philosophy:** the Educational Philosophy is detailed next, as it comprises the necessary beliefs, values, and character strengths that we believe the VCA community will need to develop and embody in order to meet the desired Outcomes for our scholars.
 - a. **Core Beliefs:** the underlying beliefs of the VCA community
 - b. **Core Values:** the VCA values that follow from our beliefs
 - c. **Core Character Strengths:** the character strengths we will value and develop as a community in order to live our values and beliefs, and ultimately be successful in attaining our desired Outcomes.

Figure 1: Core Beliefs, Values, and Character Strengths



VCA Framework of Desired Outcomes

Understanding by Design asserts that quality instruction always “begins with the end in mind” (McTighe & Wiggins, 2005). Similarly, a quality academic design must start with the desired outcomes for its scholars. The VCA Design Team spent considerable hours researching and debating what VCA graduates should be able to do and know upon graduation. The VCA College and Career Ready Outcomes (CCO) were developed by drawing upon research from many top scholars and organizations, visits to many of the highest performing schools in the nation, personal experience in the field, and

feedback from parents, scholars, and teachers here in Nashville (see Attachment 24 for a summary of this research).

The high level summary of the framework, which will be called the VCA College and Career Ready Outcomes (CCO), is listed below in Table 12.⁶

Table 12: Overview of Valor Collegiate College and Career Ready Outcomes Framework Category

	Outcomes	Descriptors
I. Knowledge	Content knowledge in three domains	Content knowledge in three domains
A. Core Subject areas	<p>Content Outcomes Measured by:</p> <p>Common Core Exams (PARCC) Common Core Exams (PARCC) TN State Exams</p> <p>Advanced Placement Exams College Course Exams ACT Exam</p>	<p>Core academic content as defined by TN State Standards, Common Core Standards, AP, IB, and ACT standards. Core subjects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English and Language Arts • Math • Science • History (w/ Government, Economics, Civics, Geography) • Foreign Language <p>Basics within each:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key terms and terminology • Factual information • Linking ideas • Organizing concepts
B. 21st Century Knowledge: global, civic, environmental, financial, health, and media literacy	<p>Content Outcomes Measured by:</p> <p>AP Environmental Science Exam AP Government Exam</p> <p>VCA Rubric based on SPARK Fitness Standards VCA Rubric and Badge System</p>	<p>Themes critical to effective participation in local, national, and global society that cross subject area and career areas</p> <p>Understand the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global • Civic • Environmental • Financial • Health • Media
C. Career related and technical knowledge	<p>Content Outcomes Measured by:</p>	<p>Knowledge about an industry sector and associated careers, technical knowledge, and college majors, providing context for learning in the core subjects; informing decisions about postsecondary education and future careers; and providing the basis for development of academic, 21st Century, and technical skills</p>

⁶ For the development of the Collegiate College and Career Ready Outcomes, we relied greatly ConnectEd’s *Framework for Developing a System of Linked Learning Pathways*, which can be found here: www.ConnectEdCalifornia.org.

	VCA Rubric	
II. Skills		Academic, 21 st Century, and technical skills needed for success, best learned in the context of academic, thematic, or career technical disciplines and through application
A. Academic skills in core disciplines	<p>Content Outcomes Measured by:</p> <p>Common Core Exams (PARCC) Common Core Exams (PARCC) TN State Exams Advanced Placement Exams College Course Exams</p> <p>ACT Exam VCA Rubric / VCA Extended Essay</p>	<p>Core academic skills as defined by the AP, IB, Common Core and TN State academic standards, enabling scholars to pursue the full range of postsecondary education and career opportunities and providing the foundation for further learning and skill development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English (spoken) • Reading comprehension • Writing ability • Mathematics • Science • History (Government, Economics, Geography) • Art
B. 21st Century Skills		Skills identified as essential in the knowledge economy that characterizes work in the 21 st Century
1. Metacognition and knowing how to learn	To be integrated into academic courses, Connections curriculum, and VCA Badge system	<p>Includes following concepts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding and applying strategies for learning • Applying and adapting new knowledge and skills in both familiar and changing situations, using learning theory • Involves self-awareness, the ability to dedicate time to learning, autonomy, discipline, perseverance, and information management in the learning process; the ability to concentrate for extended and short periods of time; the ability to reflect critically on the object and purpose of learning; the ability to communicate as part of the learning process
2. Creativity and Innovation	To be integrated into academic courses, Connections curriculum, and VCA Badge system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a wide range of idea creation techniques • Creation of new and worthwhile ideas (both incremental and radical concepts) • Elaboration, refinement, analysis, and evaluation of one's own

		<p>ideas to improve and maximize creative efforts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstration of originality and inventiveness in work; communication of new ideas to others; integration of knowledge across disciplines
3. Critical thinking and problem solving	To be integrated into academic courses, Connections curriculum, and VCA Badge system	<p>High level thinking skills exercised in the course of authentic knowledge work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem formulation • Sound reasoning and analytical thinking; use of knowledge, facts, and data to solve workplace problems • Making judgments and decisions; solving unfamiliar problems
4. Systems Thinking	To be integrated into academic courses, Connections curriculum, and VCA Badge system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding complex interrelationships • Analysis of how parts of a whole interact to produce overall outcomes in complex systems • Understanding roles within teams, work units, departments, organizations, inter-organizational systems, and the larger environment • Identifying how key organizational systems affect organizational performance and the quality of products and services • Understanding the global context of industries and careers
5. Communication: listening, speaking, writing, nonverbal	To be integrated into academic courses, Connections curriculum, and VCA Badge system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using active listening skills to obtain and clarify information • Articulating thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively • Public speaking skills • Written communications, including memos, letters, and complex technical reports that are clear and effective
6. Collaboration and working with diversity	To be integrated into academic courses, Connections curriculum, and VCA Badge system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building collaborative relationships with colleagues and customers • Ability to work with diverse teams, negotiate and manage conflicts, and learn from and work collaboratively with individuals representing diverse cultures, races, ages, gender, lifestyles, and viewpoints
7. Information management and digital media applications	To be integrated into academic courses, Connections curriculum, and VCA Badge system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessing and evaluating information efficiently (time) and effectively (sources) • Evaluating information

		<p>critically and competently</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using information accurately and creatively for the issue or problem at hand Managing the flow of information from a wide variety of sources Applying a fundamental understanding of the ethical/legal issues surrounding the access of use of information Using technology as a tool to research, organize, evaluate, and communicate information
C. Technical Skills	To be integrated into academic courses, Connections curriculum, and VCA Badge system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical skills as defined by NASDCTE standards: use of technical knowledge and skills required to pursue careers in all career clusters Technical skills as the foundation for future training and to promote greater “portability” Technical skills as a means to facilitate academic learning Engagement with objects and tools as a means to expand cognitive capacity
III. Emotional and Physical Health		Health encompasses both physical and emotional health, and also defines the productive behaviors and dispositions that are indicators of a healthy lifestyle
A. Six Seconds Social Emotional Intelligence (SEI) Framework	Six Seconds SEI Assessment Standards	<p>Six Seconds has developed 8 core competencies for SEI in three areas: Know Yourself, Choose Yourself, and Give Yourself:</p> <p>Enhance Emotional Literacy (Know Yourself)</p> <p>Recognize Patterns (Know Yourself)</p> <p>Apply Consequential Thinking (Choose Yourself)</p> <p>Navigate Emotions (Choose Yourself)</p> <p>Engage Intrinsic Motivation (Choose Yourself)</p> <p>Exercise Optimism (Choose Yourself)</p> <p>Increase Empathy (Give Yourself)</p> <p>Pursue Noble Goals (Give Yourself)</p>
B. Self-management	To be integrated into academic courses, Connections curriculum, and VCA Badge system	<p>The set of skills enabling individuals to appropriately plan, execute, and complete their own work, as required in both postsecondary and workplace settings. Includes the ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set goals Establish priorities

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage time • Study alone and in groups • Execute tasks with precision and accuracy • Persist • Take initiative and direct one's own efforts • Tackle obstacles resourcefully • Complete tasks and projects
C. Effective organizational behaviors	To be integrated into academic courses, Connections curriculum, and VCA Badge system	<p>The set of skills enabling individuals to work effectively with others within the organizations and under changing circumstances. Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to interact effectively with co-workers and provide leadership as appropriate • Ability to be flexible and adaptable • Responsibility and accountability to others • Ethical behavior
D. Eating habits	Internally developed VCA Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to plan and self-manage a healthy diet
E. Physical fitness	SPARK Fitness standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to plan and self-manage a healthy fitness routine
IV. Engagement		The ability to access resources and navigate effectively within postsecondary and workplace environments; the ability to manage a career over time
A. Engaging in and navigating the world of higher education; college transition skills	Internally developed VCA Standards	<p>The practical knowledge and skills required to enroll and succeed in postsecondary education, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admission requirements and financial aid processes • Understanding protocols for contacting professors and working in study trips • Ability to navigate a postsecondary education campus (physical and virtual) and understand school culture
B. Engaging in and navigating the world of work; career exploration and development skills	Internally developed VCA Standards	<p>The practical knowledge and skills required to explore career options, obtain employment, and manage one's career. Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career research and exploration skills • Resume writing and interview skills

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding the protocols for interacting with supervisors and colleagues • Ability to navigate the physical or virtual workplace • Understanding organizational culture • Understanding of how to advance in a career within specific industries and pathways
C. Engaging in and navigating civic life	Internally developed VCA Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to respond to social, environmental, and economic challenges at local, national, and global levels • A set of knowledge and skills that enables scholars to become engaged members of their communities
D. Engaging in and navigating transcendent life	Internally developed VCA Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to Self-Focus (i.e., meditate, Core Discipline) • Ability to locate positive, intentional communities of interest and to be a positive addition to such a community

The VCA CCO will be the heart of the academic program and overall experience at VCA. **All courses, non-academic time, community building, and culture decisions will be aligned with the goal of all scholars graduating from VCA having achieved mastery of the CCO Outcomes, which include and exceed the Common Core and TN State Standards.**

Comparable Outcomes from Summit Public Schools and Denver School of Science and Technology

Achieving mastery of the VCA CCO Outcomes will result in highly prepared scholars for college and life. These rigorous, holistic standards have been modeled after two highly successful charter school models: Summit Public Schools in Redwood City, CA and Denver School of Science and Technology in Denver, CO. As will be noted in the upcoming sections, much of the academic program for Valor Collegiate will be closely patterned after these two models. It is, therefore, appropriate to provide what we believe are likely outcomes for the VCA model here in Nashville. Below is a table of results on some of the key outcomes listed above for these two charter organizations. (Note: The entire overview of VCA’s goals will be detailed in Section V: Academic Performance Standards.

Table 13: College Ready Outcomes

School	FRL	Minority	College Ready*	College Accepted**	%>21 on ACT
Summit Public Schools	44%	65%	100%	96%	71%
DSST	55%	67%	100%	100%	85%
MNPS	75%	67%	25%	<15%***	29%
VCA Goals	50-60%	50-60%	100%	100%	85%

***College Ready = successfully completed all courses that allow scholars to apply to the state university system**

****College Accepted = received an acceptance letter from at least one four year college or university with competitive entrance requirements**

*****Data unavailable: in typical urban system, less than half of college ready scholars apply and are accepted to college**

It is encouraging to know that schools very similar to the model proposed in this charter application are achieving impressive results for a group of scholars very similar to that we wish to serve at Valor Collegiate here in Nashville. It is our intention to use much of the core academic programs from DSST and Summit. In general, the middle school program will most resemble the DSST middle school model, and the high school model will most resemble the Summit model.

Educational Philosophy

In order to achieve our goal of having all scholars achieve mastery of the outcomes on the CCO, the following **Core Beliefs** will be the driving force of the VCA community:

Core Beliefs

We believe in consistent, daily excellence: A common term that will be used throughout the VCA culture will be “world-class”. It is the mission of VCA to produce scholars that are among the best in the world. We believe that the United States has allowed itself, over time, to lower its expected outcomes for its scholars to an unacceptably low level. VCA will aim to be a leader in the United States in setting the bar of expectations for excellence at the International level. Therefore, when the VCA community talks about excellence and greatness, we will set our goals high: we believe that with great expectations, great systems, great leaders, great teachers, and hard work, we can achieve at the highest levels. We believe that MNPS has an opportunity to become one of the highest achieving diverse school Districts in the world and VCA will be a leader in pursuing that goal. Striving for excellence will be a daily expectation for all members of the VCA community. In addition, we believe that excellence is obtained through consistent daily practice, and we will all commit to learning to excel at being consistently great each day.

We believe in the power of the individual and the community: A common theme throughout the VCA community experience will be how to develop autonomous, self-directed, high-achieving individuals while simultaneously developing scholars who are deeply committed to being part of a community and feel connected and passionate about helping to improve the various communities they are part of. We reject the idea that one (individual) needs to be developed at the expense of the other (community member). Instead, we will work to develop both the individual and the community in the academic programs and culture of the school. Scholars will therefore have multiple opportunities throughout their experience to grow as autonomous individuals and will also have many opportunities to be part of groups and communities. We believe that the strongest communities are filled with confident, independent individuals who commit to their communities for common worthy causes and we intend to create that type of community at VCA.

We believe growth happens best from deep, authentic relationships: Research consistently shows that one of the highest predictors of K-12 completion for middle and high school scholars is having at least one authentic relationship with an adult at school and feeling connected to the school. (Demaray, Lazarus, & Sulkowski, 2012) At VCA, it will be a key part of the school culture and academic program that teachers build deep, authentic relationships with their scholars. In order to be able to expertly coach scholars, teachers must know them well – what makes them tick, their learning profile, their “story” outside of the classroom. Equally important is that scholars know their teachers well as human beings beyond the classroom. In addition, authentic relationships between scholars will be a focus of the program. Middle and high school scholars do not always naturally build healthy, authentic relationships with their peers: VCA recognizes this and will make it an explicit goal of the academic program to coach scholars in how to build healthy, strong peer relationships. When these types of relationships are carefully and professionally developed, trust is built within a culture, and authentic trust creates an emotionally safe environment where scholars are willing to take the risks necessary to accelerate their

learning.⁷ It will be a key goal of the VCA community to constantly provide opportunities for every scholar to have multiple authentic relationships with adults and peers in the VCA community.

We believe growth happens best when a community is both joyful and disciplined: It is the belief of the VCA community that learning and growth should be a challenging but joyful process. VCA’s model promotes joyful learning and aims to avoid what Judy Willis describes, “...when we scrub joy and comfort from the classroom, we distance our students from effective information processing and long-term memory storage. Instead of taking pleasure from learning, students become bored, anxious, and anything but engaged. They ultimately learn to feel bad about school and lose the joy they once felt.” (Ellis, 2007) VCA will bring joy to our work as educators, and we will strive to be models of joyful learning for our scholars.

We will also hold this belief closely as we develop academic programs, curriculum, and culture systems. We also believe that in order to provide an optimal learning environment for all community members, those environments should be highly structured. Highly structured learning environments allow for a sense of urgency and use of learning time that is critical for ensuring that all scholars are able to achieve at high levels. We also believe that as scholars grow older and have internalized many of the disciplined character strengths that a highly structured environment promotes, the need for the highly structured environment lessens, and it in fact begins to be a hindrance towards the development of autonomous, self-directed scholars. Therefore, the VCA model will be a “gradual release” model, with the early grades having a highly structured and disciplined learning environment, and the older grades having a more and more unstructured learning environment that demands that each scholar utilizes their own internal discipline in order to be successful. Throughout this gradual release process, the constant will be the joy of learning that community members strive for and value.

We believe scholars and communities excel when they are innovative and creative: Research and opinion from many top educators, economists, and talent recruiters all reach a strikingly similar conclusion regarding what high school graduates need upon graduation in order to compete in today’s global economy: to be innovative and creative critical thinkers. (Batey, 2011) VCA graduates will be well prepared to compete in the 21st Century colleges and job marketplace because the VCA model will develop strong foundational skills and content knowledge while also giving scholars many opportunities to apply creative and innovative problem solving to real world problems. The unique structure of the VCA school year and gradual release model allows for both time and specific opportunities for scholars to develop strong foundational academic strengths AND also to apply these strengths in authentic, real world situations.

We believe that excellence and life-long learning occur best with a strong Growth Mindset: Growth mindset is a simple idea discovered by world-renowned Stanford psychologist Carol Dweck in decades of research on achievement and success.⁸ With a fixed mindset, people believe their basic qualities, like their intelligence or talent, are simply fixed traits. They also believe that talent alone creates success – without much effort. In a growth mindset, people believe that their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work – brains and talent are just the starting point. Virtually all people who have demonstrated excellence in any area of life have had these qualities. It is a core belief in the VCA community that great ability is developed over time, through hard work, great feedback, and through experiencing and learning from failure. The VCA program will also specifically teach the core principles of Dweck’s growth mindset theory, described fully in her book, *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success* (2006), to scholars and families so that families understand and embrace the value of a growth mindset.

We believe great schools enroll Families, not just scholars: It is a VCA belief that we enroll families into our program, not simply scholars. Research shows that even the most effective schools in the world

⁷ In their research study, *Friendships, Peer Acceptance, and Group Membership: Relations to Academic Achievement*, Kathryn R. Wentzel and Kathryn Caldwell, found a link between group membership and other aspects of peer relationships and academic achievement of students they followed from 6th-8th grade: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1132301>

⁸ Here, Carol Dweck’s Mindset philosophy is summarized: <http://chronicle.com/article/Carol-Dwecks-Attitude/65405/>

have a smaller effect on scholars' academic success than their family.⁹ In order to help ensure our mission, we understand and look forward to teaming with each unique family and finding ways to help succeed in school and outside of school. We will rely on the expertise gained from the Design Team's research and experience in "wrap-around services" – services that respond to each families' needs and appropriately coach them in key areas that will help them in best supporting their scholar's, and their families', success. VCA will also create a culture at school where scholars and faculty will often refer to their school as "home". Great academic outcomes can only be accomplished by groups of scholars who feel safe and trusted and the VCA culture will be one that feels like a healthy family dynamic: lots of love and emotional support, but also very clear and high expectations.

We believe Literacy is Key: Research shows that possibly no other skill is as important to academic success as literacy. In fact, besides socio-economic factors, nothing predicts college success better than literacy scores. In 2005, only 51% of ACT-tested high school graduates were ready for college-level reading, setting too many kids up for failure in college.¹⁰ For this reason, VCA will operate under the belief that coaching all scholars to read and write is the highest priority academic mission of the school. All academic roads are paved with excellent literacy skills. The VCA community will be one where everyone reads a lot and where reading growth is carefully measured, deeply valued and celebrated. Reading will be cool, and all community members will take pride and take part in regular academic and enjoyment reading. This basic cultural value will extend beyond scholars to teachers, leaders, and families. Everyone will value and celebrate literacy at VCA.

We believe that scholars are best prepared for life in Diverse schools: The ability to deeply understand multiple perspectives is a hallmark of being able to think critically and to be prepared for college and life success. In order to truly understand and value multiple perspectives, scholars must be in diverse academic environments. In fact, "Many families now believe, as do virtually all leading colleges and universities, that racial, ethnic, and income diversity enriches the classroom" (Kahlenberg, 2012). Unfortunately, many schools may appear to be diverse from their demographic data, but when examined more closely it becomes evident that they do not have much academic diversity, meaning that scholars of different socio-economic and racial backgrounds are not interacting meaningfully in rigorous academic courses. A Core Value of VCA will be to create academic and non-academic experiences for scholars to interact in positive, meaningful ways with scholars who bring a wealth of backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences to VCA. Valuing diversity will be the fabric of the VCA experience, woven into everything that we do as a school. From faculty hiring, scholar recruitment, family orientation, to the scholar experience, VCA will deeply value the advantages that having a diverse community brings. Beyond the value given to the VCA families and faculty, VCA also believes the long-term value of creating high performing diverse schools within Nashville is significant. Highly successful integrated schools are a civil rights and economic imperative for helping to make Nashville a world-class city. VCA will deeply value being a leader in Nashville in raising awareness and focusing support towards great public, integrated schools.

Core Values

From these philosophical beliefs, the following 6 Core Values will be taught, celebrated and modeled throughout the VCA organization. The Core Values are concepts that all members of the VCA community will strive for – teachers, leaders, students, and families.

Valor Collegiate 6 Core Values

⁹ Numerous studies have found links between parental involvement and engagement and student academic success are strong, in fact, this link has now been deemed "undisputed". An example of these critical links includes the U.S. Dept. of Ed's 1995 report, *Strong Families, Strong Schools*, listed, "Three factors over which parents exercise authority- student absenteeism, variety of reading materials in the home, and excessive television watching - explain nearly 90 percent of the difference in eighth-grade mathematics test scores across 37 states and the District of Columbia on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Thus, controllable home factors account for almost all the differences in average student achievement across states (Barton & Coley 1992). Additional researchers, including Kellaghan, Sloane, Alvarez, and Bloom (2003), and Beth Simon (1999) have also well-documented and synthesized research on this topic.

¹⁰ ACT, Inc. (2006). *Reading Between the Lines: What the ACT reveals about college readiness in reading*. Iowa City, IA: ACT, Inc.

- **Excellence** – We value striving for excellence everyday; day after day; we know that excellence is the result of purposely learning from many failures
- **Continuous Growth Mindset** - We get smarter and smarter through hard work and learning from failure; we value the small, persistent steps that it takes to be great; we know that greatness in anything is the result of continual practice over long periods of time
- **Kindness** - We deeply value everyone in our community and treat them with kindness
- **Joy** – We actively seek out joy in our experiences
- **Individual AND Community** – We value our autonomy and individuality AND we value the power of community
- **Diversity** - We value the wealth of experiences and perspectives that our diverse community brings to VCA, and know that understanding these different perspectives creates compassionate, critical thinkers and leaders

The Core Values of great organizations do not only live on posters in copy rooms; instead, they permeate the entire organization. VCA will integrate the Core Values into everything we do. The VCA Core Values are integrated throughout the charter application as the academic program, culture, and operations of the organization are detailed.

Character Strengths

Dr. Martin Seligman is a world-renowned professor from the University of Pennsylvania who is widely considered the leading expert in the Positive Psychology movement. Dr. Seligman has done considerable research on the character traits that are most widely aligned with success and happiness. (Authentic Happiness, 2002) In his research he was able to identify 24 positive character strengths that, when developed, were most closely associated with both success and happiness in adolescents (and adults). These strengths fall into 6 categories. These categories will be the basis for the Character Strengths that VCA will develop in all community members as a means of living and modeling our Core Values.

- **Wisdom** (Strengths that involve the acquisition and use of knowledge)
- **Courage** (Strengths that allow one to accomplish goals in the face of opposition)
- **Justice** (Strengths that build healthy community)
- **Humanity** (Strengths of tending to and befriending others)
- **Temperance** (Strengths that protect against excess)
- **Transcendence** (Strengths that forge connections to the larger universe and provide meaning)

Pedagogy and Instructional Methods

Four Stages of Gradual Release

In order to outline the various pedagogical methods to be used at VCA it is important to understand the gradual release “Stages” of the eight-year program. Table 14 has a brief overview of the Stages. In general, the four Stages of gradual release are a research-based approach to providing the correct type of pedagogy and instructional methods to scholars as they grow through adolescence. Using research on adolescent development, each Stage is designed to best meet the needs of the scholars at each age level. In the earlier years, theory and practice tends to be more teacher centered and structured. As scholars mature through the program the theory and practices tend to become more scholar centered and less structured. The gradual release also is designed to ensure scholars are best prepared for the rigors of college and career by thoughtfully building self-disciplined, self-directed, and self-confident learners over an eight-year period.

Table 14: Valor Collegiate Academies Four Stages Overview

	Stage 1:	Stage 2:	Stage 3:	Stage 4:
	Foundations	High School Prep	College Prep	Life University
Grades	5 th and 6 th	7 th and 8 th	9 th and 10 th	11 th and 12 th
BOLD = dominant mode of instruction				
Pedagogical Focus				
	Teacher Centered	Teacher Centered	Teacher Centered	Teacher Centered
	Student Centered	Student Centered	Student Centered	Student Centered
	Team Teaching	Team Teaching	Team Teaching	Team Teaching
	Self-Directed	Self-Directed	Self-Directed	Self-Directed
	Competency Based (Unit)	Competency Based (Unit)	Competency Based (Course)	Competency Based (Open)
	Project Based	Project Based	Project Based	Project Based
Typical Instruction				
	Direct Instruction (60%)	Direct Instruction (40%)	Direct Instruction (20%)	College Lecture (25%)
	Technology enhanced personalization (20%)	Technology enhanced personalization (30%)	Technology enhanced personalization (40%)	Technology enhanced personalization (45%)
	Group-work (20%)	Group-work (30%)	Group-work (40%)	Group-work (30%)

Each type of instructional practice will be explained in more detail below. In general the main focus of the instructional practices move from teacher centered direct instruction towards more scholar centered instruction, as scholars get older. (One variance from this is the re-introduction of college-like lectures in Stage 4 as a means of preparing scholars for college lectures). It is important to note that while a type of instructional practice is more dominant during a certain Stage, each of the instructional practices may be used during each Stage in some capacity.

Pedagogy and Instructional Methods – Basics Overview

In order for our scholars to achieve the high standards outlined in the College and Career Outcomes (CCO) and guided by our Core Values and Character Strengths, VCA will implement a mixture of research-based pedagogical choices and instructional methods. Each category is explained briefly below.

Direct Instruction

Direct Instruction (DI) is an explicit, scientifically based model of effective instruction¹¹ with three main components: (a) program design, (b) organization of instruction, and (c) teacher/scholar interactions. Guiding principles of DI include: every child can learn if we teach him or her carefully and all teachers can be successful when given effective programs and instructional delivery techniques. Ultimately, it is the teacher's responsibility for scholar learning; scholars are not blamed for their failure to learn. Scholars learn more if instructional presentations are clear, which rules out misinterpretations and helps scholars generalize skills in different contexts.

The goal of DI is to "do more in less time"—accelerating scholar learning by carefully controlling the features of curriculum design and instructional delivery.

At VCA, Direct Instruction will be used as a main staple throughout Stages 1, 2, and 3. In Stage 4 it will be replaced with more college-like traditional lecture. The major advantages of direct instruction are its efficiency and its ability, when done well, to allow scholars to learn from an expert in a subject. VCA will spend significant time ensuring that all VCA teachers are experts in delivering high quality direct instruction, and will use the methods described in Doug Lemov's *Teach Like a Champion* (2010) in order to have a consistent, quality approach to direct instruction.

Technology enhanced personalization

Differentiated instruction is a framework or philosophy for effective teaching that involves providing scholars with different avenues to acquiring content; to processing, constructing, or making sense of ideas; and to developing teaching materials and assessment measures so that all scholars within a classroom can learn effectively, regardless of differences in ability or preparation level. Teachers can differentiate in four ways: 1) content, 2) process, 3) product, and 4) learning environment based on the individual learner.¹²

At VCA, we will utilize differentiated instruction in multiple ways throughout the academic program in order to personalize instruction for each student. The most common use will be through the use of technology. VCA will be a one-to-one laptop environment (starting in 6th grade), meaning that every scholar will have the opportunity to access high-quality online academic content at any time. In addition, scholars will be able to access online networks of peer and tutorial support. Lastly, scholars will be able to access rich data sets that help them track their progress towards mastery of course standards. This will allow VCA educators greater range and flexibility in designing highly effective differentiated experiences for scholars. A few common examples of technology-enhanced differentiation that will be used in VCA classrooms:

Rotational Model:

Scholars in a 6th grade math class may be separated into two groups for one period during the day. Group 1 will spend the first half of class with the teacher, who will provide a structured, direct instruction lesson on finding the slope of a line. Group 2 will spend this time on their laptops working on specific problems and/or reading/listening to explanations of standards that they have not yet mastered. Mid-way through

¹¹ Since its development in the 1960's, Direct Instruction has been proven time and again effective as a comprehensive school reform model that improves academic success for all students. In 2010, Guido Schwerdt and Amelie Wupperman, of the University of Munich, in an empirical study, found that 8th grade students learned 3.6% of a standard deviation more in math and science if the teacher spent 10% more time on direct instruction, rather than problem-solving teaching methods. Their research findings can be downloaded here: http://www.hks.harvard.edu/pepg/PDF/Papers/PEPG10-15_Schwerdt_Wuppermann.pdf

¹² Ministry of Education. (2007). *Differentiated instruction teacher's guide: Getting to the core of teaching and learning*. Toronto: Queen's Printer for Ontario.

the period, the groups switch so that all scholars have had a small, direct instruction lesson with the teacher as well as personalized instruction in an area of need.

Flipped Classroom¹³:

In some VCA classrooms lectures on short topics will be recorded by the teacher (or possibly other world-class teachers) and will be assigned for homework. Each scholar will watch the “direct instruction lecture” at home and will take an online assessment of their understanding of the lecture when they finish. The VCA teacher will then analyze the data and plan a differentiated application of the objective the following day for class. Depending on the outcome of the assessments, the class may have 2-4 groups of scholars who are working on various options (i.e., a remediation group to hit key concepts misunderstood in lesson, a practice group working on practicing the concepts of the objective, and an application group who is working on applying the concept into a new setting). In the flipped classroom, the teacher may use any type of technology (in addition to the laptops) to leverage learning and allow more time for student-teacher interaction, rather than spending that time in class lecturing.

Differentiated Homework:

Homework will often be differentiated at VCA. Scholars will be assigned personalized problems, readings, and projects. As scholars progress through the VCA program they will even be able to choose the best homework for them, based on their knowledge of themselves as learners and their current status of mastery in a course.

Differentiated Remediation and Extension:

Data will be collected daily at VCA on each scholar. VCA teachers will be highly trained and skilled at analyzing the data and making choices for how to help scholars remediate areas of growth and also to extend scholars who are showing mastery in a unit or subject. Technology will allow for great flexibility and expansion of options for how to best remediate and extend for each scholar. For example, after a Science Unit test, the VCA teacher may spend two days with scholars in two groups: a remediation group that is working with multiple online content providers to work on personalized skills and content that they have not shown mastery of, and a synthesis group that is taking the concepts they have mastered and learning to synthesize them with prior information in new settings.

Group-work

Group work will be used throughout the VCA experience, with greater use as scholars enter Stage 3. VCA will most often use **Complex Instruction** when having scholars work in groups.

Complex Instruction is a specific form of group-work that evolved from over 20 years of research at the Stanford School of Education.¹⁴ The goal of this instruction is to provide academic access and success for all scholars in heterogeneous classrooms by using multiple ability curricula and specific instructional strategies including the treatment of status problems to equalize group interactions. Generally there are four scholars in each group. In most cases the scholars are in mixed ability (or mixed preparation level groups). Tasks are designed so that all scholars in the group will have multiple access points into the curriculum. Group members are also assigned specific roles within the group (i.e., facilitator, recorder, materials manager, timekeeper). All scholars are responsible for an individual summative assignment or product at the end of the task to demonstrate their own learning from the experience. The advantages for Complex Instruction, and group-work in general, for scholars are mainly in learning how to work well in teams, how to communicate their ideas to others, and how to help others understand ideas, and to better understand complex processes and ideas by hearing and working with scholars who approach tasks in ways different than their own.

Team-Teaching

A central part of the VCA academic program is having teachers work in groups of 2-3 to teach an academic course. In Stage 1-2 (middle school) teachers will work as a team of 2 in English, Math, and

¹³ Bergmann, J., & Sams, A. (2012). *Flip your classroom : reach every student in every class every day*. Eugene, Or.: International Society for Technology in Education .

¹⁴ <http://cgi.stanford.edu/group/pci/cgi-bin/site.cgi?page=index.html>

Science. In Stage 3-4 (high school) teachers will work in teams of 3 in English, Math, and Science as well as teams of 2 in History. In general they will be responsible for approximately 25-30 scholars per teacher. Therefore, a team of 2 teachers will have 50-60 scholars at any given time during a class.

Table 15 shows the progression of team teaching across the programs:

Table 15: Team Teaching Overview

	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
Courses team-taught	Remedial Math Remedial English	Math Science	Math English Science	Math English Science History	All	All	All	All

In an ideal facility setting, there will be collapsible walls between classrooms, so teachers will have the flexibility to a) teach scholars separately as a group of 30, b) teach together as a group of 60, or c) split the scholars in some other variation (i.e., 45 with teacher A and 15 with teacher B) in a large classroom or separately. Nearly all of the team teaching advantages can be obtained, however, with traditional classrooms by having groups of scholars transition between adjacent classrooms as part of their team-teaching rotations.

Team teaching offers the following advantages¹⁵:

1. Specialization

- a. **Lesson Planning** – teachers will have, on average, 2.5 hours of common planning time with their teaching team. When two teachers plan together, they have the ability to allow teachers to write sections of the lesson plans that fit their strengths. For example, two Science teachers may split up the weeks lesson plans where Teacher A writes the labs and assessments and Teacher B creates the graphic organizers for notes and the questioning strategies.
- b. **Topic/Skills** – similar to lesson planning, teachers can devise rotations where 30 scholars see Teacher A for topic 1 and then see Teacher B for topic 2. This allows teacher A to change from teaching two different topics in a day to teaching a single topic twice.
- c. **Teaching Strength** – allows teachers who are better at lecture or group work or small group remediation more time in their area of strength. For example, if Science Teacher A is an expert in Direct Instruction they may take 45 scholars on Monday for a DI lesson on Acceleration. Teacher B is excellent with struggling scholars, especially ELL scholars, and takes the 15 lowest performing scholars for the period on Monday and delivers the same lesson in a different format (i.e., small group, inquiry based).

2. Personalization / Differentiation

- a. **Choice** – teachers have increased flexibility on choice. For example, Teacher A may teach 2 books for a Unit in English, and Teacher B may teach 2 different books. All 60 scholars now have four choices for a book to read and analyze instead of two, essentially doubling the amount of possible personalization.
- b. **Big / Small groupings** – teachers can choose to group scholars in Big/Small groups to best address needs in the classroom. For example, teachers may have 45 scholars learn a new concept in Math with Teacher A for part of a class period, and 15 scholars who showed on a pre-assessment they already understood this concept would work with Teacher B on an interesting extension project of this concept.

¹⁵ Team teaching has been found beneficial particularly within inclusive classrooms. Students benefit from being a part of a dynamic learning environment, gaining exposure to multiple and diverse viewpoints and teaching strategies, the modeled collaboration amongst teachers, and the varied approaches to different learning styles. See: http://sydney.edu.au/staff/fye/before_semester/leading_teaching_team/team_teaching.shtml

- c. **Preparation Level** – teachers can split scholars by preparation level for all or parts of lessons.
3. **Teacher coaching and training**
- a. **Observation and Feedback** – Teacher A can observe Teacher B teach a 10 minute Hook lesson to all 60 scholars in Block A, and then Teacher B can observe Teacher A teach the same Hook lesson to all 60 scholars in Block B. Both teachers then provide feedback to each other on their observations. This is an incredibly powerful PD opportunity for teachers.
 - b. **Co-planning** – teachers will plan, analyze data, and make action plans for their 60 scholars together. This co-process is especially powerful for younger, emerging teachers who are paired with experienced, master teachers. This is also excellent experience for Master teachers – learning to coach, and learning to be reflective on their own practice and what makes it successful.
 - c. **Data analysis** – teachers can do in-class data analysis to increase personalization. For example, Teacher A and B have 60 scholars do a silent warm-up in Math class on their laptops. Scholars submit the warm-up data on their laptops, and while Teacher A conducts a 15 minute lesson introduction on a new objective, Teacher B analyzes the data and creates groups for the second half of the period that will best personalize the application of the lesson for scholars.

Academic Program Gradual Release Overview¹⁶

Attachment 15 shows the general schedule overview for the entire 5-12 spectrum. A few important trends to point out in the schedules:

- 1) **Flexible grouping:** Scholars are placed in three preparation level groups in 5th grade, two levels in 6th grade, and a single heterogeneous level in 7th grade and beyond. (Note: this is an ideal we are aiming for, but may adjust as we evaluate each grade level of scholars each year).
- 2) **Team-teaching:** Team-teaching becomes more common as scholars move through the program. Math is team taught in 6th grade. By 9th grade all courses are team taught by at least two teachers. These teachers will be grouped so that a Master teacher is always the lead teacher, meaning that every scholar will have the opportunity to learn from the Master teachers in each subject area, and that every novice teacher will have the opportunity to work and develop under a Master teacher.
- 3) **Scholar autonomy and responsibility:** As scholars get older, the size of the class teams gets larger. For example, in 8th grade 50 scholars will take English IV from two English teachers. In 10th grade, 75 scholars will take English II from three English teachers. As the size of the group increases, the flexibility for personalization for each scholar via technology increases as well. Scholars will be gradually given more responsibility and freedom to direct their own learning as the size and flexibility of the learning time increases.
- 4) **Competency based mastery:** As scholars progress through the program, they will move from a cohort-based model that focuses on the values of community, striving for common goals, and reaching common assessments and benchmarks in conjunction with an individual approach that will allow for students to master standards at their own pace. For example, students will be “capped” by the Unit that they are studying in Stage 1 (5th and 6th grade), meaning that they will all move together as a class from Unit to Unit, although if a student does easily understand a Unit they may be challenged to extend their learning on some deeper topic related to that Unit as other students master the standards. As students get older, they will no longer be “capped” by a Unit, instead the “capped” unit will be the Course (meaning students can move as quickly or slowly as they need through a course), and then eventually there will be no cap at all (in grade 12).

¹⁶ VCA's Gradual Release model is based on:

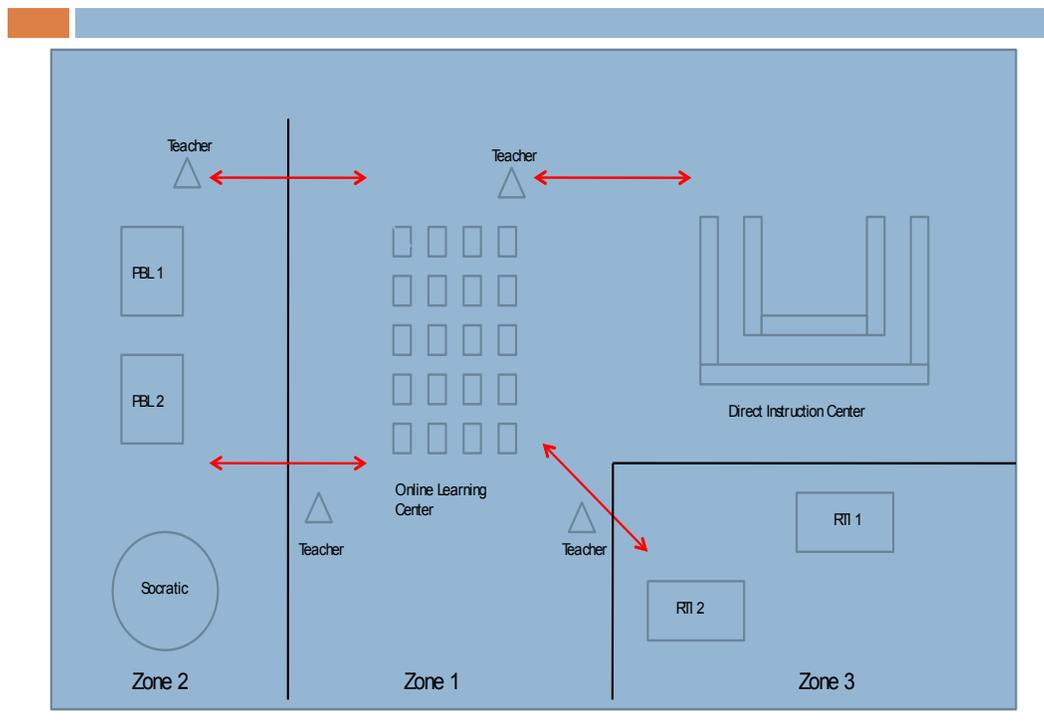
Fisher, D., & Frey, N. (2008). *Better learning through structured teaching: a framework for the gradual release of responsibility*. Alexandria, Va.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Both the cohort model and the competency based model bring different strengths and types of motivation to students and VCA believes that scholars will be best equipped to excel in a competency based model if they are first part of a strong, disciplined cohort in their middle school years.

- 5) **Personalization and self-directed autonomy:** As scholars progress through the program, they will have more opportunities to choose how they spend their time learning the curriculum. They will have multiple options for instruction: for example, in 12th grade math the entire 12th grade will have math during the same block (see Figure 2 below for a visual example). In this block, four teachers will be providing various supports to scholars: a large direct instruction lecture on key standards from the current unit by teacher A, a few smaller groups of scholars being supported by Teacher B as they work on studying past standards they are struggling with in a Response To Intervention center, a group of scholars working on their laptops and accessing online support for the unit (being overseen by Teacher C), and scholars working on Project Based Learning and a Socratic Seminar extending their learning on the current and future standards with Teacher D.

Figure 2: Example of Team Teaching Flex Model

Team Teaching Flex Model: 100 students, 4 teachers



This is one of many possible variations for teaching and learning in the team teaching setting. Having excellent technology and data systems within a flexible team teaching system allows for scholars to have exceptionally personalized learning experiences. For example, a part of many teaching rotations and homework for the 12th grade math example will include scholars identifying standards and objectives they are struggling with on their personal learning map, and then choosing the best avenue for learning that standard or objective. They will have multiple options to do so (Teacher D small group, Teacher A lecture, online video explanation, online content reading, online tutoring, or peer help from their classmates).

All of these options can be effective, and the scholar will be coached (by their mentor, teachers, and grade level coach) on how to make the best decisions in order to excel. By building self-discipline and metacognition as scholar’s progress through the program, it is intended that scholars will learn to thrive in this type of self-directed environment. Scholars will have the opportunity to use technology to accelerate and personalize their learning to a great extent in the high school Stages of the program.

Summary of Key Concepts of Academic Learning Program

A summary of the learning approach that will occur in the VCA program is as follows:

- **Gradual release**– scholars will move from teacher centered to scholar centered learning over four Stages; scholars will move from a highly structured, externally supported environment to a minimally structured, internally supported environment
- **Balanced approach** – VCA will have a balanced approach of providing high levels of personalized learning for each scholar while also providing rich group learning experiences. Scholar will have time to explore their personal passions and strengthen their personal learning styles, but will also spend time working on meaningful teams and learning the skills necessary to be thoughtful contributing members of their communities.
- **Competency Based** – as scholars progress through the VCA model, the focus will shift from a cohort of scholars in a single grade level to a personalized approach that allows for scholars to learn and excel at their own rate. The competency based approach will move from a Unit to Semester to Year to Stage, meaning that scholars will be “contained” in a cohort of scholars less and less as they gain more self-discipline, self-confidence, and self-awareness.

Structures to Support Academic Program

Listed below are 9 key structures that will support the academic program at VCA. Each of these structures and supports are essential to providing a world-class growth experience for each VCA scholar and family.

1) Intersession

Intersession is one of the most unique and powerful aspects of the Valor Collegiate model. In general, Intersession is the time each year that scholars take their elective courses. Instead of taking these courses each day (or a few times per week) during the academic year, scholars instead take them in-depth 3 to 4 times per year for 2 weeks (Stages 1-3) to 4 weeks (Stage 4) at a time. Intersession achieves multiple goals of the academic program:

- 1) Intersession allows for scholars to pursue their true passions in a much more authentic and meaningful way than a traditional elective course
- 2) Intersession allows for scholars to apply their academic learning in authentic ways
- 3) Intersession allows for scholars who are struggling in their course work large amounts of time for remediation so that they do not fall behind their peers
- 4) Intersession allows for faculty to spend large amounts of time in high quality professional development so that they can meet the VCA expectations of having a world class teacher in every classroom everyday

Table 16 below shows the basic information for Intersession in each of the four Stages of the program.

Table 16: Intersession Stage Development

Stage	Length	Dates	Sample Courses
Foundations (5/6)	3 two week sessions	Session 1: Mid-Oct Session 2: Early Jan Session 3: Late	Musical Theater, Martial Arts, Debate, Chess, Jazz Band, Math Remediation, Literacy Remediation

		May	
High School Prep (7/8)	3 two week sessions	Session 1: Mid-Oct Session 2: Early Jan Session 3: Late May	Same as above, plus Outward Bound, Community Service Projects, Language Immersion
College Prep (9/10)	3 two week sessions	Session 1: Mid-Oct Session 2: Early Jan Session 3: Late May	Same as above, plus Robotics, Technology, Health/Fitness, Model UN, Global Glimpse (Travel to other States and Countries), Wilderness Experience
Life U (11/12)	4 two week sessions	Session 1: Mid-Oct Session 2: Early Jan Session 3: Late March Session 4: Late May	Same as above, plus College Readiness, Internship, Leadership U* *VCA Leadership program where scholars work with younger VCA scholars (teaching their Intersession courses)

Intersession elective courses:

Scholars will map out an eight-year plan for their Intersession experiences with their school mentor (to be discussed on page 32) and their family. The plan will be revisited and revised each year as the scholar moves through the program. The goal of the eight-year experience is that scholars will:

- 1) Remediate any gaps in learning so that they graduate from VCA college ready and college accepted
- 2) Take a variety of courses of interest in-depth in order to explore and find areas of passion
- 3) Apply their academic learning in authentic, real-world settings
- 4) Learn the joy and discipline of committing to long-term, intentional Core Discipline
- 5) Build a strong capability for excelling on high level performance based assessments

Intersession courses will generally be broken into half-day courses, meaning that scholars will take two courses each Intersession – one in the morning and one in the afternoon. In the middle school Stages the majority of the courses will be taught on campus. As scholars grow older and have earned more autonomy, many of the courses will be held off campus at various sites. For example, VCA’s goal is for all seniors to take an internship course in a field that they hope to study in college. During these internship courses, scholars will spend most of their Intersession time actually working as an intern with a volunteering community organization. An Intersession Coordinator will oversee building strong community relationships with various community organizations, and also with writing strong curriculum that integrates what scholars are learning in their VCA academic classes and what they will be undertaking in their Intersession elective courses. Intersession is modeled after Summit Prep’s successful model in California. Summit Prep currently offers over 30 different Intersession courses to scholars through partnerships with local community organizations. VCA will plan to hire licensed Physical Education and Arts teachers to teach these courses. The courses offered in the first year will depend on the quality of teachers VCA can locate, as well as from student and parent input. The current plan for 5th grade in year one will be to offer Martial Arts, Debate/Chess, Musical Theater, and Performance Band. VCA will contract for an Intersession Coordinator to oversee the program. In addition, Attachment 13

has a copy of the Summit Prep Intersession Course List for 2013 to give an idea of the vision that VCA will be building towards over the next 8 years.

Response to Intervention Intersession:

Intersession is also used as a means for successfully remediating scholars who are below grade level, or who may be at grade level but behind in courses due to illness or other medical reasons. Intersession is one of the main levers in the VCA Response to Intervention framework, which will be discussed in more depth on page 58. In general, when scholars come to VCA below grade level, the six weeks of Intersession can be used to specifically target these scholars for personalized, small group support. Scholars who are identified as needing additional support through the RtI framework are placed in a morning and/or afternoon Math and/or Literacy remediation course during Intersession. These courses are taught by VCA educators and utilize technology-enhanced differentiation to ensure that each scholar receives personalized remedial instruction. As discussed in Section XIII: Professional Development, these remedial courses are always taught by two VCA teachers, with one who is an expert in remediation for at-risk scholars, as part of our Professional Development training for educators. These Intersession courses provide between 5,000 and 10,000 additional minutes of instruction for a scholar who is below grade level, or between 0.5 and 1.0 years' worth of additional time for academic growth. As discussed in our Response to Intervention framework, this use of time (as well as our Summer Bridge program) allows for scholars who are coming in behind grade level to gain approximately *3-4 years of additional learning time* during the Foundations Stage at VCA. It is our goal that 95% of VCA scholars will be at grade level before leaving the Foundations Stage (grade 6), and the use of Intersession to provide focused, remediated instruction by expert instructors in small groups to the most at-risk scholars is a major component of our plan to reach this goal.

Intersession Extended Semesters:

In addition to remediation courses provided for the most at-risk scholars, Intersession also has mini-courses from 3-5pm each day for scholars who are at or near grade level, but have not shown mastery in a sub-set of standards from a specific course. In these cases, scholars are requested to attend school for these "extended semester courses" in order to demonstrate mastery prior to the start of the next trimester. For example, if Johnny is struggling with one Unit in Math, two Units in History, and one spiraled standard in English, he will be assigned to stay at school three afternoons a week during Intersession (after his elective course is completed for the day) in order to continue to work on mastery of these standards. His actual VCA academic instructor will run the classes for the small group of scholars who need more time to demonstrate complete mastery of the course. These extended semester courses are both powerful motivators for scholars to ensure they have reached mastery in their courses prior to Intersession ("Yeah! I don't have any academic extended courses this Intersession! I get to just focus on my Guitar and Debate courses for two weeks!), and also a very important support for scholars who are working diligently toward mastery in a course but need more time. These courses are, again, modeled after the successful program at Summit Prep in California, where upon introduction; the number of scholars failing a course in 9th grade at Summit fell from 35% to 5%. We intend to have similar results at VCA – with our goal to improve upon those numbers by 9th grade because of our high quality remediation programs in Stages 1 and 2 of the program.

Professional Development in Intersession:

The final important aspect of the Intersession program is that it allows VCA educators the opportunity for extended periods of professional development. When scholars are taking their elective courses the VCA faculty are immersed in high quality professional development. In general, this allows a typical VCA teacher to spend about 10 times more hours¹⁷ developing as a professional than in typical private and public schools. The following is a brief overview of how Intersession will be used for VCA educators:

Intersession for Educators:

¹⁷ In 2009, MNPS High School teachers participated in an average of 9.46 professional development hours, while middle school teachers participated in an average of 9.97 hours. *An Analysis of MNPS Professional Development Activities by All Employees, Administrators, and Teachers* (2010).

For approximately 30 professional working days per year, VCA faculty will spend their time during Intersession doing:

- 1) In depth analysis of data from previous teaching cycle
- 2) Meeting as grade level and vertical teams to derive data-driven action plans for next teaching cycle
- 3) Meeting in professional learning teams working on common goals from Personalized Educator Plans (PEP) (developed with Principal in summer) – discussed on page 89
- 4) Team teaching remedial courses with observation and feedback protocol aimed at receiving large amounts of feedback on instruction with most at-risk scholars
- 5) Visiting other high-performing schools and teachers who have been targeted to help build specific skills aligned with their VCA Personalized Educator Plan (PEP)

2) Data-driven instruction

One of the Core Values of VCA is that of striving for Continuous Growth both as individuals and as an organization. We believe that the first step towards meaningful growth is having meaningful and accurate data. VCA intends to be a leader in measuring, collecting, analyzing, and making growth towards our goals based on high quality data. Data will be rigorously and thoughtfully collected on all aspects of the organization, and it will be presented in ways that allow for all stakeholders to be able to analyze it and make high quality mission driven decisions for how to best continue our growth.

Nowhere will this data-driven quest for growth be more apparent than with academic instruction.¹⁸ From our hiring process to our professional development training, from our choice of technology to our approach to assessment, all decisions at VCA will be grounded in trying to always allow for stakeholders (especially scholars and faculty) to access the simplest, highest quality data possible in order to make their next step towards meeting mastery of our academic standards the best one. The VCA Assessment approach will be discussed in Section VI - Assessments. In general, the following approach to data-driven instruction will be taken at VCA:

- 1) All courses will be **standards based**
- 2) All courses will be **backwards planned** to align with the **most current and rigorous college ready standards** (currently believed to be Common Core, AP, IB, and ACT standards)
- 3) All courses will be assessed on **common interim assessments** every **4 weeks**
- 4) All interim assessments will have a **balanced approach to question and format- type** (multiple choice, open response, essay) that best prepares scholars for success in college
- 5) All courses will use **formative assessment daily** to measure scholar's learning of the daily objective, usually through technology so that data can be stored
- 6) All courses will use **formative assessment weekly** that uploads scholar data to a centralized data system to track scholar growth on course standards
- 7) All educators will receive **significant professional development and coaching** on how to analyze daily, weekly, and interim assessment data in order to make personalized instruction plans for each scholar that both remediates and extends scholars in their areas of concern and growth
- 8) **The ultimate goal of data driven instruction is to teach scholars how to analyze their own data and make wise decisions about their learning**

VCA faculty and leadership will co-develop backwards-planned curriculum and assessments for each course. Each faculty member will then receive coaching on how to both teach each objective in their course, but more importantly, how to measure if scholars learned each objective and what to do if not all scholars learned the objective. This cycle of assessing, analyzing, and re-teaching with high quality data is the central piece of the VCA educator development plan and we intend to be leaders in the field in

¹⁸ Since NCLB, there has been an overall increase in the use of data in schools and districts. Often the use of data has been heavily results-based, rather than used for continuous academic improvement, as proposed at VCA. The Oregon DATA Project, which began in 2007, aimed to harness all of the data floating around for the benefit of classrooms and student achievement. As a result of the 4 year project that included 140 of the state's 200 schools, classroom instruction became differentiated and student achievement increased. See: <http://www.educase.edu/ero/article/oregon-data-project-building-culture-data-literacy>

executing this cycle. By designing the school year to have Intersession breaks after every 8 weeks of instruction (in addition to 1-2 days after each 4 weeks of instruction) for teachers to analyze and plan with their data, we believe that we will be able to set educators (and scholars) up for maximum success in taking the theory of data-driven instruction and making it a practical, efficient reality across the organization.

3) One to One laptop program

To best prepare scholars for success in college and life, VCA believes that scholars must learn at a deep level how to interact successfully with technology.¹⁹ In addition, we believe that having regular access to student data allows for all VCA community members to provide a truly personalized learning experience for each scholar. For these reasons, the VCA program will be a one to one laptop program. VCA plans to model our program after the highly successful Denver School of Science and Technology program. Starting in 6th grade, each scholar will be given a leased laptop at the beginning of the year. (5th graders will be trained over the course of the first year on the tools and technology used at VCA) 6th graders will be given training in the summer prior to entry into the program on the basics of their laptops. Subsequent training on the laptops will occur within the structures of their academic courses. Laptops will be used for the following purposes and activities, among others:

- 1) Taking assessments (daily, weekly, interim, summative)
- 2) Taking surveys (weekly, interim, summative)
- 3) Receiving graphic organizers for notes and assignments
- 4) Turning in class notes and assignments
- 5) Taking class notes
- 6) Using online content (i.e., Khan Academy, LearnZillion, Accelerated Reader)
- 7) Track mastery of standards and grades in courses (i.e., Powerschool, Illuminate)
- 8) Communicating with peers, parents, and faculty
- 9) Creating multi-media performance assessments
- 10) Completing homework assignments

The one to one laptop program will allow for scholars to become highly proficient in using technology over their eight years in the VCA academic program. In addition, it will allow for VCA to better execute our data driven instruction strategies by allowing teachers the ability to quickly upload assessment information, even from daily assessments. Lastly, the one to one program allows for our ultimate goal of having scholars become successful self-directed learners through consistent access to high quality data on their personal progress and multiple tools, content, and peers to aid in their continued growth. VCA recognizes that not all scholars will have internet access at home and intends to work with families to get discounted internet services through programs such as Connect2Compete and has budgeted accordingly to help with those costs when necessary.

4) Mentor program

While all of the structures in the VCA academic program are important to the success of our scholars, perhaps none is more so than the mentoring program. At VCA, each scholar will be assigned to a mentor group in 5th grade. The mentor group will be a heterogeneous group of approximately 16-20 same-sex scholars that is overseen by one of the VCA faculty members. The VCA faculty member stays with the mentor group for four years (and possibly eight!). The mentor group meets for 15 minutes each morning, and for 40 minutes on Fridays. The mentor group is also the main grouping for scholars on school trips, school celebrations, and on school study trips. The mentor has the following responsibilities for his/her mentor group:

- 1) Coach mentee and family on developing a Personalized Learning Plan
 - a. Coach mentee and family on academic progress
 - b. Coach mentee and family on non-academic progress
- 2) Main point of contact with family re: successes and concerns

¹⁹ *1:1 Laptop Initiatives: A summary of research findings across six states*, conducted by the NC State University in 2011, confirms that, when properly introduced, supported, and integrated, 1:1 laptop initiatives have been found to: increase scholar engagement (especially for special needs, disabled, at-risk, and low-achieving students), improve academic skills, improve technology skills for both scholars and teachers, and promote the development of 21st Century skills for scholars, including innovation, creativity, problem-solving, and higher-order thinking.

- 3) Teach Connections Curriculum to mentees on Fridays (Connections is a curriculum for mentors covering Academic Literacy, Health, Adolescent Issues, Community Building written by Summit Prep – see Attachment 16 for an example of 9th grade. VCA will write a new version by June 2014)

The VCA mentor-mentee relationship will be a special point of emphasis. In order for VCA’s mentoring program to positively impact scholars, research and our experience confirms that we must ensure the program, “...establishes close, enduring connections that promote positive development change.” (DeBois & Rhodes, 2008) To this end, VCA will conduct professional development with all faculty members to ensure that scholars are able to build trusting, authentic relationships with both their mentor and their fellow mentee. The mentor will also build strong relationships with the mentee family, making communication with the school and the family a very personal, authentic experience. The mentor program will be modeled after the highly successful model used at Summit Public Schools. Because of the length of time of the relationship (four years) and the amount of time spent together (on average over 50 hours over Stages 1 and 2), the mentor gets to know their mentees (and their mentees family and life outside of school) at a very personal level, and is able to help coach them through the challenging times of adolescence.

In addition, some of the strongest bonds and friendships for scholars naturally emerge from these diverse scholar groups – allowing for scholars to get to know scholars from all different backgrounds in a thoughtful, carefully planned manner, and also during less structured trips and celebrations. For each grade level at VCA, a grade level Coach (certificated Special Education teacher) will oversee the mentoring program: writing the curriculum for the Connections program, training the faculty on how to be effective mentors, and spending time as needed with scholars and families who are in need of more specific, professional assistance. The overall result of the mentoring program is essentially the strong foundational glue of the VCA model: scholars, families, and faculty all experience a powerful, personal connection to the VCA family, and through these high-trust personal relationships the ability to really challenge scholars to grow to their full potential is made possible.

5) Personalized Learning Plans

The personalized learning plan (PLP) is the document at the heart of the VCA mentoring program. The PLP document is provided in Attachment 18. The PLP document is the product of a goal setting process that each VCA scholar and family is coached through by his or her mentor. Each August the mentor, scholar, and scholar’s parents meet for about 1-2 hours to develop the document. The PLP document starts with the end in mind: scholars and their family start in 5th grade by discussing and setting goals for what type of life they envision for themselves. What type of job? Where are they going to live? What qualities will they be known for? How will they give back to the world? To their community? From these questions, possible colleges are chosen, and then goals are set that need to be met in order to attend those colleges. Goals are then backwards planned to “what does your weekly schedule in 5th grade need to look like in order to obtain this kind of life?” The PLP also pushes the scholar and family to set goals around character strength development, healthy living, and family relationships. The PLP document becomes a living document that is constantly re-visited by scholar, mentor, faculty, and family.

Several times a year the document is formally re-visited, and the best examples of the PLP being used successfully will be when it hangs on the scholar’s refrigerator at home, evoking constant discussion and evaluation within the family. The effect over time for both families and scholars is significant: VCA scholars will become excellent goal setters, and will deepen their relationships with their families and their mentor as they use the PLP to help guide them towards goals that they find inspiring and meaningful. The PLP is also used as an extension of the 504 and IEP process, which will be discussed in Section IV: At-Risk Scholars and Scholars with Special needs. The PLP and mentor program will be modeled after the highly successful Summit Prep program. In a 2012 survey of scholars at Summit Prep, 94% answered ‘Strongly Agree’ to the question “the mentor program at Summit Prep was important to my growth as a scholar and a person” – the highest positive answer on the annual scholar survey.

6) Valor Collegiate Badge System

VCA will design a system of “Badges” that scholars can earn throughout their time at VCA by completing various cognitive and non-cognitive challenges, or for demonstrating Core Values and Character Strengths. The incorporation of the badge system is based on the idea that, “students must derive some sense of personal reward from specific tasks before they can be expected to generate any significant motivation to carry out the task”. (Renchler, 1992) The Badge system will become a highly valued and celebrated part of the VCA culture. Scholars will receive actual Badges that will be sewn onto their school uniforms for the various accomplishments. Some Badges will be relatively easy to obtain, while others will be very difficult and rare to earn. When Badges are earned, the VCA faculty and scholars will have public ceremonies to celebrate community members’ accomplishments. In addition to being a visual cultural badge of honor, the Badge system will also be an important part of the VCA report card – page two of the report card will contain a comprehensive list of each Badge earned by a scholar. These Badges will be particularly helpful to college admissions teams as they evaluate VCA graduates. Over an eight-year period of time it is expected that a scholar’s list of Badges will paint a very clear picture of that scholar, especially in their accomplishments outside of the classroom.

Table 16 below lists a sample of possible Badges that the VCA faculty will design:

Table 16: Sample Badge Overview

Badge Name	Core Value or Strength	Requirement
Socrates	Integrity	Demonstrated great integrity at difficult moment
Mother Teresa	Kindness	Demonstrated unusual kindness in a difficult moment
Apollo 13	Innovation	Completed Intersession Challenge of building a rocket launch that successfully landed in pool 100 meters away
Joaquin Tovar	Engagement / Leadership	Spoke at a legislative hearing re: future of public education
Cal Ripken Jr	Excellence	Perfect Attendance for the Year!
Valor	Personal Bravery	Acted as a leader in the community in a very difficult moment; embodied personal bravery to overcome a difficult challenge
Read Baby Read!	Excellence / Growth	Grew more than 2 years in Lexile reading scores in one year!

7) Morning meeting

One of the most powerful drivers of culture and academics in many high-performing schools is the all-school meeting. VCA will have a Morning Meeting each day to set a positive, focused tone for all community members. The meetings will be based off of the meeting structure used at the Denver School of Science and Technology (DSST).

VCA intends to have vibrant, joyful, structured Morning Meetings that set the tone for greatness every day in the school. Below is a list of typical events that occur at Morning Meetings:

- Celebrations of community and individual accomplishments (Badge Ceremonies, Core Value and Character Awards, College Acceptance, etc.)
- Public apologies and ownership of mistakes by faculty and scholars
- Stories and examples of Core Values and Character Strengths in action
- Shout-outs and appreciations of fellow community members
- Affirmation of positive intentions for day

Morning meeting will last for 12 minutes and will include highly structured routines for how to celebrate, shout-out, apologize, listen, and generally show high levels of kindness for all community members.

8) Core Discipline

In order for VCA scholars to be successful in college and life, they need to develop skill-sets and mindsets beyond the academic classroom. The College and Career Ready Outcomes (CCO) sets standards in the development of 21st Century skills that go beyond the typical academic skills tested on the ACT and AP course exams. Possibly the most important of these non-academic skills is the ability to self-manage, which has been identified as such by prominent world-wide bodies including the APEC Education Network.²⁰ In the CCO at VCA, developing strong Self-Management skills is an important aspect of the academic program. Self-Management contains the following skill areas and mindsets:

- Ability to set and track goals
- Ability to establish priorities based on goals
- Ability to manage time based on priorities
- Ability to execute tasks with precision and accuracy
- Ability to persist
- Ability to complete tasks and projects
- Ability to commit to learning a difficult task over an extended period of time

In order for VCA scholars to master these important skills and mindsets, they will all undertake a Core Discipline while at VCA. Each scholar's Core Discipline of choice will be discussed with their mentor and family during their PLP. Scholars will have the first two Stages of the VCA experience to experiment with different possible Core Disciplines and then will commit to a Core Discipline by the start of Stage 3 (9th grade). Scholars will then commit to practicing their Core Discipline over the remaining four years at VCA. Possible Core Discipline choices might be:

- Martial Arts
- Chess
- Debate
- Computer Programming
- Dance
- Musical Instrument
- Writing
- Running
- Foreign Language
- Meditation/Yoga

The objectives of the Core Discipline commitment for all VCA scholars are:

- 1) To develop a deep appreciation of having a growth mindset
- 2) To learn persistence and self-discipline in consistently working towards growth in a practice over a period of over six years
- 3) To experience the joy and self-confidence derived from experiencing substantial growth over long periods of time due to specific, intentional practice of a set of skills

VCA faculty and families will also be encouraged to commit to Core Disciplines. The Core Value of Core Discipline will be celebrated and valued throughout the VCA organization. Core Discipline will be integrated into the organization in the following ways:

Scholars:

1. Will commit to 4 years of commitment to a Core Discipline of their choice
2. Will spend 6 of 16 Intersession courses practicing their Core Discipline commitment (or an equal amount of time outside of school hours in lieu of Intersession courses)
3. Will study and practice the ideas of Carol Dweck's Growth Mindset (a key idea in high quality practice) in the Summer Bridge program and also in academic classes
4. Will celebrate at least 4 years of Core Discipline with community in a culminating public display of skills acquired from Core Discipline work

²⁰ The APEC Education Network consists of 21 international economies, including the U.S. www.apec.org.

Faculty:

1. Will commit to approaching teaching as a Core Discipline
2. Will be highly trained in coaching and developing talent through practice, namely through professional development focused on *Mindset*, Carol Dweck, *The Talent Code*, Daniel Coyle (2009), and *Practice Perfect*, Doug Lemov.
3. Will commit to using the principles of practice and growth mindset as part of the Core Instructional Strategies used in VCA academic and non-academic settings
4. Will commit to a Core Discipline outside of school that they can use as an example for scholars (including the option of teaching)

Table 17 below shows the evolution of Core Discipline for scholars as they move through the VCA program:

Table 17: Core Discipline Overview

	5 th	6 th	7 th	8 th
Intersession Course 1 (AM)	Remediation OR Personal Passion OR Core Discipline	Remediation OR Personal Passion OR Core Discipline	Core Discipline	Core Discipline
Intersession Course 2 (PM)	Remediation OR Personal Passion	Remediation OR Personal Passion	Personal Passion	Personal Passion
	9 th	10 th	11 th	12 th
Intersession Course 1 (AM)	Core Discipline	Core Discipline	Core Discipline	Core Discipline
Intersession Course 2 (PM)	Leadership and Community	Leadership and Community	College Readiness	Internship

Not all scholars will follow this course outline exactly. Some scholars will choose to pursue their Core Discipline outside of school, and will therefore use their Intersession courses learning about other areas of passion. Intersession course progression is personalized for each scholar’s needs and development. Each scholar’s Intersession progression will be discussed in their Personalized Learning Plan meeting with their family and mentor. Overall, however, each scholar will set goals in their PLP to commit to spending greater than 150 hours per year practicing a personal passion. This passion will be developed over a minimum of six years of time, leading to over 900 hours of committed time spent deeply practicing a set of skills. Scholars will demonstrate their growing mastery of their Core Discipline commitment in 8th grade and again in 12th grade to their community. The cumulative Core Discipline Badge will be one of the most valued of the cultural Badges at VCA. All scholars and faculty will be celebrated for their commitment and growth at an annual Core Discipline event held at VCA each Spring.

In summary, the VCA community will value and celebrate commitment to passions that require long-term investment in building skills for mastery. It is our belief that because of this unique focus and development, VCA scholars will be especially well prepared to meet the mission of the school: to lead inspired and purposeful lives upon graduation from college.

9) **Social-Emotional Development**

VCA recognizes that the development of scholar's social and emotional skills are as important to their future success and happiness as their academic skills. VCA graduates will need both sets of skills to be able to truly thrive. VCA will approach the development of social-emotional skills, using both student-centered and environment-focused approaches²¹, in the following ways:

1) **KMS system with SEI data**

VCA intends to partner with Illuminate²² and Six Seconds²³ to build an online, standards based Knowledge Management System (KMS) that includes social-emotional intelligence (SEI) data. This SEI data will be standards based and scholars will work towards mastery of the standards throughout their VCA experience. The scholar's mentor and grade level counselor will oversee the monitoring and development of growth towards mastery of the SEI standards. Growth will be tracked through the Personalized Learning Plan (PLP). All community members will have access to progress towards these standards via simple to understand School Outcomes.

2) **Academic course integration**

VCA will have a thoughtful, backwards planned map for each course that includes SEI standards within courses. As a simple example, in order to develop persistence, a scholar may use the diligent writing of multiple drafts of a persuasive essay as evidence of growth on this SEI standard. VCA intends to write this integrated curriculum over the course of the next year with Six Seconds leadership as a partner in the work.

3) **Connections curriculum in mentor groups**

The Connections curriculum mentors teach each week will integrate SEI standards. As an example, one of the three standards of the EQ-in-Action model (the Social-Emotional learning standards in the CCO framework) is the 'Know Yourself by Recognizing Patterns'. A Connections lesson would involve having scholars list and share areas of their life where they consistently get into a pattern of bad habits using a reading from *The Power of Habit* by Charles Duhigg. A heavy emphasis of the Connections curriculum in regard to SEI learning will be faculty modeling and on using culturally relevant role models as inspiration for living with high SEI.

4) **Personalized Learning Plan**

Developing high character, social-emotional intelligence, and the VCA core values will be an important parts of the PLP process. Scholars will set goals around each of these areas and will meet with their mentor, grade level counselor, peer mentor group, and their parents about their growth in these areas. Over the course of a school year, a scholar will meet at least three times to review progress on their goals, and they will be available online at all times for the scholar and the scholar's family.

5) **Badge challenges**

Multiple Badge challenges will include standards for SEI and character development, as well as the VCA Core Values. For example, the highly celebrated and valued 'Kindness Badge' may be earned through undertaking a community service project that demonstrates exceptional empathy and service – two standards from the CCO SEI standards.

²¹ In the book, *Foundations for Social and Emotional Learning*, (2004) Zins, Bloodworth, Weissbert, and Walberg, suggest concentrating on SEL is more impactful when it is a whole-school effort. The book cites the 2003 review conducted by the Collaborative Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), of the 80 national programs reviewed that integrated SEL with the academic program, 83% realized academic gains when combined with effective teaching practices. CASEL offers abundant research on the benefits of SEL: www.casel.org.

²² Illuminate is a Knowledge Management System used by Summit Public Schools that VCA intends to partner with to use in our school. Illuminate combines gradebook, assessment system, parent portal, attendance, data management, report cards, Special Education system, scheduling, grades, discipline, Medicaid billing, IEP writing, and analytical reporting in one tool.

²³ Six Seconds is a non-profit organization in Palo Alto CA that was founded by Anabel Jensen, the leader of the famed Nueva School. Six Seconds has developed a social-emotional learning curriculum that is being used at Nueva School, Synapse Schools, and Connect Community Charter School. Ms. Jensen and Mr. Dickson from VCA are working on a grant to take the Six Seconds model and create a digital mapping tool for individual students that will be linked to Illuminate so that students and teachers can access both academic AND social-emotional information about each student.

6) Cultural value and celebration

The VCA community will value growth and achievement in SEI and character development equally along with academic growth and achievement. This placement of high status on being kind, high character human beings will be reflected in all cultural celebrations, and throughout the general culture of the community.

7) VCA discipline system

The VCA discipline system will be detailed in Section VIII: School Culture. The discipline system will be defined by the question “how does this opportunity allow us to develop this scholar?”²² Every discipline action will be through the lens of having the consequence for each community member’s action being carefully structured to push that scholar’s growth in SEI and character development. A scholar’s success and missteps will be part of the evidence that is used to show their growth towards the CCO standards in these areas.

Standards and Curriculum

VCA will utilize a standards-based curriculum that is aligned to the most rigorous college ready standards, including the Common Core and Tennessee State Standards and Performance Indicators. **VCA intends to develop internal standards that are a reflection of the complex number of standards that are necessary for scholars to be successful in and beyond college.** Table 18 below lists the various standards that are incorporated into the VCA College and Career Outcomes (CCO):

Table 18: Standards used to build VCA Standards in College and Career Ready Outcomes

	Stage 1:	Stage 2:	Stage 3:	Stage 4:
	Foundations	High School Prep	College Prep	Life U
English	Common Core TN State Standards Six Seconds SEI	Common Core TN State Standards Explore ACT Six Seconds SEI	Common Core TN State Standards Plan ACT Six Seconds SEI	Common Core IB SL Literature and Language AP English Language AP English Literature ACT Six Seconds SEI
Math	Common Core TN State Standards MYP IB Six Seconds SEI	Common Core TN State Standards MYP IB Explore ACT Six Seconds SEI	Common Core TN State Standards Plan ACT Six Seconds SEI	Common Core IB SL Mathematics AP Statistics AP Calculus ACT Six Seconds SEI
Science	Next Gen SS CC Literacy TN State Standards	Next Gen SS CC Literacy TN State Standards	Next Gen SS CC Literacy TN State Standards	Next Gen SS CC Literacy TN State Standards

²² In 2006, the American Psychological Association recommended an end to zero tolerance discipline policies, citing the fact that zero tolerance does not improve school safety or culture, and such programs ignore mitigating or extenuating circumstances and miss an opportunity to teach children respect and inspire their trust in adults. See: www.apa.org

	MYP IB Six Seconds SEI	MYP IB Explore ACT Six Seconds SEI	Pre-IB Plan ACT Six Seconds SEI	AP Environmental Science Six Seconds SEI
History	TN State Standards CC Literacy MYP IB Six Seconds SEI	TN State Standards CC Literacy MYP IB Explore ACT Six Seconds SEI	TN State Standards CC Literacy Pre-IB AP World History Plan ACT Six Seconds SEI	TN State Standards CC Literacy AP US History AP Government AP Economics Six Seconds SEI
Electives	State and National Standards for course Six Seconds SEI	State and National Standards for course Six Seconds SEI	State and National Standards for course Six Seconds SEI	State and National Standards for course Six Seconds SEI
Social-Emotional Learning	SEI: Six Seconds Kansas SECD Illinois State Standards	SEI: Six Seconds Kansas SECD Illinois State Standards	SEI: Six Seconds Kansas SECD Illinois State Standards	SEI: Six Seconds Kansas SECD Illinois State Standards
Character Strengths	Six Seconds SEI Kansas SECD Character Education Quality Standards	Six Seconds SEI Kansas SECD Character Education Quality Standards	Six Seconds SEI Kansas SECD Character Education Quality Standards	Six Seconds SEI Kansas SECD Character Education Quality Standards

Curriculum Development and Alignment

The curriculum development process that we intend to adopt is based upon Roxbury Preparatory Charter

School - one of the highest performing urban charter schools in the country. This process was further refined over the past five years at Summit Public Schools where it has proven to result in very high quality, standards-based curriculum. As documented in the previous section, multiple assessment standards will guide VCA's curriculum and instruction. The Curriculum Alignment Development process is based on the understanding that teachers must be able to answer the following three questions with uncompromising clarity and specificity in order to get scholars to achieve at high levels:

1. What do my scholars need to know or be able to do at the end of the year? (curriculum)

2. How do I make sure that scholars have really learned the concepts I wanted them to know? (assessment)

3. What is the most effective way for me to teach scholars these important concepts? (instruction)

The Curriculum Alignment and Development process is designed to ensure that teachers have a deep understanding of the answers to those questions for an entire course of study before instruction begins. By knowing this, they can make fully informed decisions about assessments, scope and sequence and instructional delivery.

It is a philosophical belief that VCA educators must play an integral role in the development and alignment of the curriculum with the VCA CCO standards, and both external and internal assessments. This process is among the most important professional development that educators at VCA undertake each year. However, it is acknowledged that a dilemma of teacher development is answering the question "How much of the curriculum should be developed by teachers (which is great PD but takes large time investments) versus how much of the curriculum should be given to teachers (which saves time and ensures quality across a school/organization/District)?" We recognize this dilemma and generally fall on the side of using curriculum development as a powerful professional development tool with teachers.

However, VCA's goal is that all educators are provided with a curriculum alignment template for their course, rather than develop their own each year.²³ This is especially true for educators new to the VCA organization, as they will have a steep learning curve in acclimating to a new organization. The template will have, in the first year, the suggested sequence, assessments, and instructional methods for a course as determined by VCA leadership. The professional development for educators will then focus on studying the current version of the course template and developing suggestions about how to take the current best-of-class template and improve upon it, especially for the current group of scholar's preparation level and also for that educator's strengths.

In subsequent years the course template will have the additional advantage of having improvements and suggestions from the educator who taught the course that year. Over time, the course templates will be living documents that represent the best of the community learning over time of how to effectively teach a course to VCA scholars.

In the Summer of 2013 VCA will either hire an highly qualified Founding Principal, or Lead Founder will be elected by the Board to lead the school as Principal. In either case a very experienced leader will oversee the development of Curriculum Alignment Templates for each of the VCA courses in Stages 1 and 2 (Middle School). By 2016 VCA plans to hire a Chief Academic Officer (CAO) that will also oversee the development of the Curriculum Alignment Templates for Stages 3 and 4 (High School).

During every summer, the Dean of Curriculum and Instruction (DCI – hired in Year 2 in the model) in coordination with the Principal and CAO will oversee the curriculum development process, beginning

²³ In 2011, Colorado's District Sample Curriculum Project worked with 500 educators from 61 schools to compile a bank of 670 standards-based curriculum samples created by teachers – for teachers, utilizing a template as a starting point, much like VCA envisions. In just a few months, Colorado teachers created hundreds of new curriculum samples that are accessible and can be modified by any teacher in the state. Colorado curriculum samples and templates can be found here: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/StandardsAndInstruction/SampleCurriculumProject.asp>

with professional development training for teachers during the extended multiple-week summer orientation and professional development. Before each summer orientation, to identify the precise areas of content knowledge and skills our scholars should master in each course at each grade level, the DCI will perform a detailed item analysis of all standardized assessments that our scholars will take with the Chief Academic Officer. The DCI also guides the instructional team in this same type of detailed analysis so that teachers have a crystal clear understanding of what scholars must know and be able to do.

Once thoroughly analyzed and identified, those specific, measurable areas of skills and content are combined with the standards of the VCA College and Career Ready Outcomes to create the specific, rigorous and measurable internal academic standards for each course in each grade. The instructional team then carefully considers the best methods for teaching and assessing these standards. In order to best maximize the first summer professional development sessions, VCA leadership will write the 5th grade curriculum in its entirety in the upcoming planning year for the school (see Attachment 1 – Start-Up Plan). These Curricular documents will then be reviewed and improved upon during the initial professional development sessions in the Summer of 2014.

Overview of Course of Study

High School Preparatory Program – Middle School (Stages 1 and 2)

Stages 1 and 2 of the VCA program focus on building a solid foundation of literacy and mathematics skill and content knowledge, along with experience in applying this foundation in authentic settings. We believe that scholars ultimately need to master critical thinking skills and apply them in a wide array of contexts to demonstrate deep mastery of a subject, but we also believe that we must be deliberate in achieving that end goal. The development of real-world problem solving and critical thinking skills must first involve the creation of a solid foundation of basic skills upon which all advanced learning rests. Because of this, Valor Collegiate designs the Stage 1 program around a rigorous, core literacy, mathematics, and science curriculum. We begin by building a solid foundation of literacy with scholars demonstrating fluency at comprehension on or above grade level and clear, organized, and detailed writing of five- paragraph essays so that scholars are prepared for a demanding Literature and Composition course by ninth grade. We build and strengthen scholars' numeracy skills so that by the end of Stage 2, scholars complete a rigorous, full-year Algebra I course and are prepared to excel in Geometry and/or Algebra II classes upon entering high school.

College Preparatory Program - High School (Stages 3 and 4)

Stages 3 and 4 of the VCA program build upon the skills and knowledge mastered in the middle school. Scholars are enrolled in an accelerated, academically rigorous college preparatory program that exceeds the Tennessee graduation requirements and prepares them for success in college and in life. Scholars have a solid foundation of core skills and are prepared to deeply analyze literature and text, write college level essays, solve higher order mathematical problems, design sophisticated scientific experiments, and understand the relationships between U.S. and world history, government, and economics. Scholars will be enrolled in at least 2 AP courses, and many will choose to take more AP courses. Beginning in ninth grade, scholars will also begin to expand their learning through the study of a foreign language and culture. A minimum of two years of foreign language will be required for all Valor Collegiate scholars.

Language Arts (Reading and Writing)

- **Reading:** In the Foundations Stage 1 (5th/6th grade), the reading curriculum begins with a concentration on fluency, comprehension, and if necessary phonics and with an introduction to sophisticated pieces of literature for study and analysis. Instruction and skill development focus on identifying perspective, drawing supporting details, increasing vocabulary, and identifying literary elements such as tone and mood.

Stages 2-4 (7th-12th) extend the reading capabilities of the scholars, and focus on specific genres of literature, progressing from world literature, to American literature and then to comparative literature.

Scholars develop a deeper understanding of both the structure and the meaning of a work of literature, studying how the form and style of a work of literature is affected by region and historical period. In addition, scholars analyze how themes are influenced by society and will start to identify recurring themes in a broadly representative collection of literary works.

- **Writing:** In Foundations, the writing curriculum begins by focusing on grammar, the writing process, and basic writing conventions. In addition, scholars are introduced to the editing and proofreading process. They then start to expand their use of descriptive words and complex sentences, and start to explore different styles of writing. By the end of the Stage 2 (8th grade), scholars develop a personal style of writing, write varying types of essays and narratives, and critique and proofread writing samples.

In Stages 3 and 4 (9th-12th), scholars continue to improve their writing skills based upon the Common Core and Tennessee Content Standards. In ninth grade, scholars become proficient at technical writing, while in later grades scholars explore persuasive and expository writing, culminating in the successful completion of an IB quality extended essay prior to graduation, as well as AP English Language in 11th grade and AP English Literature in 12th grade.

Table 19: Course progression for ELA.

Foundations		High School Prep		College Prep		Life University	
5 th	6 th	7 th	8 th	9 th	10 th	11 th	12 th
Reading I	Reading II	Reading III	Reading IV	English I	English II	AP English Language	AP English Literature
Writing I	Writing II	Writing III	Writing IV	Composition I	Composition II	Composition III	Theory of Knowledge / Extended Essay

Table 20: Additional Curriculum utilized in ELA Course Progression

Course	Curriculum	Descriptor	Rationale
Grade 5	Core Knowledge Readings and Poetry	Classroom curriculum will follow Core Knowledge	Rigorous reading lists
	Achieve 3000 / Compass Learning	Blended and RtI supplements will use Achieve 3000, Compass Learning	Excellent Lexile differentiated readings
Grade 6	Fountas and Pinnel Leveled Reading Accelerated Reader Program	SSR will use Accelerated Reader and Fountas and Pinnel Leveled Reading	Excellent levelled reading Good data tracking, Lexile levelled reading
	AP SpringBoard	Classroom curriculum will follow AP Springboard and Core Knowledge	Backwards planned to AP English Language and Literature
Grade 6	Core Knowledge Readings and Poetry	Blended and RtI supplements will use Achieve 3000, Compass Learning	Rigorous reading lists
	Achieve 3000 / Compass Learning	SSR will use Accelerated Reader and Fountas and Pinnel	Excellent Lexile differentiated readings

	Fountas and Pinnel Leveled Reading Accelerated Reader Program	Leveled Reading	Excellent levelled reading Good data tracking, Lexile levelled reading
Grade 7	AP SpringBoard Core Knowledge Readings and Poetry Achieve 3000 / Compass Learning Fountas and Pinnel Leveled Reading Accelerated Reader Program	Classroom curriculum will follow AP Springboard and Core Knowledge Blended and RtI supplements will use Achieve 3000, Compass Learning SSR will use Accelerated Reader and Fountas and Pinnel Leveled Reading	Backwards planned to AP English Language and Literature Rigorous reading lists Excellent Lexile differentiated readings Excellent levelled reading Good data tracking, Lexile levelled reading
Grade 8	AP SpringBoard Core Knowledge Readings and Poetry Achieve 3000 / Compass Learning Fountas and Pinnel Leveled Reading Accelerated Reader Program ACT Explore - Classworks	Classroom curriculum will follow AP Springboard and Core Knowledge Blended and RtI supplements will use Achieve 3000, Compass Learning SSR will use Accelerated Reader and Fountas and Pinnel Leveled Reading Classworks online for ACT tutoring	Backwards planned to AP English Language and Literature Rigorous reading lists Excellent Lexile differentiated readings Excellent levelled reading Good data tracking, Lexile levelled reading Essential preparation program for ACT
Grade 9	AP SpringBoard Great Books Foundation - Literacy ACT Plan - Classworks Empower 3000 / Compass Learning	Classroom curriculum will supplement with AP SpringBoard and Great Books Literary list Blended classroom will use Empower3000 and Compass Learning RtI and mentors will use Classworks – ACT Plan	Backwards planned to AP English Language and Literature Excellent supplement to Springboard, especially in novels Essential preparation program for ACT Excellent remediation/extension for personalization
Grade 10	AP SpringBoard Great Books Foundation -	Classroom curriculum will supplement with AP SpringBoard and Great Books Literary list Blended classroom will use Empower3000 and Compass	Backwards planned to AP English Language and Literature Excellent supplement to Springboard, especially in

	Literacy ACT Plan – Classworks / Grockit Empower 3000 / Compass Learning	Learning RtI and mentors will use Classworks – ACT Plan and Grockit	novels Essential preparation program for ACT Excellent remediation/extension for personalization
Grade 11	AP English Language – Summit Prep Great Books Foundation - Literacy ACT Prep - Grockit Empower 3000 / Compass Learning	Classroom curriculum will use Summit Prep and Great Books Blended classroom will use Empower3000 and Compass Learning ACT Prep will use Grockit	Backwards planned to AP English Language and Literature Excellent supplement to Springboard, especially in novels Essential preparation program for ACT Excellent remediation/extension for personalization
Grade 12	AP English Language Literature – Summit Prep Great Books Foundation - Literacy ACT Prep - Grockit Empower 3000 / Compass Learning	Classroom curriculum will use Summit Prep and Great Books Blended classroom will use Empower3000 and Compass Learning ACT Prep will use Grockit	Backwards planned to AP English Language and Literature Excellent supplement to Springboard, especially in novels Essential preparation program for ACT Excellent remediation/extension for personalization

Mathematics

In the Foundations Stage, scholars have extended minutes of mathematics (73 minutes/day) to ensure a solid foundation of skills and concepts and prepare for an accelerated high school mathematics curriculum. The mathematics courses have a dual focus: procedures (skills/computation) and problem solving (application). Initially, fifth grade scholars focus on mastery of arithmetic operations, fractions, percentages, basic geometric concepts, simple variable use, and probability. Throughout middle school, they study linear equations and symbolic algebra, planar geometry, theoretical probability and statistical analysis. By the end of eighth grade, all scholars will complete Algebra I class, setting them up to begin high school in Geometry. In middle school, the problem solving class complements the skills/computation class; the same concepts are taught using word problems, scenarios, and real world context to ensure that scholars are able to apply their mathematical skills and develop their critical thinking skills through logical reasoning. This focus on mathematics allows for accelerated remediation of scholars who lack basic skills and preparation for a college preparatory focus in high school.

In high school, scholars focus on an advanced curriculum that prepares them to complete college-preparatory math courses. In eleventh grade, math tracks begin to personalize. All scholars are required to take math every year. Additionally, each scholar will complete either AP Statistics or AP Calculus before graduation. These courses are aligned to the Common Core and Tennessee State Content Standards. Table 21 displays the typical course of study for Mathematics.

Table 21: Course Progression for Mathematics

Foundations		High School Prep		College Prep		Life University	
5 th	6 th	7 th	8 th	9 th	10 th	11 th	12 th
Procedures I	Procedures II	Pre-Algebra	Algebra I	Geometry	Algebra II	Pre-Calculus	AP Calculus
Problem Solving I	Problem Solving II	Algebra PSI	Algebra PSII			Trigonometry	AP Stats

Table 22: Additional Curriculum utilized in Math Course Progression

<u>Course</u>	<u>Curriculum</u>	<u>Descriptor</u>	<u>Rationale</u>
Grade 5	KIPP National Math Curriculum	Classroom instruction built around KIPP and Singapore curriculum	Excellent 5th/6th grade math curriculum, particularly for struggling students
	Math in Focus: Singapore Math	Supplemented with blended options (i-Ready, Achieve 3000, Compass, Khan, and ST)	Excellent alignment with Common Core; rigorous
	i-Ready Achieve 3000 / Compass Learning / Khan Academy / ST Math		Used for personalized remediation and extension
Grade 6	KIPP National Math Curriculum	Classroom instruction built around KIPP and Singapore curriculum	Excellent 5th/6th grade math curriculum, particularly for struggling students
	Math in Focus: Singapore Math	Supplemented with blended options (i-Ready, Achieve 3000, Compass, Khan, and ST)	Excellent alignment with Common Core; rigorous
	i-Ready Achieve 3000 / Compass Learning / Khan Academy / ST Math		Used for personalized remediation and extension
Grade 7	KIPP National Math Curriculum	Classroom instruction built around KIPP and Singapore curriculum	Good 7th/8th grade math curriculum, particularly for struggling students
	Math in Focus: Singapore Math	Supplemented with blended options (i-Ready, Achieve 3000, Compass, Khan, and ST)	Excellent alignment with Common Core; rigorous
	i-Ready Achieve 3000 / Compass Learning / Khan Academy / ST Math		Used for personalized remediation and extension

<p>Grade 8</p>	<p>KIPP National Math Curriculum</p> <p>Math in Focus: Singapore Math</p> <p>i-Ready</p> <p>Achieve 3000 / Compass Learning / Khan Academy / ST Math ACT</p> <p>Explore - Grockit</p>	<p>Classroom instruction built around KIPP and Singapore curriculum</p> <p>Supplemented with blended options (i-Ready, Achieve 3000, Compass, Khan, and ST)</p> <p>ACT preparation will use Grockit</p>	<p>Good 7th/8th grade math curriculum, particularly for struggling students</p> <p>Excellent alignment with Common Core; rigorous</p> <p>Used for personalized remediation and extension</p> <p>Used for personalized remediation and extension</p> <p>Excellent adaptive learning platform for ACT Prep</p>
<p>Grade 9</p>	<p>Summit Public Schools Competency Based Curriculum (with Khan Academy and Stanford University)</p> <p>i-Ready</p> <p>Achieve 3000 / Compass Learning / Khan Academy / ST Math ACT</p> <p>Plan – Grockit</p>	<p>Classroom instruction based on Summit model, including i-Ready, Achieve 3000, Compass, Khan, and ST</p> <p>ACT preparation will use Grockit</p>	<p>Personalized approach to mathematics; aligned with Common Core and College Ready skills</p> <p>Used for personalized remediation and extension</p> <p>Used for personalized remediation and extension</p> <p>Excellent adaptive learning platform for ACT Prep</p>
<p>Grade 10</p>	<p>Summit Public Schools Competency Based Curriculum (with Khan Academy and Stanford University)</p> <p>i-Ready</p> <p>Achieve 3000 / Compass Learning / Khan Academy / ST Math ACT</p> <p>ACT – Grockit</p>	<p>Classroom instruction based on Summit model, including i-Ready, Achieve 3000, Compass, Khan, and ST</p> <p>ACT preparation will use Grockit</p>	<p>Personalized approach to mathematics; aligned with Common Core and College Ready skills</p> <p>Used for personalized remediation and extension</p> <p>Used for personalized remediation and extension</p> <p>Excellent adaptive learning platform for ACT Prep</p>
<p>Grade 11</p>	<p>Summit Public Schools Competency Based Curriculum (with Khan Academy and Stanford University)</p> <p>i-Ready</p> <p>Achieve 3000 / Compass Learning / Khan Academy / ST Math ACT</p>	<p>Classroom instruction based on Summit model, including i-Ready, Achieve 3000, Compass, Khan, and ST</p> <p>ACT preparation will use Grockit</p>	<p>Personalized approach to mathematics; aligned with Common Core and College Ready skills</p> <p>Used for personalized remediation and extension</p> <p>Used for personalized remediation and extension</p>

	ACT – Grockit		Excellent adaptive learning platform for ACT Prep
Grade 12	AP Calculus / AP Stats Compass Learning AP Calculus Achieve 3000 / Compass Learning / Khan Academy	Classroom instruction based on Summit model, including i-Ready, Achieve 3000, Compass, Khan, and ST	Currently best preparation for College rigor Used for personalized remediation and extension Used for personalized remediation and extension

Science

In middle school, the curriculum for science is informed directly by the State of Tennessee Curriculum Standards and Next Generation Science Standards. As a result, scholars complete a course in Science encompassing Life, Earth and Space, and Physical Science in grades 5-8. Scholars utilize standard safety practices, analyze data proficiently, communicate scientific ideas, and conduct scientific inquiry experiments.

In high school, scholars are held accountable to the TN and NSS standards as they complete focused, college preparatory courses designed to cultivate deeper understanding of the different branches of science. In ninth grade, scholars take a Conceptual Physics course. Scholars explore Physics through inquiry, hands-on laboratory investigations, individual studies, and group activities. Their study includes both qualitative and quantitative descriptions of matter and the changes that matter undergoes. In the tenth grade, scholars take Biology. Scholars practice the necessary precautions for performing safe inquiries and activities and appreciate the risks and benefits of producing and using chemical substances. In the eleventh grade, scholars take a course on Chemistry and in the twelfth grade, scholars will take AP Environmental Science²⁴.

Table 23: Course Progression for Science

Foundations		High School Prep		College Prep		Life University	
5 th	6 th	7 th	8 th	9 th	10 th	11 th	12 th
Science I	Science II	Science III	Science IV	Physics	Biology	Chemistry	AP Environmental Science

Table 24: Additional Curriculum utilized in Science Course Progression

Course	Curriculum	Descriptor	Rationale
Grade 5	FOSS (Full Option Science System) EScience3000	VCA curriculum supplemented with FOSS and/or EScience3000 EScience3000 differentiated by Lexile level	Excellent hands-on / inquiry based science Excellent personalization by Lexile
Grade 6	FOSS (Full Option Science System) EScience3000	VCA curriculum supplemented with FOSS and/or EScience3000 EScience3000 differentiated by Lexile level	Excellent hands-on / inquiry based science Excellent personalization by Lexile
Grade 7	FOSS (Full Option Science System) EScience3000	VCA curriculum supplemented with FOSS and/or EScience3000 EScience3000 differentiated by	Excellent hands-on / inquiry based science Excellent

		Lexile level	personalization by Lexile
Grade 8	FOSS (Full Option Science System) EScience3000	VCA curriculum supplemented with FOSS and/or EScience3000 EScience3000 differentiated by Lexile level	Excellent hands-on / inquiry based science Excellent personalization by Lexile
Grade 9	Conceptual Physics – Hewitt	VCA curriculum supplemented by Conceptual Physics	Concept based Physics supplemented with rigorous VCA math
Grade 10	Compass Learning – AP Biology Biology – McGraw Hill	Will use Summit Prep Biology curriculum	Excellent rigorous curriculum backwards planned to AP
Grade 11	Chemistry – Houghton-Mifflin	Will use DSST Chemistry curriculum	Excellent rigorous curriculum backwards planned to AP
Grade 12	APES – McGraw Hill K12 AP Physics, AP Chemistry	Will use Summit Prep APES curriculum	Excellent rigorous curriculum backwards planned to AP Excellent rigorous curriculum backwards planned to AP

History

In middle school, the curriculum for social studies is informed directly by the Tennessee Curriculum Standards. Fifth graders complete a general social studies course with a focus on geography. Scholars in the sixth grade complete a general social studies course with a focus on World History. Scholars in the seventh grade complete a general social studies course with a focus on Comparative History and Civilization. Scholars in the eighth grade complete a general social studies course that focuses on American History. Each course is split into six strands: culture, economics, geography, governance and civics, history, individuals, groups and interactions.

In high school, scholars expand their existing knowledge by completing a series of advanced history courses, one in World History in the ninth grade and then will take their first AP course, AP World History, 10th grade. They will subsequently take AP US History, and AP Government in Stage 4.

Table 25: Course Progression for History

Foundations		High School Prep		College Prep		Life University	
5 th	6 th	7 th	8 th	9 th	10 th	11 th	12 th
Social Studies I (Geography)	Social Studies II (World History)	Social Studies (Comparative History and Civilization)	Social Studies (American History)	World History	AP World History	AP US History	AP US History AP Government;

Table 26: Additional Curriculum utilized in History Course Progression

Course	Curriculum	Descriptor	Rationale
Grade 5	Core Knowledge sequence History Alive! Achieve3000	VCA will develop core curriculum using Core Knowledge sequence Supplement with History Alive and Achieve3000	Rigorous, specific; aligned to Common Core Excellent supplement; inquiry based Personalized by Lexile level
Grade 6	Core Knowledge sequence History Alive! Achieve3000	VCA will develop core curriculum using Core Knowledge sequence Supplement with History Alive and Achieve3000	Rigorous, specific; aligned to Common Core Excellent supplement; inquiry based Personalized by Lexile level
Grade 7	Core Knowledge sequence History Alive! Achieve3000	VCA will develop core curriculum using Core Knowledge sequence Supplement with History Alive and Achieve3000	Rigorous, specific; aligned to Common Core Excellent supplement; inquiry based Personalized by Lexile level
Grade 8	Core Knowledge sequence History Alive! Achieve3000	VCA will develop core curriculum using Core Knowledge sequence Supplement with History Alive and Achieve3000	Rigorous, specific; aligned to Common Core Excellent supplement; inquiry based Personalized by Lexile level
Grade 9	KIPP King World History curriculum DSST World History curriculum History Alive! Achieve3000	VCA will develop core curriculum using KIPP King and DSST as model Supplement with History Alive and Achieve3000	Excellent, rigorous curriculum; proven results Excellent, rigorous curriculum; proven results Excellent supplement; inquiry based Personalized by Lexile level
Grade 10	KIPP King World History curriculum DSST World History curriculum History Alive! Achieve3000	VCA will develop core curriculum using KIPP King and DSST as model Supplement with History Alive and Achieve3000	Excellent, rigorous curriculum; proven results Excellent, rigorous curriculum; proven results Excellent supplement; inquiry based Personalized by Lexile level
Grade 11	Summit Prep AP US History / AP Government History Alive!	VCA will develop core curriculum using Summit Prep as model Supplement with History Alive and Achieve3000	Excellent, rigorous curriculum; proven results Excellent supplement; inquiry based

	Achieve3000		Personalized by Lexile level
Grade 12	Summit Prep AP US History / AP Government	VCA will develop core curriculum using Summit Prep as model	Excellent, rigorous curriculum; proven results
	History Alive!	Supplement with History Alive and Achieve3000	Excellent supplement; inquiry based
	Achieve3000		Personalized by Lexile level

Foreign Language

Foreign language will not be part of the regular course progression in middle school; however, scholars will have the opportunity to take a Foreign Language as an elective course during their Personalized Learning Lab. If they choose, scholars can take an online language course through Compass Learning: Middlebury Powerspeak12 World Languages language learning, as determined by their family and mentor in their Personalized Learning Plan. Scholars will also be given the opportunity to choose HTML coding as a Foreign Language.

In high school, scholars will be required to take at least 2 years of Foreign Language. They will take this course during their Personalized Learning Lab via online software (Compass Learning: Middlebury Powerspeak12 World Languages).

Table 27: Course Progression for Foreign Language

Foundations		High School Prep		College Prep		Life University	
5 th	6 th	7 th	8 th	9 th	10 th	11 th	12 th
Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Foreign Language I	Foreign Language II	Foreign Language III

Table 28: Additional Curriculum utilized in Foreign Language Course Progression

Course	Curriculum	Descriptor	Rationale
Grade 5	Optional: Powerspeak12 World Language	Scholars will have option of self-study	Currently best reviewed online language program; Middlebury College
Grade 6	Optional: Powerspeak12 World Language	Scholars will have option of self-study	Currently best reviewed online language program; Middlebury College
Grade 7	Optional: Powerspeak12 World Language	Scholars will have option of self-study	Currently best reviewed online language program; Middlebury College
Grade 8	Optional: Powerspeak12 World Language	Scholars will have option of self-study	Currently best reviewed online language program; Middlebury College

Grade 9	Powerspeak12 World Language	Scholars will choose one of 5 languages offered and complete 2 years of credit courses, and at least 1 year of non-credit courses	Currently best reviewed online language program; Middlebury College
Grade 10	Powerspeak12 World Language	Scholars will choose one of 5 languages offered and complete 2 years of credit courses, and at least 1 year of non-credit courses	Currently best reviewed online language program; Middlebury College
Grade 11	Powerspeak12 World Language	Scholars will choose one of 5 languages offered and complete 2 years of credit courses, and at least 1 year of non-credit courses	Currently best reviewed online language program; Middlebury College
Grade 12	Powerspeak12 World Language Language	Scholars will choose one of 5 languages offered and complete 2 years of credit courses, and at least 1 year of non-credit courses	Currently best reviewed online language program; Middlebury College

The curriculum for each course in grade 5 and 6 will be completed by June 2014. The documents in Attachment 19 are the templates that are used in order to store curriculum in a common manner on the VCA data management system. The common storage and writing of curriculum across the school will allow for effective coaching and development in designing high quality courses for VCA scholars.

SECTION IV – SPECIAL POPULATIONS AND AT-RISK STUDENTS

Accessible for All Scholars

Pursuant to state and federal law, charter schools are required to serve the needs of special student populations, including hiring licensed and endorsed special educators and licensed ESL instructors. School personnel shall participate in developing and implementing the Individualized Education Programs (IEP); identify and refer students for assessment of special needs; maintain records; and hire appropriate personnel as are required in an IEP (ex. Speech/language pathologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, etc.).

- Detail a comprehensive plan to serve students with special needs including but not limited to those students with federally recognized disabilities; students with IEP's or Section 504 Plans; English Language Learners; students identified as intellectually gifted; and students at risk of dropping out.

- Identify the special populations the school plans to serve, whether through data related to a specifically targeted school or neighborhood or more generalized analysis of the population to be served.

- Discuss how the course scope and sequence, daily schedule, staffing plans and support strategies will meet or be adjusted for the diverse needs of the students.

- Explain specifically how you will identify and meet the needs of students with mild, moderate or severe disabilities in the least restrictive environment possible. Specify the research based programs, strategies and supports you will provide, including the following:

- Methods for identifying students with special needs (and avoiding misidentification).

- Specific instructional programs, practices, and strategies the school will employ to provide a continuum of services; ensure students' access to the general education curriculum; and ensure academic success for special needs students.

- Plans for monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of special education students, including coordination with the LEA's monitoring and evaluation.

- Plans for promoting graduation for students with special needs (high school only)

- Plans to have qualified staffing adequate for the anticipated special needs population including budgetary assumptions

It is the mission of Valor Collegiate that all scholars will be provided with a world-class education, including being accepted to a four-year college or University upon graduation. There are no exceptions for this mission: it is our belief that it is the VCA community adults' responsibility to coach and inspire every VCA scholar to achieve this goal. In order to be successful with all scholars we must be especially thoughtful about how to support the most at-risk learners and gifted scholars. The following sections describe how VCA intends to support these special populations.

Overview of Support Model for All Scholars

Define:

VCA will generally categorize our special populations as follows:

1. **Below grade level academically and/or behaviorally**
2. **Current IEP scholar**
3. **English Language Learner**
4. **Gifted Scholars**
5. **Drop-Out Risks**

It will become clear in our descriptions of our support systems that many scholars will fit into multiple categories, and will move in and out of various categories in their time at VCA.

Approach

The following sections will describe VCA’s approach to successfully addressing the needs of these special populations to ensure they are able to successfully meet the mission of the organization, specifically: to be accepted to a four year college or university and to develop the non-academic skills listed in the CCO that will ensure and purposeful and inspired life.

The most important systems for best supporting special populations are 1) **identification**, and 2) **response to intervention (RtI)**. Struggling scholars must be identified quickly and accurately, and then effective responses to their struggles must be determined, delivered, and monitored with equal speed and accuracy.

Tiered-Service Model

Table 29 shows the overview of the Tiered-Service model for all scholars in the VCA academic program. This model is based off of the successful Summit Prep and DSST models. We anticipate approximately 50% (Level 1) of the scholars who go through the VCA program will be successful in the provided academic model. Approximately 20% (Level 2) of the scholars will use the additional supports provided from 4-5pm each day. The remaining 30% of the scholars will require more intensive supports (Level 3,4,5). These supports are listed in the Scholar Experience Column of the table.

Table 29: Valor Collegiate Tiered Service Model Overview

Scholar Experience	Faculty Expectations	Resources
Level 1: 50% of scholars are prepared through basic mainstream program		
✓ Daily classroom experience	✓ Course content is VCA standards based	✓ 30 days for professional development, collaborative planning and scholar logistics
✓ Illuminate data School Outcomes posts and tracking	✓ Gradual Release Teacher to Scholar centered pedagogy	✓ 2.5 hours of common planning time with vertical team daily
✓ Homework completion	✓ Vertically and interdisciplinary planned curriculum for skill development – includes spiraling	✓ 1 hour grade level team meetings weekly
✓ Regular Connections participation	✓ Differentiated instruction	✓ 2 sections only
✓ PLP development and annual meeting	✓ All scholars are engaged	✓ Class size of 30
✓ Final exam review sessions	✓ Homework is limited to 30 minutes per day per class	✓ 1 prep only
✓ Personalized Learning Lab time	✓ Homework is meaningful and extends learning	✓ 60 scholars max
	✓ Longer assignments are chunked with frequent checks	✓ Looping and/or teaching same subject two or more years in a row
	✓ 100% extended time for all on tests and exams	✓ Uninterrupted teaching time (no assembly schedules, minimum days, announcements, etc...)
	✓ Connections teaches academic literacy skills	✓ Peer coaching

	✓ Extensive scaffolding is used to support skill development	✓ Induction mentors
	✓ No assigned work during vacation	✓ Existing / developed curriculum for each course (available to all)
	✓ Scholars are assessed using multiple modes	✓ 25% time administrator for connections coordination
	✓ Assessments are designed to allow scholars to demonstrate mastery of course content standards	✓ Existing / developed curriculum for connections
	✓ SDAIE / SIOP methodology	✓ Personalize Educator Plans (PEPs) connected to professional development
	✓ Common behavior norms / expectations with consistent follow-through	✓ Decision-making authority in school policy and procedure
Level 2: 20% of scholars require level one program plus additional mainstream supports to be prepared		
✓ Office Hours	✓ Two hours of office hours per week	✓ A clear system for supporting assignment completion, resulting in ability to plan classes accordingly
✓ Study Hall	✓ MASH monitoring / supporting system	✓ Culture of revision and redemption
✓ Mandatory Peer Tutoring	✓ Consistent expectations for delivery of work on time	
Level 3: 15% of scholars required level one, level two supports, and level three mainstream supports to be prepared		
✓ Remediation Intersession	✓ 10 days per Intersession (30 hours) of small group remediation in English and Math	✓ Scheduled, coordinated time with scholars needing additional support
✓ Extended Semester	✓ 6 hours of Extended Semester sessions per intersession	✓ Designated grading days
✓ Personal Tutor	✓ Email and phone contact with home	
✓ Saturday School		
✓ Additional mentor support		
Level 4: 8% of scholars required level one, two, and three, plus level four mainstream supports to be prepared		
✓ 504 or IEP plan with accommodations		✓ 10 to 15% of administrators' time
✓ Extensive personal mentor support		✓ Intervention documentation template
✓ Grade level interventions / plans		✓ 504 plan template
Level 5: 7% of scholars require all mainstream supports, plus special education to be prepared		
✓ IEP with services	✓ Write Present Levels of Performance as needed	✓ 1 full-time resource specialist per grade level

✓ Resource support	✓ Attend IEP meetings as needed	✓ 1 full-time counselor per grade level
✓ Speech and language therapy	✓ Implement modifications / accommodations	✓ Contracted school psychologist
✓ Occupational therapy		✓ Contract therapists
✓ Hearing		✓ 10 to 15% of administrators' time
✓ County mental health		
✓ Modifications to program / curriculum		

As noted above, VCA will provide extensive support to all scholars in Level 1, 2, and 3. It is a philosophical belief that all scholars benefit most from being part of mainstream classrooms, with the mainstream, academic expectations, whenever possible. (Hehir & Sanchez, 2012) It is also a general philosophical belief of VCA that world-class teaching incorporates most supports that are generally considered “additional supports for struggling/at-risk scholars”. For example, VCA courses will all be highly personalized with data and 1-to-1 laptops, differentiated instruction, and small group tutoring after school and on Saturdays. In addition, the Intersession sessions allow for extended time for scholars who need it, and also allow for intensive small group remediation and extension. All of these supports would generally be considered part of a program to assist special populations in a traditional school; however, these are supports that are available to all scholars at VCA that could benefit from them.

This philosophy essentially allows scholars from special populations the opportunity and challenge to be considered part of the “normal” system at a VCA school. We believe this is healthy for their self-confidence and ultimately allows them to be able to reach higher academic and non-academic goals over time. It is important to know that we do not mean this philosophy to be a means for not providing great services to special populations (i.e., the “we mainstream SPED kids” plan some charter schools offer because they do not have a thoughtful SPED plan that fits their model). Instead, we believe that the strongest services for special populations must first begin with world-class supports for all scholars in mainstream classes, and that these supports when executed well can provide an amazing amount of support for the most at-risk scholars.

At-Risk Identification

In order to serve struggling scholars well, they must be identified quickly and reliably. Table 30 details the Response to Intervention (RtI) process used to identify and support struggling scholars with the correct targeted interventions of each tier of the model.

Table 30: Response to Intervention Model

RtI Level	Identification Process	Intervention additions	Approximate % of students	Responsible
Level 1	Grade Level Faculty via classroom assessment	Mainstream	100	Grade Level Faculty
Level 2	Grade Level Faculty will place students to Level 2 as needed; decision made by Grade Level Team using classroom assessment data	Above + Office Hours + MASH + Peer Tutoring + Saturday School	20	Grade Level Faculty

Level 3	Grade Level Faculty will assign students to Level 3 as needed; decisions made by Grade Level Team with School Admin	Above + Intervention Plan + Extended Semesters + Remediated Intersession	15	Faculty + Admin
Level 4	Grade Level Faculty will hold Interventions for students still struggling; referrals for 504 made by joint Grade Level, SPED, and Admin decision	Above + 504 Plan (if deemed appropriate) OR IEP	8	SPED + Admin
Level 5	Grade Level Faculty will hold Interventions for students still struggling; referrals for 504 made by joint Grade Level, SPED, and Admin decision	Above + IEP (if deemed appropriate)	7	SPED + Admin

Each grade level will have a team of educators (usually 7.5 adults: 6 academic teachers, 1 SPED teacher, and .5 Counselor/Coach). This team meets every week for one hour on Wednesdays after school. During this weekly grade level meeting, the first agenda item will be to collect data from teachers on scholars who are struggling academically or behaviorally. Scholars are identified who are a) failing multiple classes, or b) are having consistent behavior issues across classes. The grade level team then moves students from Level 1 to Level 2 as needed (i.e., assigning students to mandatory Office Hours, After School Study Hall, and Peer Tutoring). **As students move levels, their mentor teacher and their family are notified of the move.**

If a student is still not responsive in Level 2, the grade level may then opt to move the student to Level 3 of the RtI Tiered Service model. **When a student is moved from Level 2 to Level 3, an Intervention Meeting is scheduled.**

The scholar’s mentor is notified, and the mentor arranges a meeting with the grade level teachers, the scholar, and the scholar’s family. Attachment 20 has an example document that will be used in these Intervention meetings. This process continues as described above until the scholar is either successful, or they move to have more supports put in place until they eventually are successful in the model. The process is overseen by the grade level SPED teacher, and is supported by the grade level teachers and grade level mentors. This RtI model is based on the successful model used at Summit Prep Charter.

As noted in Table 30 the Response to Intervention model adds the following interventions for struggling students:

Additional Supports for Scholars

- 1. Office Hours**
- 2. Study Hall – quiet homework completion**
- 3. Saturday School**
- 4. Extended Semester**
- 5. Intersession Remediation**
- 6. Summer Bridge**

The grade level academic teachers, counselor, SPED teacher, scholar mentor, and one school administrator make the decisions for adding these supports for a struggling scholar. While the logical progression of the model works for most students, the best progression may vary for each student, depending on their specific needs. Decisions will be made based on what is best for each individual scholar, and the Tiered Service Model will be used as a guideline for the approximate number of scholars who will need various supports within the school. It is the responsibility of VCA leadership and the

SPED grade level leaders to predict when a level of the tiered service delivery model may exceed the predicted number of scholars (and thus need resource adjustments). These support structures are modeled after Summit Prep and were highly effective with a similar scholar population to the scholars we will target here in Nashville.

Scholars With Disabilities

Valor Collegiate will provide scholars with disabilities with a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) within the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) possible. We will comply with all regulatory special education requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and any other civil rights enforced by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (OCR). Likewise, we will fully comply with additional regulations and policies of the state of Tennessee and Metro Nashville Public Schools.

Special Education Program Structure

Our special education program will be spearheaded by a certified Special Education Coordinator (“SPED Coordinator”), directly responsible for ensuring that Valor Collegiate is in compliance with all applicable special education laws and requirements. There will be a SPED teacher for each grade level, and one SPED teacher who will oversee the team of (at scale) twelve SPED teachers in all Stages. The planned ratio of teachers per SPED student will not exceed 24:1. If that is the case then additional SPED teachers may be added. Experienced and certified special education teachers will be employed to ensure that the unique needs and learning styles of all scholars are being met. Whenever possible, we will educate all scholars within the regular education classroom, unless the nature of the disability requires a scholar’s removal.

Special education teachers (“SPED teachers”) will coordinate the direct instruction and inclusion of Special Education scholars. Classroom teachers will be informed of their responsibilities for particular scholars, trained and guided by the SPED Coordinator, SPED teachers and/or the Principal on how to successfully meet those responsibilities, and will implement any modifications or accommodations in their classes in accordance with the scholars’ Individualized Education Plans (“IEPs”). As required (outside of the classroom) tutoring, counseling, physical, occupational, speech and language therapy services will be provided (either by VCA certified staff or specially contracted expert professionals) for those with special needs. Our special education staffing structure through full enrollment is outlined in **Table 31** below.

Table 31: Special Education Staffing

Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
1 SPED*				2 SPED **			
*SPED MS Leader	1 SPED	1 SPED	1 SPED	**1 SPED HS Leader	2 SPED	2 SPED	2 SPED

Identifying Scholars with Special Needs

When scholars are admitted to the school, we will use the information on the application regarding IEP identification as the first mode of identifying scholars joining us who may need additional support. For all scholars who self-identify during the application process (in our experience this is about 85% of families) we will set up a transitional IEP meeting with the scholar and family in the Spring and Summer leading up to the start of the school year.

We will also follow up with the sending schools to determine whether the scholars have IEPs and ensure these records are transferred to VCA prior to the beginning of the school year. This will include the SPED coordinator and VCA leadership driving to all middle schools (particularly any middle school that has challenges in sending scholar cumulative files quickly) to obtain scholar files. In most years this will cover 95-99% of scholars who have been through the IEP process in elementary school.

If the scholar files have not been obtained by the start of school, they will be identified at the latest at the scholar Personalized Learning Plan (PLP) meeting in August and the mentor will take responsibility with the Office Manager of obtaining any missing records.

Parents and teachers of scholars with special needs will attend a meeting led by our Special Education Coordinator to determine appropriate services to be delivered. We will comply with all laws and provisions regarding scholars with IEPs. We will implement IEPs as written, and if a child's IEP needs to be reviewed for updated goals and services or to determine continued eligibility for special education, the IEP team will convene for a review of the IEP.

Throughout the school year, VCA's frequent internal assessment program described in the Response to Intervention section, as well as the RtI process described above, provides an efficient means to identify scholars who are struggling academically in compliance with the Child Find requirements of IDEA. Weekly, each teacher will review the progress of his/her scholars based upon their performance on homework, class work, tests, quizzes and projects. The Principal and the Director of Curriculum and Instruction (Year 2) will monitor scholar assessment data at regular intervals. This will allow scholars who are struggling with the course material to be identified quickly. If a scholar is not making sufficient academic progress, the Special Education Coordinator, in consultation with the Principal, will develop a pre-referral strategy that may include tutoring and/or other supports. The effectiveness of the pre-referral strategy on the scholar's progress will be carefully monitored for up to six (6) weeks. In addition, other information will be gathered to determine if a scholar may have a learning disability, such as parent questionnaires, classroom observations, analysis of work samples, and teachers' anecdotal data.

Evaluating Scholars with Special Needs

If pre-referral strategies are unsuccessful, the scholar is not progressing academically, and classroom teachers or special education faculty believe a disability may exist, the scholar will be referred, in writing, to the Special Education Coordinator for individual evaluation and determination of eligibility for special education programs and services. Referrals may be made by any professional faculty member of VCA. Such referrals will (1) state the reasons for the referral and include any test results, records or reports upon which the referral is based; (2) describe any attempts to remediate the scholar's performance prior to the referral, including any supplementary aids or support services provided for this purpose; and (3) describe the extent of parental contact or involvement prior to the referral. A copy of such referral along with the procedural safeguards notice described in 34 CFR §300.504 will be sent to the scholar's parents. The Special Education Coordinator and the Principal will convene a meeting with the scholar's parents to discuss the option of psycho-educational testing to determine the child's special education eligibility and to secure written parental consent to conduct such testing. VCA will then conduct such testing, either in-house or via the services of an expert consultant. Once the tests have been conducted and the results are received, an eligibility meeting will be reconvened with the parents, the Special Education Coordinator, the scholar's advisor, and other appropriate faculty. At that time, a decision will be made as to the scholar's eligibility for special education services. If the scholar is eligible for special education services, an IEP for that scholar will be developed. All IEPs will be evaluated and revised as needed at least annually. All assessments and evaluations will be repeated at least once every three years. The IEP will be legally managed by the SPED grade level teacher, but will also be supported by the mentor of the scholar.

Section 504

Section 504 requires schools receiving federal funds to provide scholars with disabilities appropriate educational services designed to meet the individual needs of such scholars to the same extent as the

needs of scholars without disabilities are met. Section 504 prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability. VCA will adhere to all obligations under IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) and Section 504. We will immediately evaluate and identify any scholars protected under Section 504. This includes any scholar determined to: 1) have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, 2) have a record of such impairment, or 3) be regarded as having such impairment.

The Special Education Coordinator will serve as the Section 504 coordinator to ensure that the legal rights of such scholars are met and that their special needs are effectively served.

The process for identifying and developing plans for scholars with 504 plans is the same as described above for IEP scholars. Monitoring of the 504 plan will be overseen by the scholar's mentor. For a typical mentor, they will have 16-18 scholars in their mentor group, meaning statistically they will most likely have about 2 scholars who have an IEP or 504 plan. By dispersing responsibility across all teachers for the monitoring and overseeing a small number of scholar's with special needs the quality and in-depth knowledge of the scholar's needs increases.

Resource Class for IEP and Struggling Scholars

VCA will attempt to keep scholars mainstreamed whenever possible. However, we will provide a Resource class for scholars that may benefit from smaller class instruction, who may need additional support and time to master the mainstream content, or in rare cases may need time before they access the mainstream curriculum at all.

The Resource class will be provided as determined in each scholar's IEP meeting. If it is determined that a scholar will require the Resource class in order to successfully master the content standards, the following options will be considered:

1. Scholar takes regular course load and takes the Resource class instead of their Personalized Learning Lab (53 minutes per day)
2. Scholar does not take History and instead takes Resource class (possibly for two periods a day if in lieu of PLL as well – 106 minutes per day)
3. Scholar does not take History or Science (extreme cases) and instead takes up to 190 minutes of Resource class
4. Scholar does not take any mainstream class. Instead, they have an individualized day that incorporates as much of the mainstream course work as possible but is essentially an inclusive service in the Resource Room.

Scholars who need additional support will be provided with outstanding, small group attention with a SPED expert teacher through this model. It is anticipated that approximately 10-15% of scholars will have IEPs in a given VCA grade level. Of these scholars, approximately 5-10% will require a Resource class in addition to their mainstream classes, or approximately 14-21 scholars. The class will be held three times per day, making the approximate class size about 4 or 7 scholars.

The Resource classes will focus on the following objectives:

1. Provide content and skill support for mainstream classes
2. Provide remediation as needed to build towards access to mainstream classes
3. Provide behavior and life-skill coaching to build towards access to mainstream classes

Summit Prep ran this highly successful SPED Resource model with great success and we are confident that VCA will be able to provide outstanding SPED service to all learners. In 2010, the Special Education Director of the Bay Area SELPA (Special Education Local Plan Areas) called Summit Prep's Special Education program "the best model of Special Education that I have seen in my 35 years of work in education." VCA will take great pride in giving world-class support to scholars with special needs.

Discipline for SPED/504 Students

As detailed in Attachment 5 – Student Discipline Policy, careful attention and care will be taken with students with special needs when they interact with the Expectations and Consequences at VCA. While we will always seek to treat them as similar to our scholars whom do not have a diagnosed disability, we will also be careful to not treat them unfairly in our system due to their disability. While in the extreme cases we expect this to be handled effectively by always having a manifestation hearing in the cases of lengthy suspensions (3+ days) and expulsions, we also we will be very careful and compassionate when dealing with behavioral incidents that are considered minor or moderate offenses. In these cases, the scholar’s mentor will be involved so that someone who knows the scholar well is able to help all parties understand the student, and we will try whenever possible to also involve the parent. In general, we will always follow all Federal and State laws to ensure that student’s rights are upheld, but we will also commit to going beyond that to ensure that we treat every student in a personalized way – pushing them to grow while also being compassionate for their disability. There is no perfect system to handle this well; instead, we will seek to train our faculty and leadership so that they make wise decisions in tough moments when they value both the clear expectations and consequences of the school and the growth of an individual student. This training, which involves being aware of the different types of student diagnosis’ that we have at VCA that year, will take place during the Summer Orientation as well as during the weekly Grade Level team meetings.

Hiring Licensed SPED personnel

The VCA model includes a large amount of SPED and Coach positions (defined as counselors). In fact, we believe that SPED and Coach positions are extremely valuable to both the SPED and ELL learners in the school, but also generally to all students. SPED teachers are generally very strong at knowing how to break learning down into smaller pieces, and have in-depth knowledge about how student’s learn because they have worked so closely with students who sometimes struggle greatly with acquiring knowledge. Faculty who are licensed as counselors or therapists (who we call “Coaches” in the VCA model) are very talented in understanding behavior management, emotional intelligence, and group dynamics. Because the VCA model values the development of the whole child, we purposeful have a staffing model that is heavier on SPED and Counselor faculty, especially as the students grow older. We therefore will spend significant time developing relationships with strong SPED and counseling programs in Nashville, Tennessee, and the country. We will include the attraction, development, and retention of great SPED and Coach faculty positions as one of the highest priorities in our hiring process.

Service Providers

VCA intends to work with MNPS on getting appropriate services for their IEPs. Examples include but are not limited to, speech therapy, occupational or physical therapy, interpreters, medical services (such as a nurse to perform procedures the child needs during the day, for example, catheterization), orientation and mobility services, parent counseling and training to help parents support the implementation of their child’s IEP, psychological or counseling services, recreation services, rehabilitation, social work services, and transportation. VCA understands that it is too small as a single school to house full-time FTE positions for these roles, but is confident that they will be able to work out quality agreements with the District to provide these services as needed. As noted in Attachment 10 – Budget Narrative, the VCA Board will always have a contingency plan ready in the case that the costs of an IEP student (or multiple IEP students) increases the expenses on the budget. VCA will be prepared for a \$100k increase in budget in a single year due to unexpected costs due to a student’s IEP services.

ELL Scholars

Explain how the school will meet the needs of English Language Learner (ELL) students, including the following:

- **Methods for identifying ELL students**
- **Specific instructional programs, practices and strategies the school will employ to ensure academic success and equitable access to the core academic program for these students**
- **Plans for monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of ELL students, including exiting students from ELL services**
- **Means for providing qualified staff for ELL students, including budget assumptions.**

We are committed to providing a challenging and high quality education for all of our scholars. We will serve any and all scholars with limited English proficiency (English Language Learners or “ELL”) using structured English language immersion so that they receive appropriate support and achieve proficiency in the academic English language as quickly as possible. Our ELL program is designed exclusively to meet our mission. We estimate an ELL population of approximately 10-30% based on the data analysis listed in Table 32 below.

Table 32: ELL and SPED students for Middle and High Schools in Target Areas

School	ELL	SPED
Overton High School	18	7.7
Hillsboro High School	1.4	12.4
Antioch High School	11.6	9.9
Glencliff High School	14.1	9.4
Cane Ridge High School	6.9	10.4
Oliver Middle School	6.1	10.4
Croft Middle School	10	13.2
McMurray Middle School	38.2	7.4
JT Moore Middle School	1.6	12.4
Wright Middle School	20.2	10.6
Marshall Middle School	8.3	10.9
Apollo Middle School	15.2	10.4
Antioch Middle School	17.7	11.5
Average	13.02	10.51

VCA will serve English Language Learners based on the U.S. Department of Education’s six steps of progression through an ELL program: 1) enrollment in school, 2) identification of potential ELLs, 3) assessment determining need for ELL services, 4) provision of appropriate ELL services, 5) transition from ELL services, and 6) monitoring ability to participate meaningfully. In implementing our ELL program, VCA will comply with all applicable laws including Title VI of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 (as amended) and the federal Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974.

Scholars with limited proficiency in English will achieve proficiency in the English language through the use of VCA’s services and teaching methods. We will ensure that ELL scholars are not excluded from curricular and extracurricular activities based on an inability to speak and understand the language of instruction, and that ELL scholars are not assigned to special education because of their lack of English proficiency. Parents whose English proficiency is limited will receive notices and information from VCA in their native language. Parental outreach will also be conducted through home visit by a school representative and an interpreter.

Identification of ELL Scholars

We will use the following process for identifying scholars who are ELL: (1) Home Language Surveys will be used to screen all new enrollees for potential limited English proficiency; (2) If the home language is other than English or the scholar’s native language is other than English, appropriate VCA faculty or a hired interpreter will conduct an informal interview in the scholar’s native language and English; (3) If the scholar speaks a language other than English and/or the scholar speaks little or no English, we will administer the TELPA for ELLs. Results from these assessments will be used to inform instruction and ensure all scholars are able to access the academic content and master performance and content standards. (Note: VCA will coordinate TELPA testing with the District)

The RtI identification process will also be used to identify scholars with limited English proficiency. In

addition, the PLP meeting with mentor and family will be an opportunity in August for the family and school to discuss potential English language acquisition issues.

Between the Home Language Survey, RtI process, and PLP meetings we are confident that all ELL scholars will be identified quickly and accurately.

English Immersion Program and Services

General Support and Overview

All ELL scholars will receive the same academic content as those scholars who are native English speakers. VCA will use the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) as the main strategy within mainstreamed classrooms.²⁴ Per the SIOP model, all instruction at VCA will be in English. However, the level of English used for instruction—both oral and written—will be modified appropriately for each ELL scholar. This does not mean that the content will be “watered down.” Instead, teachers will incorporate a variety of strategies to make the content more comprehensible. For example, use visuals and diagrams, provide many opportunities to practice key vocabulary, and utilize graphic organizers. General education teachers of English language learners will adapt lessons, assignments, and instructional groups to reduce language barriers and to assist ELLs to participate fully in the educational program. Faculty will participate in professional development opportunities in these areas each year during their development, as determined by their Personalized Educator Plan. Scholars will never be prevented from speaking in their native language, either inside or outside of the classroom. We will create the most accepting cultural atmosphere possible, such that scholars of all backgrounds and languages feel welcome and valued.

VCA will be prepared to address the needs of scholars who are struggling with the structured English immersion program by providing, if it is determined to be the best course of action, pull-out instruction and/or assignment of a certified aide, teacher or qualified consultant under contract who speaks that child’s native language. Pull-out instruction will focus on increasing basic English - including vocabulary, grammar, reading and writing - so that scholars can perform and participate in their regular classes. In the VCA staffing model, the Grade Level coach will always be an EL endorsed faculty member and, along with the Grade Level SPED teacher, will oversee the Resource class that will serve students who VCA determines need both sheltered instruction and structured immersion.

When possible, in order to minimize disruption to the scholar’s daily schedule, these services will take place outside of normal class time (usually during a scholar’s Personalized Learning Lab period, as described in more detail below). We will actively recruit at least one full-time teacher who speaks the foreign language that is most common among our scholars. We believe that in order to have meaningful relationships with parents and scholars who do not speak English as a first language, we must be proactive in our communication styles and techniques. This may require us to be creative through the involvement of translators, community organization support, or friends of VCA. We will make sure that all home-school correspondences are translated using a document service company. During the planning year, we will secure ELL experts to help design and review our ELL services.

ELL 1,2,3

Every Spring VCA will administer the ELDA to all scholars who either scored a 1 or 2 on the TELPA on entry into the school in the Fall, or students who previously scored a 1,2 or 3 on the ELDA they year before at VCA. For students who score a 1,2, or 3 VCA will determine the optimal services to provide to each scholar in order to maximize their success. The most common option will be to use the scholar’s

²⁴ Co-Developers of the SIOP model for teaching ELL students, MaryEllen Vogt, Deborah Short and Jana Echevarria, along with other researchers, have conducted and analyzed the impact of their sheltered instruction model since its inception nearly 14 years ago. SIOP has been validated as a model of instruction that improves the achievement of students whose teachers use it. As Jana Echevarria explains in CREATEBrief, October 2012, as recent as 2011, a high school in Texas and elementary school in Washington restructured their ESL programs into comprehensive SIOP models and were met with astounding results for their ELLs, with ELL’s at Tiffany Elementary, WA, scoring 20% better in reading than other ELL students in the state and ELL’s at Pasadena Memorial High School, TX, increasing passage rates on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills annually since SIOP was adopted.

Personalized Learning Lab time to be in the Resource Room with our ELL trained Coach who will work with the student on a structured English language acquisition curriculum. If a scholar is determined to need additional support, they may also have an additional Resource class period during the day so that they are receiving up to 150 minutes of instruction in English language acquisition.

ELL 4, 5

For ELL learners who test above ELL 4 on the ELDA the supports provided in the mainstream program (including RtI Level 3: namely SIOP trained mainstream teachers, differentiation, personalized learning, specific identification and pre-teaching of vocabulary, SSR reading time, extended semesters, Intersession remediation, Summer Bridge) will provide appropriate support. These students are determined to be T1 and their progress will be closely monitored by their mentor teacher and the VCA RtI process. If a ELL 4 or above shows signs of struggling to access the curriculum the options for ELL 1 and 2 will be considered.

Exit Criteria

The proficiency of an identified ELL scholar receiving pull out services will be measured at least twice a year to determine whether continued special services are warranted. All pull-out and special services will continue until a scholar attains fluency in English language proficiency as measured by the ELDA. In addition, we will evaluate each scholar's performance in academic content areas to measure the scholar's progress in core subjects. If an ELL scholar continues to struggle in these academic areas, modifications to the instructional program may be made. Any scholar classified and receiving educational services as an ELL, who subsequently tests high enough to exit the program, will mark an end to ELL services for that particular scholar. No scholars will exit the ELL program unless they can read, write, and comprehend English well enough to participate fully in VCA's academic program.

Accountability and Evaluation of the ELL Program

In order to ensure that the ELL program is achieving the desired results (scholars are making progress in the acquisition of the English language and making progress academically) and to determine the need for programmatic modifications, VCA will evaluate the progressive growth of its ELL scholars on standardized assessments and non-standardized assessments in comparison to that of non-ELL scholars. VCA will also track scholars longitudinally throughout their matriculation to determine if there is significant variation in the academic achievement of scholars who were once classified ELL and non-ELL scholars as measured by standardized assessments and non-standardized assessments. VCA will track how many scholars are declassified as ELL and the number of instructional years it takes for this declassification to occur.

Gifted Scholars

Explain how the school will identify and meet the needs of intellectually gifted students, including the following:

- Specific research-based instructional programs, practices, strategies and opportunities the school will employ or provide to enhance their abilities**
- Plans for monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of intellectually gifted students**
- Plans for hiring qualified staff for intellectually gifted students, including budget assumptions.**

We anticipate serving a small population of scholars who qualify as Gifted and Talented under TN qualifications. We will utilize the application process, scholar cumulative file, and PLP meeting similar to IEP and ELL identification in order to identify such scholars. For these scholars, the VCA commitment to personalized, differentiated courses will be the main support. In addition, the following supports will be provided:

1. **Personalized Learning Plan** – the PLP meeting is the ideal time for Gifted scholars to map out a challenging and rewarding schedule for the year, including many of the option listed below.
2. **SSR reading period** - will provide opportunities for Gifted scholars to read at their appropriate level.
3. **Intersession** – Gifted scholars will have a wide variety of options to choose from during Intersession to pursue challenging courses that fit their personality and learning style. At Summit Prep, some Gifted scholars designed their own Intersession courses that included working at Berkeley Laser Lab, programming HTML at Apple, learning Italian and traveling to Italy.
4. **Personalized Learning Lab** – for Gifted scholars, using their PLL period each day to take an additional course of their choosing is an excellent option. Computer programming, Model United Nations, Advanced Math or Science, etc. are all interesting and challenging options that a Gifted scholar may choose to add to their VCA course load.
5. **Badge system** – there will be a wide variety of challenging and inspiring Badge challenges that Gifted scholars may choose to undertake at VCA. For example, a scholar may decide to take on a Leadership, Community Service, Rocket Design, Language Acquisition, or Body Mass Index challenge that best fits their growth goals. Often scholars who are Gifted in one area of their life may have challenges or gaps in other areas. The PLP meeting is an ideal time to identify areas of growth for Gifted scholars, and Badge challenges are an excellent way to either build on strengths or work on areas of challenge.

Drop-Out Risks

VCA believes that all scholars categorized above can be considered drop-out risks. The strategies, systems, and supports described above will be used to give these scholars access to the VCA curriculum, and to ensure that they feel hopeful and engaged in their educations and their futures.

A few additional school-wide systems will be utilized to identify scholars who are not within the special populations described above, but are still drop-out risks. These scholars are generally from the following categories (Hammond, Linton, Smink, & Drew, 2007):

1. **Intense family poverty**
2. **Physical and emotional abuse**
3. **Excessive absences**
4. **Health issues (including drug and alcohol abuse)**

For these categories, the following systems will be used:

1. **Grade level Coach** – each grade level will have a SPED teacher who oversees the social-emotional health of scholars within the grade level. This coach will work closely with the mentors in each grade level to ensure that any instances of abuse, health issues, or family issues are brought to their attention, and personal plans can be made to support these scholars.
2. **Daily attendance tracking** – scholars and families who miss school will be closely tracked and individual meetings will be held with mentor, Coach, and school leadership for scholars who are “red-flag” risks on school attendance. Plans to improve attendance will include both positive and negative consequences (i.e., attending all Saturday school dates and/or getting public recognition for perfect monthly attendance)
3. **Intersession** – in some cases, Intersession may be used as a tool to get a scholar who was very sick (or had some other exceptional circumstance) caught up on their school work. For example, a scholar who had to leave school for a month to go to Mexico because their parents were deported, or a scholar who was sick with mono can be given the opportunity to use Intersession in order to get caught up in their semester classes rather than falling so far behind that they must repeat the grade.

In addition, the strong VCA culture that is centered around Kindness, Joy, Hard Work, and Continuous Growth will be critically important to engaging these scholars, who often in the past have felt excluded from their community in their learning experiences. (Demaray, Lazarus, & Sulkowski, 2012) Perhaps the most important feature of the VCA model for scholars who are risks to Drop-Out is the mentor program. Each scholar and family will have a faculty mentor that will have a deep, personal relationship with them.

The mentor will be responsible for ensuring that the scholar and family feel known and engaged in the VCA family. In Summit Prep's 10 years of operation, the average percent of drop-outs has been under 2% over four years, or less than 0.5% per year. By modeling our Special Education and mentoring programs after Summit Prep, VCA intends to have similar results.

SECTION V – ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

The most important aspect of Valor Collegiate Academy is encouraging great effort in our scholars to achieve outstanding academic achievement. We will set very high academic goals for all scholars and we will work tirelessly in order to coach and inspire scholars to reach these goals. Listed below are the Academic Goals of Valor Collegiate Academy. It should be noted that we include non-academic goals in our School Goals. VCA includes these goals because we believe that without achieving these goals, we cannot be confident that our scholars will be able to meet our mission of being world-class scholars who graduate from college and lead purposeful and inspired lives.

Describe the proposed charter school’s annual and long-term academic achievement goals, in measurable terms.

Academic Goals

Board Level Valor Collegiate School Outcomes

Table 33 below shows the overall VCA School Outcomes that oversees the major goals of the school. The VCA School Outcomes is maintained by the CEO and School Leader, and is presented three times per year to the Board of Directors. The first column of the School Outcomes has the Outcomes that VCA will meet in order to ensure that each VCA graduate is ready for success in college and life. The Key Performance Indicators are the indicators that will tell the leadership of VCA if we are on target with meeting our mission. In general these indicators will not change significantly over time. The metrics are measurements that VCA will collect in order to provide feedback on the key indicators. These metrics may change, and will be set using input from school leadership and school faculty. The goals for each of these metrics will be set prior to each school year, most often in the summer (although a few goals may need data from the start of the year in order to make wise goals).

Table 33: Valor Collegiate Academy Board Level School Outcomes

Outcome	Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Metric	Valor Collegiate Goals 2014-5
College Ready Graduates	Scholars remain at Valor Collegiate	% incoming 5th grade scholars graduating from Valor Collegiate middle school on time (and w/in 5 years)	75%
		# of scholars in each grade level on TN Attendance Measurement	5th: 140 6th: 125 7th: 115 8th: 110
	Scholars attend school consistently and on time	Average Daily Attendance	96.5
		% tardies	<3% per day average
	Scholars demonstrate mastery in their classes	% scholars who are Proficient or Advanced on their EOC TN exams	75% (Avg across courses)
		% scholars who receive an A/B or above AND a Adv/Prof or higher on TN EOC exam / 3 or higher on AP Exam (or IB equivalent)	80%
		% alignment of faculty predictions in April with TN EOC exams/AP scores	90%

	Scholars are prepared for success in college	% scholars who believe they can go to and be successful in college	5th: 75%; 6th: 80%; 7th: 90%; 8th: 95%
		% scholars accepted to 1 or more 4 year colleges	100%
		% scholars who need no college remediation	90%
		% scholars who obtain a 4 year college degree within 6 years	75%
	Scholars demonstrate academic growth each year towards mastery of VCA CCO standards	% Growth each year ACT (Explore, Plan, ACT)	Set by school leader and CEO in June 2014
		% Growth on TN EOC Exams	Set by school leader and CEO in June 2014
		% Growth on Internal Assessments (Pre-Post each year)	Set by school leader and CEO in June 2014
		% Growth each year on MAP	Set by school leader and CEO in June 2014
		% Growth on Lexile Reading (5-8 only)	Set by school leader and CEO in June 2014
		% Growth on CCO Standards each year (SEI, Civic, 21st Century)	Set by school leader and CEO in June 2014
	Scholars are high performing on external assessments	% AP test score of 3 or better	10% above National Average (50%)
		AP Index (Total tests in a year/total # of seniors)	4.5
		Average ACT Scores	24
AP Equity and Excellence (% seniors who have passed 1 AP exam)		90%	
Scholars demonstrate all six Character Strengths by graduation	% scholars agreeing to the statement "Valor Collegiate scholars typically demonstrate Valor Collegiate's Character Strengths."	80%	

		% scholars receiving a "BASIC or above" in all Character Strengths by the evaluation of their mentor and teachers	60% mid-year, 75% end of 5th 85% end of 6th 95% end of 7th 100% 8th
	Scholars demonstrate mastery of all CCO standards by graduation	% scholars receiving a "BASIC or above" in all CCO standards	100% seniors; add metric for 5-11
		% faculty that can state the Core Values and key CCO categories and identify how/where their curriculum addresses them	100% by Dec each year
High Achieving Teams	Valor Collegiate attracts and retains the "right fit" teachers	# of high quality applicants/faculty job opening	5
		# faculty leaving Valor Collegiate/VCA after 2 or fewer years that are a cultural, philosophical, and skill fit	< 10%
		# faculty leaving Valor Collegiate/VCA that are a not a cultural, philosophical, and skill fit	Less than 2 or 7.5% per year (depending on year of school)
		Faculty average years as a classroom teacher at Valor Collegiate	4 years
		% Faculty who "buy-in" to mission, vision, and non-negotiables as measured by a FIT assessment rubric	100%
		% Faculty who reach Bonus Goals	85%
	Faculty are consistently high performing	% high performing faculty (combination of Continuum Levels and FIT assessment)	80%
		% of faculty that agree with the statement "VCA Home Office provides high quality products and/or services"	90%
		% of scholars who agree "my classes this year are engaging and motivating"	90%
		% scholars agreeing to the statement "My mentor provides valuable help in my college planning"	90%
		% scholars agreeing to the statement "My mentor helps me be successful at Valor Collegiate"	90%
		% parents agreeing to the statement "My scholar's mentor provides valuable coaching and guidance to help him/her achieve his/her potential at Valor Collegiate"	90%

		% parents agreeing to the statement "My scholar's mentor provides sufficient coaching and guidance in his/her college planning"	90%
Strong Culture	Community culture is productive, positive, and high trust	% community (faculty, scholars, parents, and Board) agreeing to focused culture questions on community survey	90%
		% faculty that agree faculty meetings are productive and useful	90%
		% board members that agree board meetings are productive and useful	90%
		Valor Collegiate scholars can state the mission of the school	9th:75%; 12th:100%
		Valor Collegiate culture is consistent in monthly walk-throughs	"Excellent" average
	Valor Collegiate community is diverse	# of total applicants from each targeted demographic	150% # of targeted seats
		% enrolled scholars in various ethnic & groups and income categories	near District average
		% applicants in various ethnic groups & income categories	near District average
		% scholars/faculty agreeing to statement "I feel I am accepted for who I am at Valor Collegiate"	90%
		% scholars/faculty agreeing to the statement "I appreciate being in a school with people who are different than me"	90%
		% scholars agreeing to the statement "I have sufficient opportunity to take leadership roles in Valor Collegiate clubs, class projects and other school activities"	75%
	Valor Collegiate community is emotionally and physically safe	% scholars/faculty agreeing to statement "My teachers care about me"	95%
		% community members agreeing to the statement "I fell physically safe at Valor Collegiate"	95%
		% community members agreeing to the statement "I fell emotionally safe at Valor Collegiate"	95%
		% suspensions and expulsions	< 1% expulsions; <10% suspensions
	Valor Collegiate has a clean, orderly environment that helps ensure the mission of the school	% Community members agreeing with the statement "Valor Collegiate is clean and orderly"	90%
		Clean/orderly measure in culture walk-throughs	Need to set after tool development

	Community members are ambassadors for Valor Collegiate mission and vision	% parents who fulfill volunteer hours	90% complete > 5 hours
		% parents who return community survey	75%
		% community agreeing to the statement "I have recommended Valor Collegiate to other parents"	90%
		Valor Collegiate graduates are satisfied with Valor Collegiate	90%
Finance and Operations	Organization is fiscally and operationally sound and viable	Valor Collegiate runs a balanced budget	20k Bottom Line
		Valor Collegiate has an independent annual audit and receives a "clean" opinion with no significant findings	
		Budget versus Actual	Variance within 5%
		% Fundraising target raised	Meet school fundraising goal by June 1
		Forecasted budget versus actual (w/ net income)	
		End-of-year Fund Balance	3% reserve
		% faculty agreeing to statement "I had the opportunity to make authentic input into the Valor Collegiate budget"	100%

Promotion Criteria

Explain how students will matriculate through the school (i.e., promotion/retention policies and graduation requirements). Tell how parents will be informed and educated about these standards.

In order to be promoted to the next grade level in August, each VCA scholar must:

1. Pass all their academic courses with a C- or higher
2. Pass all their Intersession courses with a C- or higher
3. Have met the Behavior Growth metrics for their grade level
4. Have not missed more than 15 days of school without a medical reason

Scholars who are not passing a class at the end of a trimester (each 8 week session leading up to an Intersession session) will be required to attend the extended semester sessions for that class. The extended semester sessions will be held from 3:00-5:00pm during Intersession. At the end of the second and third Intersession sessions, a final grade for each course will be determined by the teacher of the course. If a scholar has not passed a course at this time with a C- or higher they will be given an F for the course. **(There will be no D grades at VCA, as D grades are not accepted by colleges).** In order to continue on to the next grade level, a scholar must pass all courses prior to the following August. In order to pass classes that they have failed during the course of a year, the following options will be supported:

1. **Academic Boost Course** - Scholars may be placed in the ABC Intersession course to work on their courses that they have not mastered to a C- level in a course called **Academic Boost Course (ABC)**. For example, a scholar who has a 57% in Math and a 44% in English may, upon consultation with their mentor and family, be given the opportunity to not take their Elective

Intersession course in January and instead take the ABC course. During ABC, scholars will work with a VCA teacher and individually to complete coursework and take mastery assessments in order to achieve a C- in the courses that they have not mastered. We anticipate that about 5-10% of scholars will opt for this option each Intersession.

2. **Summer Bridge** – Scholars who are not passing 1-2 courses at the end of the year may choose to attend Summer Bridge. The scholars will be given additional coursework and assessments during Summer Bridge in order to demonstrate mastery at a C- level in a course. We anticipate that less than 5% of scholars in a class will need some extended time in the summer to pass a course.
3. **Independent Online Recovery** – Scholars may also choose, with their family and mentor, to take online replacement courses for a class they have failed at VCA. Courses must be approved by VCA school leadership as equivalent in rigor to a VCA course. Scholars may submit a transcript of a passing grade (again C- or higher, even if the online course allows a D grade as passing) to VCA prior to the beginning of school the following August.
4. **Repeat Grade Level** – If a scholar is failing more than 2 courses at the end of a school year in June they will be retained in that grade level the following year. VCA will work very hard to create a positive culture where retention is viewed as meaning that some scholars need more time to master material and is respected for the grit and courage it takes to value education and college readiness above social impact.

VCA will work incredibly hard with scholars and families in order to ensure that scholars are able to master the content and skills necessary to be successful each year. However, we do believe that promoting scholars who are not prepared for the next level is a disservice to the scholar and will eventually lead to their academic failure. We intend to build a culture where mastery of concepts is paramount: being prepared for success in college and life will be more important to scholars and families than graduating in eight years. If it takes some scholars nine, or even rarely ten years, to graduate but they are will prepared for college and life we believe this is the type of courageous decision by that scholar should be celebrated and valued within the VCA community. This promotion model is based on Summit Prep in CA which had very high levels of success in keeping the majority of scholars moving forward in a rigorous curriculum (about 85-95% of 9th graders moved onto to 10th grade each year, the highest risk year for retention).

Exit Standards

Provide the school’s exit standards for students. These should clearly set forth what students in the last grade served will know and be able to do.

In order to graduate from VCA, the criteria in Table 34 must be met:
(Note: These requirements will be kept up to date with the TN requirements for graduation from high school, which are currently listed in TN State Board of Education 0520-01-03-.06 Graduation, Requirement E for students entering High School in 2009 or later.)

Table 34: High School Graduation Requirements for Valor Collegiate (grades 9-12)

Course or Requirement	Years (or Explanation)
English	4 years
Math	4 years (including current TN requirements)
Science	4 years
Social Studies	3 years (including current TN requirements)
Fine Art	1 year
Physical Education	4 years minimum of Basic on Spark Fitness rubric; 100 hours of physical activity completed on PLP each year 1 credit of Wellness in high school
Finance	1 year (per TN requirements)

Social Emotional Learning	Basic or above on SEI Rubric in all categories by graduation
Foreign Language	2 years
VCA Badges	16 VCA Badges earned
VCA Character Strengths	Basic or above on Character Strength Rubric in all categories
Acceptance to a Four Year College or University	At least one acceptance letter prior to graduation

SECTION VII - Graduation Requirements

Explain how the school will meet graduation requirements. Describe how students will earn credits, how grade-point averages will be calculated, what information will be on transcripts, and what elective courses will be offered. If graduation requirements will exceed those required by the State, explain the additional requirements.

How will the graduation requirements ensure readiness for college or other postsecondary opportunities (i.e., technical centers, community colleges, military, or workforce).

What systems or structures the school will use to assist students at risk of dropping out and/or not meeting graduation requirements throughout the term of the charter.

VCA scholars will exceed the current minimum requirements for graduation from high school in Tennessee in the University Prep Curriculum (TN Rule 0520-01-03-.06(b)). Credits will be earned for each academic course taken during the Academic Semesters at VCA. Courses will be 1 Semester in length, or 1 Year in length, with the Semesters being Aug-Dec (Semester 1) and Jan-June (Semester 2). Grade point averages will follow TN requirements as shown below.

Grading

VCA grading in high school will follow the guidelines listed in TN State Board of ED Rule 0520-01-03-.05. Namely, courses will have the following percentages:

Uniform Grading System				
Grade	Percentage Range		Weighting for Honors	Weighting for AP and IB
	A	93		
B	85	92		
C	75	84		
F	0	74		

VCA will comply with all requirements in TN State Board Rule 0520-01-03-.06 regarding graduation requirements, competency examinations, and gateway examinations. A decision on whether to offer Honors classes in high school will be made by the Summer of 2017 and will be communicated to families and the general public.

As shown in Section III: Academic Plan the VCA curriculum will be rigorous and will prepare scholars very well for college. We have also been very careful to include a wide-range of supports throughout the model to ensure that all students have an opportunity to access the rigorous curriculum.

A challenge of college preparatory high schools is how to deal with the inevitable times when some high school students get discouraged and may wonder if they have the ability and/or willpower to persist in a challenging program. VCA hopes to be a leader in guiding students through these difficult moments. The main support for these students who can become “drop-out” risks is their faculty mentor. The faculty mentor will be very invested in guiding their 18 students through the VCA high school experience, and to see each of them graduate successfully with a college acceptance in their hand. The faculty mentor will therefore check-in weekly with their mentees and will be able to diagnose quickly if a student is struggling or may be a drop-out risk. When these situations do develop, the faculty mentor will then involve the grade level Coach, SPED teacher, and VCA leadership in order to make decisions about how

to best support the struggling student. The Response to Intervention strategies may be employed, or other supports unique to each particular situation may be used. A few examples may be:

1. Intervention meeting at scholar’s home with mentor and VCA leadership
2. Dropping a course that is not required for graduation
3. Using Intersession time to get caught up on work/academic courses
4. Taking a course online in the Summer Bridge program to stay on track
5. Repeating a grade level, perhaps without a 1-2 courses that were already passed (substituted with a Resource Room/Learning Lab support class)

All of these examples were used at Summit Prep in CA as ways of keeping students that were drop-out risks to remain in school and graduate. Summit Prep was highly successful in this area, maintaining less than a 1% drop-out rate during the time that Mr. Dickson was the Executive Director of the school.

Comprehensive Plan for Accreditation

VCA leadership has undergone the extensive planning and execution necessary to have a high school fully accredited. We anticipate working with AdvancEd (formerly SASC) and undergoing their rigorous accreditation process during the 2020-2021 School Year. We will begin preparation for the process a year in advance, including setting aside resources for either a stipend or a partial FTE position who can oversee the process.

VCA believes that the accreditation process is a powerful tool for self-evaluation, learning, and strategic planning and will therefore look forward to this opportunity to grow and get better as an institution. In general, VCA have teams of faculty, parents, students, and Board members work on each of the 5 Standards:

AdvancEd Accreditation Standards for Quality Schools

Standard 1: Purpose and Direction
Standard 2: Governance and Leadership
Standard 3: Teaching and Assessing for Learning
Standard 4: Resources and Support Systems
Standard 5: Using Results for Continuous Improvement

Each team will be created at least one year in advance of the accreditation process and will undergo a 10-12 month process of collecting information, reflecting, and documenting the strengths and challenges of the VCA program. The entire process will be overseen by a SASC Coordinator who will work closely with the CEO and the VCA Board throughout the process. The VCA Board will take advantage of this opportunity to create a new Strategic Plan for the school that they will present to the community following the completion of the accreditation process.

Parent Communication - Promotion and Exit Standards

Parent communication at VCA will be conducted in the following ways:

1. **Parent Information Nights** – as will be discussed in Section X: Community Engagement VCA will hold information nights for potential parents. At these events, the graduation and promotion requirements of the school will be first introduced. VCA will start the education process early in our relationship with families so that everyone is clear about the expectations of the school before even deciding to apply to have their child attend.
2. **Parent University** – VCA will hold three 90 minute Parent Orientation sessions for new families in July each year. These will be called Parent University and they will give families a comprehensive overview of what to expect, and how to engage with VCA. Promotion and graduation requirements will be reviewed at these sessions.

3. **Personalized Learning Plan** – By far the most important session for communication regarding graduation requirements and promotion will be the PLP meeting, held in August/September each year with the scholar, family, and mentor. The mentor will explain the graduation requirements with the scholar and family, and will set a plan to ensure that the scholar is moving forward towards graduation.
4. **Intervention Meetings** – As discussed in the Response to Intervention (RtI) section for special populations, when a scholar is struggling academically or behaviorally an Intervention meeting will be held with the family, mentor, and grade level teachers. These meetings will occur for all scholars who are failing two or more classes in a semester, one to two weeks prior to the end of a semester. It is preferred to have the meetings in person, but they may be done via phone if a parent cannot attend in person. An academic or behavior plan will be created during this meeting to help guide the scholar towards success, and the plan will always include a reference to how any decisions made affect the scholar's path towards graduation.
5. **Online Standards-Based Tracking System** – As discussed in the next session, parents and scholars will have real-time access of their progress towards mastery of the VCA standards defined in the CCO. Parents and scholars will be trained on how to view the information online, and will be able to communicate with their mentor at anytime for help in determining their progress.
6. **Phone/Texting** – the online system will also email/text/call (parent choice) with warnings and updates regarding their scholar's progress towards graduation and the standards of each course. Again, parents will be trained and also supported via their scholar mentor in how to use this system.

As stated in the Board Level Goals, communication with VCA families will be a high priority and strength of the VCA model.²⁵ We believe that the personal connection that is created between each family and their mentor is the key to having outstanding, trusting, and continual communication with VCA families. When combined with great training, orientation, and technology we hope to be an example for excellent communication with families.

²⁵ While most would agree and research bears out, family involvement impacts schools. However, according to Amy Reschly for the RTI Network, some of the most effective family-school partnerships have been found to include: communication and dialogue between family and school, joint monitoring of student progress, and parent intervention centered on specific outcomes, all hallmarks of the VCA family partnership model.

SECTION VI – ASSESSMENTS

Assessment System

Identify the primary interim assessments the school will use to assess student learning needs and progress throughout the year. Explain how these interim assessments align with the school’s chosen curriculum, performance goals and state standards.

Explain how the organization will measure and evaluate academic progress – of individual students, student cohorts, sub-groups, and the entire school – throughout the school year, at the end of the academic year, and for the term of the charter agreement.

Explain how the school will collect and analyze student academic data, use data to inform and improve instruction, and report that data to the school community. Identify the person/persons or positions that will be responsible for the collection and analysis of assessment data.

Describe the process for collecting data, interpreting it for classroom teachers, and leading or coordinating professional development to improve student achievement.

Explain the training and support that school leadership and teachers will receive in analyzing, interpreting, and using performance data.

Describe the school’s approach to help remediate students’ academic underperformance. Detail the interventions and remediation to be implemented and how they will be chosen. Cite the research/rationale for the chosen methods.

VCA believes that a world-class assessment cycle is one of the most important features of outstanding teaching and learning. VCA even extends this theory beyond scholar teaching and learning to include the entire VCA organization. In order to be a great learning organization, everyone within the organization must be clear on what the expected outcomes are, and must be given regular, meaningful data on progress towards those outcomes. Outstanding training must be given so that everyone can develop the capacity to analyze that data in order to make wise decisions about how to best proceed towards the agreed upon outcomes. This cycle should ultimately include the most important person in the organization: the scholar. By the end of the VCA experience, it is the intention that each VCA scholar will be able to self-manage their own learning data in order to achieve their academic and non-academic goals. This section will detail the overall VCA data assessment

system, including how we intend to use our gradual release model to transition the assessment system from teacher and parent centered to scholar centered.

Data Assessment System

VCA sets out to be a leader in collecting, analyzing, and acting on data in order to maximize both student and teacher learning. We will use data in order to personalize the learning experience for all community members. The following section describes an overview of the data and assessment systems that VCA will utilize.

A brief description of each component of the system:

1. **Knowledge Management System** – VCA will use Illuminate for its Knowledge Management System (KMS). Illuminate is actually a few different products in a single sign-on:
 - a. **Student Information System** – scholar demographics, grades, attendance, State reporting, Special Education and discipline are all tracked in the SIS portion of Illuminate
 - b. **Data and Assessment** – the data and assessment capabilities of Illuminate are excellent. State Standards, Common Core Standards, and Internal Standards can be uploaded into the Illuminate system. Assessments can then be linked to these Standards. Assessments can be easily uploaded via video scanning, making data uploading nearly real-time.

- c. **Activate** – Illuminate has partnered on a grant with Summit Public Schools in CA to develop an additional tool called Activate. Valor Collegiate will be able to access this exciting tool. Activate provides functionality to leaders and teachers to further analyze scholar data and to make “smart” suggestions to scholars for lessons, readings, and online videos depending on the results of their assessments. In addition, the tool helps make suggestions for differentiated groupings based on mastery of standards. For example, if scholar’s A, B, and C all have weak mastery of finding the slope of a line, but scholars D, E, and F have mastered that skill, Activate can suggest “tutor pairing” where a student who has mastered the material works with a student who hasn’t (i.e., A with D, B with E, etc.), OR Activate can suggest a remediation activity for students A, B, C and an extension activity for students D, E, and F.
2. **Additional Assessment Management**
 - a. **Mastery Connect** – in addition to Illuminate/Activate, VCA will use Mastery Connect (MC). MC integrates with Illuminate, but enhances teachers and leaders ability to design and analyze great assessments. Mastery Connect links with the Student Information System and allows for teachers to track mastery of the TN State Standards and the Common Core. It also has formative assessments on these standards, and easy-to-use digital uploading of these assessments in order to get data on student performance back in real-time. In addition, it allows teachers and leaders access to a national network of teachers who are working on Common Core, AP, and TN State assessments.
 - b. **Online / Blended Content and Assessment** – VCA will utilize multiple online content and assessment providers for various courses and grade levels. Many of these providers have data from their online assessments that will be incorporated into the VCA KMS. In order to create a “single sign-on” for each scholar and teacher that essentially combines the VCA KMS with these various online content and assessment providers, VCA will partner with Education Elements (a Silicon Valley organization that specializes in developing blended learning solutions for schools). Ed Elements and VCA will build a customized Data Management System that combines with Illuminate and will be on the leading edge of collecting and analyzing scholar data from multiple systems.
 3. **Behavior Tracking System** – VCA intends to use Kickboard or Live School for their behavior tracking system. Both systems link with Illuminate and will allow for behavior and discipline assessment data to be tracked efficiently. Again, VCA will work with Education Elements to combine this data into a “single sign-on” for VCA community members, including scholars and families.
 4. **Community School Outcomes** – By partnering with Education Elements, VCA intends to have easy to access and understand Community School Outcomes for parents, scholars, teachers, and leaders that have all the important information they need in order to track scholar’s progress towards the VCA mission.
 5. **College Tracking System** – VCA will utilize Naviance for tracking the college process for high school scholars. Since the high school will not open until 2017, this choice may change if a higher quality product emerges in the next few years.
 6. **Teacher and Leader Development** – VCA intends to use Bloomboard for dynamically managing teacher and leader development, as will be discussed in more detail in Section XIII: Professional Development. Bloomboard is a very exciting new data management system from Silicon Valley that VCA believes has the opportunity to really accelerate the way teachers are trained.

External Assessments

VCA will use a combination of external and internal assessments in order to measure progress towards the VCA mission and goals. Table 34 shows the external tests that will be used at each grade level:

Table 34: External Assessments used at VCA

	5 th	6 th	7 th	8 th	9 th	10 th	11 th	12 th
TN State Tests (Common Core)	1x year	1x year	1x year					
NWEA MAP	2x per year							
ACT				Explore	Plan	2x ACT	2x ACT	2x ACT (optional)
AP						1x year	1x year	1x year
SAT						1x year (optional)	1-2x year (optional)	1-2x year (optional)

VCA will work to have enough external assessments each year so that the VCA community is well informed about the progress of our scholars as compared to other scholars in TN, the Nation, and the World. However, we will also be aware that high stakes external tests, while important, also take time to administer and can have take an emotional toll on scholars; therefore, they can be a liability to the overall learning process and ultimate goals of our mission and must be used judiciously.

Internal Assessments

VCA will administer internal assessments every four weeks, with common assessments across courses every eight weeks. The internal assessments will be mostly internally developed, although we will contract for assistance in developing the multiple choice sections so that they are accurate representations of the external assessments that our scholars will take (i.e, the Common Core assessments, TN State assessments, ACT, and AP). We will most likely use the Achievement Network or Intell-Assess to develop the multiple choice sections of our internal assessments. A decision on vendor will be made by the Spring of 2014. The development of internal assessments is considered one of the key components of the teacher development cycle; therefore, internal assessments will always be at least partially developed within the VCA organization. The VCA Internal Assessment Cycle is shown below in Table 35.

Table 35: Internal Assessment Schedule

IA1	Data Analysis 1	IA2	Data Analysis 2	IA3	Data Analysis 3	IA4	Data Analysis 4
Week 4	Week 5 (2 days)	Week 8	Week 9, 10 (10 days)	Week 13	Week 14 (2 days)	Week 18	Week 19, 20 (10 days)
IA5	Data Analysis 5	IA6	Data Analysis 6	EOC Exams	Data Analysis 7	IA7	Data Analysis 8
Week 24	Week 25 (2 days)	Week 29	Week 29 (2 days)	Week 35, 36	Week 36 (2 days)	Week 38	Week 39, 40 (10 days)

As shown, a large amount of time is spent analyzing internal and external data. **40 days of time during the regular school year are devoted to professional development time for teachers, with at least**

20% of that time spent on analyzing scholar data and developing action plans for ensuring excellent personalized instruction for each scholar. We are not aware of any model that devotes as much time towards analysis, planning using scholar assessment data and VCA believes that this unique use of time and focus on data analysis and planning will allow both the scholars and the teachers to excel in this model.

Data Assessment Cycle

The data assessment cycle at VCA is shown in Figure 2. In order to capitalize on the large amounts of time for analysis and teacher development that are created by the use of the Intersession schedule, the data analysis sessions must be very well organized, and differentiated for each teacher and grade level. The process that we envision for these days is outlined below:

Figure 2: VCA Data Assessment Cycle



Data Analysis Session 1,3,5,6,7

Duration: 2 days

Overview:

These sessions are after a four-week cycle, which usually coincides with approximately one Unit of instruction. Teachers will have the following objectives for the two-day sessions:

1. Grade any short answer, open-ended responses with rubrics and upload data into KMS
2. Analyze scholar data and identify each scholar's strengths and challenges with the standards of the Unit(s)
3. Identify trends across scholars/classes with respect to standards
4. Reflect on lesson planning and execution of lessons; draw conclusions about how each affected scholar outcomes
5. Decide upon and document changes to lesson plans and execution for next year
6. Create an action plan for each scholar and class to ensure they learn standards from previous four week Unit, including possible options of:
 - a. Re-teach to entire class
 - b. Re-teach to small groups / Extension for others
 - c. Re-teach outside of class time (Office Hours, tutoring, Saturdays, Intersession)
 - d. Spiral key themes into upcoming Unit
7. Review KMS for all mentees and call/email each scholar and their parent for discussion of current academic standing
8. Review upcoming Internal Assessment (usually a large 8 week assessment, or year end assessment) – make changes if appropriate
9. Modify / create lesson plans for next four week Unit based on data and review of upcoming assessment

The basic analysis sessions will have the following key steps:

1. Upload all assessment data to KMS prior to Data Analysis Days
2. Work in content teams to analyze data
3. Reflect and present data to VCA leadership (DCI or Principal)
4. Work in content teams to create action plans

5. Reflect and present action plan to VCA leadership
6. Present action plan to grade level team
7. Work in content team to design lesson plans for next Unit
8. Present lesson plans to VCA leadership

Data Analysis Session 2,4

Duration: 10 days – Intersession periods 1 and 2

Overview:

The same basic objectives and overview will occur during these sessions. The biggest difference is that each step of the process is allowed considerably more time. The points of emphasis with the expanded time will be:

1. More in-depth collaboration and sharing of teachers around successes and challenges
2. More in-depth work with school leadership on reflection and action plans
3. More cross grade level and vertical team time to look for patterns across courses, and also to see gaps and strengths across years (i.e., for 6th grade Science teachers to share with 5th grade Science teachers that scholars are showing gaps in their knowledge of Cells – these teachers can then work together on improving the 5th grade lessons on Cells, or discuss how to spiral Cells more frequently into the 6th and 7th grade curriculum)
4. Time for visits to great schools/teachers outside of the VCA organization. For example, 5th grade English teacher identifies that her scholars are struggling with Grammar and her school leader helps her coordinate to go observe a world-class teacher at Nashville Prep who is very strong in grammar instruction.
5. School-wide sharing of key learnings, successes, and challenges – faculty will commit to being a powerful learning community that shares successes and struggles

Data Analysis Session 8

Duration: 10 days – Intersession period 1

Overview:

The final Intersession Data Analysis session is during the last two weeks of school. It will feel very similar to the other two 10 day sessions, but will have less focus on planning for the next session. Instead, there will be increased focus on detailed reflection and sharing of what worked and what we need to improve for the following year. The steps are, again, similar, but heavy emphasis is placed on analyzing the data from the entire year in teams of teachers, and then documenting what to change for the following year, especially in terms of assessments. School leadership and Master Teachers will then use this information in the summer to improve upon the assessment cycle and curriculum.

Professional Development for Data Analysis

In order to ensure that the Data Analysis days described above are effective, VCA will ensure that faculty members are highly skilled in data analysis. VCA will utilize the following approach for training all faculty in effective data analysis:

1. **Leadership data analysis training** – School leaders must be experts in data analysis, classroom instruction, and coaching in order for the data analysis cycle to be effective. The school leader for VCA will spend an entire year leading up to opening the school working with the CEO of VCA, traveling to see world-class leaders in action and practicing data analysis. In addition experienced teachers in the VCA system have the opportunity to become Master teachers. One of the strands on the Continuum for growth towards a Master teacher is successfully undergoing 160+ hours of data analysis and 160+ hours of data analysis coaching, or approximately 5 years of data work in the VCA system. These Master teachers will be key leaders in guiding emerging teachers through the VCA process.
2. **Technology training** – Many data analysis processes are not effective because either a) the data is too complicated and therefore overwhelming, or b) the data is too difficult to access/process because the leaders and teachers are not experts in the technology tools. In order to avoid these pitfalls, VCA will make it a point of emphasis in hiring to find faculty and leaders who are technology savvy and excited about the potential of data and technology to revolutionize

education. In addition, a significant part of each data analysis session will be on training all educators on how to use the technology tools to manipulate data. Every data analysis session (whether in the Summer, the two day sessions, or the full ten day Intersession sessions) will include differentiated sessions on the technology tools that will be overseen by the Chief Technology Officer and executed by school leadership and Master teachers.

- 3. Guided practice with data** – the main strategy for developing excellent data analysis skills among the faculty at VCA will be to have teachers receive considerable amounts of guided practice with a data expert, especially as they are developing as emerging instructors. School leadership (DCI and/or Principal) and Master teachers will work closely with newer teachers (year 1-3) during the Data Analysis Sessions in order to guide them with daily, consistent feedback on collecting, uploading, analyzing, reflecting, and creating action plans based on their data. For example, a year 1 teacher will be teamed with a Master Teacher (year 5+) and will teach the same Math course to the 6th grade. All teachers in common courses will give the same internal assessments and therefore will co-design the assessments. When the Data Analysis sessions arrive, the Master teacher will lead the analysis sessions, guiding the emerging teacher through the process. School leadership will have regular check-ins with the team, and will provide differentiated feedback to both teachers on how to improve assessments, lesson plans, and execution of instruction.
- 4. Collaborative sharing and feedback** – A core teacher (and scholar) development belief at VCA is in order to develop a high capacity faculty, each faculty member must have the courage and desire to commit to a public, collaborative growth process. By committing publicly to improving as educators we will create an environment where growth amongst our educators is valued and expected each year. One of the key strategies VCA will use to build capacity and trust among the faculty is to have regular collaboration around strengths and challenges in each other’s teaching and learning. As part of each professional development session, faculty will regularly share successes and failures with each other, as a way to build trust and communal knowledge around what is working (and not working) in our model. Faculty will also regularly practice giving and receiving feedback with each other, with the cultural belief being that compassionate feedback is a gift that helps everyone grow. A typical VCA professional development session will be startling to observe for those not used to such a high trust, courageous environment: teachers and leaders will all show courage, vulnerability, humility, and passion for growth as they share and analyze their data together. Failure and successes will both be celebrated as important aspects of continual growth in the Core Discipline of teaching.

School-wide and Sub-group Assessment

VCA will utilize the Intersession periods to also analyze data at a school-wide level. Data will be compared against other schools, and will also be compared for growth against previous years. This data will be shared with faculty, students, parents, and the general public. VCA aims to have high transparency with all of our data, and will be forthcoming in our areas of strengths and also our weaknesses. In addition, sub-group assessment will be part of every level of data analysis at VCA. Because we aim to have a richly diverse set of scholars at the school we anticipate having multiple sub-groups large enough for data sets, and we will use those sets at all levels of data analysis.

Remediation for Academic Underperformance

Describe the school’s approach to help remediate students’ academic underperformance. Detail the interventions and remediation to be implemented and how they will be chosen. Cite the research/rationale for the chosen methods.

Remediation for academic performance is undertaken in the following tiers at VCA:

- 1. Classroom Level** – VCA teachers have a unique opportunity to review data every 4 weeks for 2 days, and every 8 weeks for 10 days. Out of these analysis sessions teachers will design action plans for all students, but especially for struggling students. Most common remediation actions for struggling students will include:

- a. Re-teaching key concepts in small groups during classtime
 - b. Office Hour assignment with student to re-teach key concepts
 - c. Saturday School assignment with student to re-teach key concepts
 - d. Peer tutoring assignment for student to re-learn key concepts
2. **Intersession** – For students who need additional support (as per data analysis), they are assigned to additional remediation support during Intersessions
 - a. **Extended Semester** – Students who have not learned all concepts from an 8 week cycle will be assigned to Extended Semester from 3-5pm during Intersession and will be taught key concepts
 - b. **Intersession Remediation Course** – Students who need considerable extra time to learn key concepts from Math and English will be assigned an Intersession Remediation Course (actually called ABC – Academic Boost) that meets in the mornings during Intersession for 3 hours each day and focuses on the key skills and concepts in Math and English that a scholar is struggling with. These courses are taught in teams by VCA faculty as part of their Professional Development process.
3. **Summer Bridge** – Some scholars will need additional support beyond Office Hours, Extended Semester, and Academic Boost in order to pass their courses may be assigned to Summer Bridge (Summer School) at year’s end. These courses will be three weeks in length and will be taught in June each year.
4. **Grade Level Retention** – For a small number of scholars it may be determined by VCA leadership, faculty, mentor, and family that the best decision for keeping a scholar on the path towards college is having them spend another year in the current grade before moving onward. These decisions are made very judiciously and compassionately.

SECTION VIII - School Culture

Describe the desired school culture or ethos of the proposed school and how it will promote a positive academic environment and reinforce the charter school’s mission, goals and objectives.

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

Explain how the school culture will embrace students with special needs, including students with disabilities, English language learners and students at risk of academic failure.

In our visits to the highest performing public and private schools in the country, the most common predictor of outstanding academic achievement was a focused, positive culture that had clear, high expectations for every scholar. VCA believes that having a strong scholar and faculty culture is the most important ingredient of a world-class school. While it is tempting to focus on academic achievement first, great schools invest first and foremost in school culture. Without a strong school culture, consistent long-term academic achievement is very difficult to achieve. As Ron Berger stated in *An Ethic of Excellence*, students’ achievement and character are shaped by the culture around them (2003). Strong cultures need to be carefully constructed: every detail needs to be carefully thought about and planned for in order to develop the type of culture that promotes positive growth in all community members.

VCA intends to have a culture that embodies our Core Values, and works to develop and celebrate our Character Strengths. We intend to clearly communicate that every community member of VCA, which includes all VCA faculty, leadership, scholars, and families, will be held to the same high standards and expectations for being positive stewards of the VCA culture.

The **Core Values** of VCA are:

- **Excellence** – We value striving for excellence everyday; day after day; we know that excellence is the result of purposely learning from many failures
- **Continuous Growth Mindset** - We get smarter and smarter through hard work and learning from failure; we value the small, persistent steps forward that it takes to be great; we know that greatness in anything is the result of continual practice over long periods of time
- **Kindness** - We deeply value everyone in our community and treat them with kindness
- **Joy** – We actively seek out joy in our experiences
- **Individual AND Community** – We value our autonomy and individuality AND we value the power of community
- **Diversity** - We value our diverse community and know that we are better prepared for inspired, passionate lives by deeply understanding the multiple perspectives and worldviews of the various backgrounds of our VCA families

A good summary of the VCA Core Values is “We will work hard everyday because we want to grow. We will be kind to everyone in our diverse community everyday. We will celebrate our individuality and we will embrace our community. We will support each other joyfully in order to be one of the best schools in the world!”

In order to live these Core Values everyday, we will work on developing the following Character Strengths in each community member.

Character Strengths:

- **Wisdom** (Strengths that involve the acquisition and use of knowledge)
- **Courage** (Strengths that allow one to accomplish goals in the face of opposition)
- **Justice** (Strengths that build healthy community)
- **Humanity** (Strengths of tending to and befriending others)
- **Temperance** (Strengths that protect against excess)
- **Transcendence** (Strengths that forge connections to the larger universe and provide meaning)

In order to make these Core Values and Character Strengths come alive in the daily culture of the school, the following systems and strategies will be utilized:

1. Scholar Orientation

- Home Visit** – in 5th grade, every new scholar will have a home visit by their mentor and/or school leadership in the summer before school starts. At this meeting, every family will be welcomed to the VCA community in a joyful manner. Scholars will receive a t-shirt and their laptops for the year. The school mission, Core Values, and Character Strengths are first introduced at this meeting.
- Summer Bridge** – approximately 75%+ of incoming 5th graders will attend the Summer Bridge program in June. The program will run for three weeks in July. Part of the program will include an introduction of the VCA mission, Core Values, and Character Strengths. The scholars who attend Summer Bridge will become scholar leaders when the August Sessions for all VCA scholars begin.
- Valor Institute** – scholars will have a 4-day Orientation prior to the first day of academic school. This Orientation session will be lead by school leadership, parent volunteers, and in later years predominantly by older VCA scholars. The sessions will focus on:
 - VCA Mission** – through stories and vivid examples, scholars will be introduced to the school mission
 - Core Values introduction** – through stories and experiences the Core Values will be introduced
 - Character Strengths** – again, through stories and vivid examples, our expectations of living the VCA Character Strengths will be clearly explained
 - Expectations and Consequences** – all school expectations and consequences will be carefully detailed and **practiced**. For example, how scholars sit in Morning Meeting, how scholars walk in the Hallways between classes, how scholars eat lunch and clean-up, how scholars greet faculty and fellow scholars, how scholars enter and exit the building, etc. Great detail and focus will be spent on making sure that every scholar is 100% clear on how they are supposed to behave as a VCA scholar. All expectations and consequences will be carefully tied back to explanations for how they develop the Character Strengths and support the Core Values of the School
 - Community Building** – ice-breaker games and get-to-know you sessions will be lead to show that we will break through the normal “cool/uncool” paradigm of adolescence and will inspire scholars (and teachers and parents!) to find joy in school, and to equate kindness with a “cool” way to behave.
- First two weeks of school**
 - Orientation Reinforcement** - Morning Meetings, and a small portion of each class period (about 5 minutes) will be spent reinforcing all of the lessons introduced during the August Orientation.
 - Classroom Expectations and Consequences** – A strength of nearly all high performing schools is the shared commitment across classrooms to the exact same set of expectations and consequences.²⁶ VCA will have a shared set of expectations and consequences for each VCA classroom, and for non-classroom

²⁶ Shared consequences and expectations have been identified as key components of prevention programs in schools that accelerate academic achievement, diminish problem behaviors, and increase readiness for learning. See, *Prevention Strategies That Work*: <http://cecp.air.org/preventionstrategies/textonly.htm>

time. These classroom expectations will be carefully detailed and practiced in the first two weeks of school in every classroom. A list of the 5th grade Expectations and Consequences is listed in Attachment 5 – Student Discipline Policy. As the scholars progress through the Gradual Release model at VCA, the expectations and consequences will become more and more internally based. The exact Expectations and Consequences for classrooms in these later Stages will be developed in the year prior to that Stage opening.

2. Faculty Orientation

- a. **August session** – VCA will conduct a differentiated 10-12 day Orientation for new faculty in the three weeks leading up to the start of school. The session will include culture building (described here) as well as the previously discussed assessment and curriculum development sessions. VCA believes that having a strong, high trust faculty culture is equally important to having a strong scholar culture, and in fact is a necessary ingredient for the latter. Attachment 28 details a draft Calendar for these sessions.
 - i. **High Trust Culture** – faculty will be led through sessions on what a high trust culture looks like, how to develop a high trust culture, and how to ensure its continual growth. The book *The Speed of Trust* by Stephen Covey will be used as the basis for the sessions, as well as *Drive* by Daniel Pink, and *Practice Perfect* by Doug Lemov. A high trust culture has the following characteristics that all VCA faculty will aspire to:
 1. **Common mission and clear expectations**
 2. **Positivity**
 3. **Consistent, honest feedback**
 4. **Minimal water cooler talk**
 5. **Humility**
 - ii. **Mindset** – all faculty must have a deep understanding of Carol Dweck’s theory of mindset. Her book *Mindset* will be an assigned summer reading, and multiple sessions will be led by faculty members on how VCA will live and incorporate this critical Core Value into the culture of both the scholars and the faculty.
 - iii. **Sweat the Small Stuff** – in order to be an effective faculty, we must have crystal clear understanding and agreement on all of the expectations and consequences that we will have for our community. The Expectations and Consequences (E&C) for scholars will be introduced, with time for discussion, feedback, and input for changes. Once the E&C has been determined for the year, faculty will spend considerable time *practicing* how to effectively deliver clear expectations, and how to handle fair and compassionate delivery of consequences. Faculty will work in teams and practice real scenarios of giving feedback to real scholars (and sometimes faculty playing the role of scholars). Clear, bite sized feedback will be given for each scenario from school leadership, the grade level Coaches, and Master teachers. Faculty will also practice giving feedback to each other re: common issues that affect faculty, including parent interactions. In short, VCA faculty will be incredibly well prepared to handle all the “small stuff” in a consistent manner because they will practice, practice, practice. The practice builds trust in the faculty culture, builds deep familiarity with the expectations, and builds skill in delivering consequences that are fair, consistent, compassionate, and always tied to growth towards the VCA Character Strengths.
 - iv. **Practice Perfect** – Faculty will also have a summer reading assignment to read Doug Lemov’s *Practice Perfect*. Many of the suggested skills and strategies from the book will be utilized as part of the faculty orientation, especially around taking skills that are essential to running great schools (and classrooms) and breaking them down into small, practicable skills. Leadership at VCA will present a small number of skills that all faculty will practice together, and will also suggest specific skills for each faculty member to develop in their Personalized Educator Plans (described below).

- v. **Core Discipline commitment** – As part of the orientation sessions, faculty will publicly commit to their Core Discipline for the school year. This practice can be simply “teaching”, i.e., they are going to put significant energy into becoming a deeply committed education practitioner. However, they may also commit to another Core Discipline. A secondary passion will be more common with more experienced educators, but not always. For example, a faculty member may choose to run a marathon, become fluent in Spanish, or become an expert in ELL strategies. Faculty and scholars will be taught the same theory and process for working on a Core Discipline, and will periodically share their triumphs and struggles with each other throughout the school year.
 - vi. **Personalized Educator Plan (PEP)** – every faculty member at VCA will also have a PEP. A copy of the PEP Document is shown in Attachment 21 and will be discussed in more detail in Section XIII: Professional Development. The PEP meeting with school leadership will occur during the Faculty Orientation sessions.
- b. **Intersession sessions** – Intersession is a rare 30-day opportunity to develop teachers. As discussed in the Assessment Section, about 30% of this time will be spent developing teachers through the Data Analysis Cycle. While this cycle is focused mainly on analyzing scholar data, it really is an extensive opportunity for teachers to develop as excellent classroom teachers. By using the data cycle as the central focus, teachers and leaders are able to discuss and work on all aspects of world-class teaching: assessment, curriculum design, lesson planning, classroom execution, and emotional intelligence (especially self-management and relational awareness and management). The remaining time in Intersession will include a focus on scholar and faculty culture. Some of the possible topics that will be addressed/developed:
- i. **Scholar culture** – any relevant scholar culture issues will be discussed, and strategies for addressing them will be developed and planned. For example, if bullying is an issue in 5th grade, the 5th grade level team will spend time developing an effective plan to address and deal with the issue in a way that builds the Character Strengths of all of the 5th grade scholars. If academic integrity is a worry in 6th grade then the 6th grade team will develop a plan for the upcoming 8 week session to address it. If a school-wide issue is noticed (i.e., lack of joy in the classrooms) then the entire faculty will schedule a session to address the culture issue. By having time and consistent breaks in the schedule to address these types of culture issues, we will never allow culture to drift too far from our ideal.
 - ii. **Faculty culture** – similar to scholar culture, if issues in faculty culture need to be addressed, sessions will be schedule during this time. For example, if there appears to be inconsistent execution of Expectations and Consequences across content areas or grade levels they would be addressed here.
 - iii. **Courageous conversation** – faculty will be trained in how to have Difficult Conversations, especially with fellow faculty members, and also parents. *Difficult Conversations* (Stone & Patton, 1999) will be used as the model. Strong cultures are not devoid of problems, but instead are defined by how they pay attention to and address problems as they occur. VCA will regularly train faculty and encourage them to have open, honest conversations with fellow faculty members in order to promote a healthy, transparent culture.
- c. **Leadership Team meetings** – LT meetings will be held from 2:05-4:05pm on Wednesdays. These meetings will be mainly for professional development, but will also work to build positive culture among the faculty. A few of the culture building aspects are listed below:
- i. **Shout-outs** – all meetings will start with a 3 minute rapid fire session of “shout-outs” to fellow VCA community members for actions that represented the Core Values or Character Strengths of the School
 - ii. **Appreciations** – multiple times per year (usually at notoriously difficult stretches in a school year – i.e., late October) faculty will do specific Appreciation sessions

where they spend 20 minutes either writing or verbally appreciating their fellow faculty members

- iii. **Failure celebrations** – one time per week faculty will do a rapid fire “celebration” of failures. Faculty will volunteer areas or examples where they have failed recently. Faculty will acknowledge their courage and growth in the areas.

3. **Parent Orientation** – It is a belief at VCA that parent culture is a critical ingredient in successful schools. It is also a belief the vast majority of parents want to be involved and part of the school culture, but have not been taught how or given the right type of opportunities. In order to ensure that the VCA parent community is engaged, knowledgeable, and supportive of the VCA mission for their scholars, we will use the following culture building strategies.

- a. **Recruiting sessions** – from the very start of the recruiting process, VCA will work to make all parents feel welcomed and inspired by the VCA culture. Recruiting sessions will involve current scholars and parents (after year 1) who will detail the school culture.
- b. **Home Visit** – the home visit described above is a very important step in engaging parents in the VCA community. Volunteer opportunities are described to parents at this meeting, and they are encouraged to find opportunities that fit their lifestyle.
- c. **Summer Bridge** – one of the many volunteering options for parents is during the Summer Bridge programs. During these sessions, parents are invited to attend the culture classes that introduce the VCA mission, Core Values, and Character Strengths of the school. Parents are also invited to attend the sessions on Mindset.
- d. **Parent University** – VCA will have three 90-minute sessions during Summer Bridge (at night and on Saturdays) that will be a comprehensive introduction to the VCA culture for families. We will do our very best to get all parents to attend these sessions so that they can start to build a trusting relationship with the school, and so that VCA can begin to understand each family. As part of Parent University, parents will be asked to attend an evening Orientation Meeting (7-9pm) and a Saturday Orientation Session (either 9-12pm or 1-4pm). Ideally parents will attend both the evening session and one of the Saturday sessions. Parents will be personally called by their mentor and invited to each event, and the importance of the events will be explained to them. We aim to have 100% attendance at these events, and will be very persistent in order to get all parents to attend. The home visit often makes getting 100% attendance at these events possible, because the mentor has already started to create a personal relationship with the family.
 - i. **Mindset** – one of the key sessions at these events is a parent version of Mindset, which explains the key idea that by working hard we get smarter, and that intelligence is not a fixed number, but can be developed through hard work. This message is often an inspiring and well received one by parents, both for themselves and their children.
 - ii. **Technology Training** – parents are trained on how to use their laptop to check on scholar progress at school. VCA realizes that parents who are not tech savvy will need multiple coaching sessions throughout the year in order to build the skills necessary to be partners in their scholars educational growth and will schedule multiple sessions throughout the year.
- e. **First two weeks of school** – again, parents are encouraged to volunteer during the first two weeks, helping with attendance, lunch, welcoming, room decorating, camping trip planning, and laptop check-outs. We especially like to have parents attend the Morning Meeting sessions to get a sense of the VCA culture, expectations, Core Values, and Character Strengths.

4. **Clear Expectations and Consequences** – VCA will have very clear expectations and consequences (E&C) for behavior, especially for the Stage 1 scholars who enter in 5th in 2014. We believe the E&C are critical at this stage of adolescent development, and properly set the stage for the gradual release model at VCA that carefully develops college ready scholars. Very clear and consistent E&C are also a critical component of the VCA culture. It is a core belief at VCA that every E&C is directly tied to the support of a VCA Core Value, or helps develop a VCA Character Strength. Therefore, all E&C are designed solely for the purpose of helping our

scholars grow and meet our mission. When developing any type of strategy or system at a VCA school, the question “is this good for our scholars growth?” must be answered in the affirmative in order for the strategy or system to be acceptable. In other words, systems or strategies that simply make life easier for adults are not acceptable at VCA. A few of the highlights of the systems that support the E&C (see **Attachment 5: Student Discipline Policy**):

- a. **Graduated Discipline System** – for each Stage of the VCA model there will be a Graduated Discipline System. The GDS describes the levels of action taken by VCA as a scholar progresses through the year in relationship to the Expectations and Consequences (E&C). The GDS for Stage 1 is shown in **Attachment 5: Student Discipline Policy**. A high-level description of each GDS, by Stage:
 - i. **Stage 1** – in Stage 1 the E&C and the GDS do not give much room for error or choice for scholars. Scholars are given very clear expectations and consequences, and the GDS consequences generally focus on individual consequences (usually detention and loss of Paycheck points).
 - ii. **Stage 2** – as scholars progress to Stage 2 they have begun to develop self-discipline and have responded well to the clear E&C of Stage 1. The Expectations are therefore less specific in Stage 2. For example, instead of “there will be no talking in the hallways between classes” the expectation is “classes in session and faculty working will not be disturbed by scholars changing classes in the hallways”. In short, scholars will be given expected outcomes rather than expected behaviors, and as part of their consequences they will be expected to discuss how they decided to achieve a certain outcome and how that decision/behavior did or did not work to achieve that outcome. The general consequences are similar at Stage 2, except that detention time is spent in more dialogue discussing their behavior choices in order to develop self-awareness around their behavior choices.
 - iii. **Stage 3,4** – as scholars progress towards Stage 3 the vast majority have begun to internalize the E&C at VCA. VCA therefore begins to remove more of the scaffolding around E&C. Instead of having specific behavior rules for every situation, the community begins to rely more heavily on the Core Values and Character Strengths. In Stage 1 and 2, the E&C are very clear especially to help the 10-20% of scholars who may need specific clarity around how to behave as a scholar. As the model progresses, the E&C are written more specifically for the 80-90% of scholars who have earned trust and do not need layers of specific expectations and consequences to behave in manners aligned with the Core Values and Character Strengths. In order to make this transition work in Stage 3, the *consequences* are very clear and more far-reaching for scholars who do not choose to take advantage of the increased freedom and trust that has been granted to them. In effect, more freedom is granted to all scholars, but the consequences for stumbling with this new freedom is higher.
- b. **Merit / De-Merit System** – VCA will use the LiveSchool Merit/De-Merit system to enforce E&C within the classroom and in non-academic settings. We will use this system as a paycheck system where scholars are awarded Character Currency for exceeding expectations, and will lose Character Currency when they do not meet clear expectations. All faculty will have laptops and will have the capability (and expectation) to note both positive and negative behaviors for scholars in real time. Faculty will be incredibly consistent in following their grade level E&C. Building on and celebrating the positive behaviors will always be a focus at VCA, and when negative behaviors are identified, the consequence will always be tied to the growth of a particular Character Strength or Core Value (i.e, Johnny, I am noting that you did not raise your hand so that you can continue to improve in your growth of Kindness towards your fellow classmates). The tracking of the system will be the responsibility of each mentor, and will be overseen by the grade level Coach.

5. **Mentor Groups** – A strong mentor program is critical to developing a strong culture. Many of the culture building activities are run during Connections class (taught by each mentor to their 16-18 mentees each Wednesday afternoon). In addition, whenever school-wide issues are addressed or discussed it will often be in the mentor group.
6. **Morning Meeting** – The Morning Meeting will be a central hub for monitoring, reinforcing, celebrating, and discussing culture. It will be the most visible aspect of the strong VCA culture on a daily basis.
7. **Scholar of the Month** – One Morning Meeting a month will be to give Awards to outstanding scholars in each class that embody as our expectations for academics and/or Core Values and Character Strengths.
8. **Scholar Leadership Team** – A volunteer team of ambassadors and “culture leaders” who will work with Principal and DCI to keep a pulse on the scholar culture and will be leaders at key moments when the school culture needs to be addressed. Will have one member from each mentor group, plus any other scholars who wish to join.
9. **Core Values and Character Strengths Box** – the Core Character Box gives all community members an opportunity to Shout-Out Fellow VCA community members for being a positive force within the culture.

Mid-Year Acculturation

For scholars who enter VCA during the school year, the following strategies will be used in order to get them up to speed as quickly as possible on the school culture.

1. **Shadow Day** – scholars who wish to enroll will be given the opportunity to Shadow during one of our VCA Shadow Days. These days are run 2x per month and are designed to give scholars a clear idea of the VCA program. Scholars who wish to transfer to VCA will be requested to attend a VCA Shadow Day to ensure that they feel the school is a good fit for them and their family.
2. **Mentor PLP** – in the first week of a new scholar’s enrollment they will have their PLP meeting with their mentor. This will be the main source of information and acculturation for the new scholar and their family.
3. **Scholar Leadership Team** – part of the role of the SLT will be to appoint a current VCA scholar to be a “buddy” for the new scholars. Ideally this scholar will share a mentor group with the new scholar and will be responsible for checking in on the scholar daily for the first month (usually during mentor time) and communicating with their mentor if any issues arise.
4. **Saturday Orientation with parents** – One Saturday per month will include a Parent Saturday Orientation session that will be run by current parents, and will include a culture session run by school leadership.

Culture: Special Populations

VCA intends to be an exceptional school for including all scholars in the positive, kind culture of the school. A saying that was used frequently at Summit Preparatory Charter was “We Leave no Husky Behind” (the Summit school mascot was “Husky”). This saying was deeply respected and embodied in the Summit Prep culture by scholars, faculty, and parents. It was used regularly in conversations, award ceremonies, discipline discussions, and, most telling, in conversations among scholars themselves. The positive impact on the entire culture was in many ways transformative. It is for this reason that We Leave No Patriot Behind (assuming the mascot is the Patriots) will be one of the Key Beliefs of the school. It is the responsibility of every member of the VCA community to always look out for their fellow community members. This important belief, coupled with the Core Value of Kindness, will be critical to developing a welcoming and supportive culture for all scholars, but especially for scholars who may have had difficult experiences in schools in the past. The scholar leaders at VCA will be the models for how to

treat all scholars with kindness and respect, and the school community will expect all community members to live these basic expectations everyday.

Some specific strategies that will be used for scholars with exceptional special needs:

1. **Mentor group coaching** – the mentor group will be held to exceptionally high standards of Leaving No Patriot Behind for all of its members. Even in a school that will be as emotionally and physically safe as VCA, adolescents can still stumble at times, and it will be the mentor group responsibility to be especially watchful for their fellow mentees, and to talk with their mentor if they see any bullying or unkindness happening, especially to scholars who may have difficulties in social settings, or have disabilities that can make them possible targets for unkind behavior.
2. **PLP** – when developing the Personalized Learning Plan, the mentor, scholar, and family will all look to set goals that will help the scholar grow in all areas of their life. For example, a scholar with Asperger’s Syndrome may have a 504 Plan that specifies how teachers should interact with them during class time, and perhaps a Resource Class is assigned two times a week with the grade level Coach to develop skill in recognizing facial expressions. The PLP may be used to set goals around making friends, and taking risks in class. Typical goals on the PLP in this case may be: “I will introduce myself to 1 new scholar per week this Fall and ask them to eat lunch with me. I will ask Jade in my mentor group for help with choosing scholars to introduce myself to”, and “I will raise my hand at least once in every class”. These goals are monitored by the mentor and family and are often publicly shared within the mentor group so that they can all help each other grow.
3. **Scholar Leadership Team** – as with new scholars, the SLT will often help when requested by mentors. An example might be the one given above, where the Asperger’s scholar has set a goal to eat lunch with new people this Fall. The mentor may ask for the help of the SLT, who may find volunteers to eat lunch with the scholar. A careful balance of acting kindly and joyfully while not acting out of pity will be coached with all scholars at VCA.

Section IV - Enrollment, Recruitment, Marketing

Describe how parents and other members of the community will be informed about the school and how students will be given an equal opportunity to attend the school.

Specifically describe any plans for outreach to: families in poverty, academically low-achieving students, students with disabilities, English Language learners, and other students at risk of academic failure. If your school has a specific area of focus, describe the plan to market that focus.

Where are the families located you are trying to reach? What outside groups would you target for marketing and recruitment?

VCA will strive to recruit a scholar population that will be reflective of the general population of the Overton, Cane Ridge, Glenclyff, and Hillsboro clusters, as shown in Table 36 below:

Table 36: Demographics for Targeted Clusters Middle Schools

School	Black	Hispanic	White
McMurray Middle School	15.2%	45.6%	20.2%
Antioch Middle School	26.9%	46.6%	23.0%
Apollo Middle School	43.0%	30.1%	23.1%
Croft Middle Design Center	23.5%	26.1%	47.4%
H G Hill Middle School	29.5%	15.9%	45.6%
Thurgood Marshall Middle School	53.2%	23.1%	18.9%
William Henry Oliver Middle School	34.7%	11.5%	45.2%
Wright Middle School	25.7%	44.3%	24.2%
Antioch Comprehensive High School	44.8%	26.8%	24.6%
Cane Ridge Comprehensive High School	54.2%	23.1%	19.1%
Glenclyff Comprehensive High School	30.3%	35.5%	27.0%
Hillsboro Comprehensive High School	52.9%	4.2%	40.0%
John Overton Comprehensive High School	25.1%	24.5%	36.6%
Average	35.3%	27.5%	30.4%

VCA will engage in a variety of means and strategies to try to achieve this type of racially and ethnically diverse scholar population. These strategies will include:

1. **Family room events** – VCA has been conducting events in living rooms of potential VCA parents since the Summer of 2012. These events typically have 6-10 parents or guardians who are invited to a friend’s house who might be interested in the VCA model. VCA leadership has already conducted over 25 family room events and has received pledges of support from 250 families regarding their intent to support the VCA model if it is provided in Nashville (see Attachment 29 – Community Petition). Upon acceptance of the charter it will be the goal of the VCA leadership team to conduct 50 family room events prior to next May, 2014, or about 1 event per week. We believe that the intimacy of these events, and the relationships that are formed with parents at these events are well worth the time investment and will help build significant support for the school.

2. **Community center and church events** – VCA will hold our first large community event at Casa Azafran on Nolensville Road on April 27, 2013. We are hoping to have about 100 families attend the event. Starting this Summer, VCA will hold approximately 1 large event per month for a total of 8 events before the application deadline next March, 2014. We hope to build a strong, diverse group of supporters through these events that will produce over 200 applications for next year’s 5th grade class, but also for interest in future classes as well.

3. **Elementary School information events** – VCA will contact every local elementary school in the targeted clusters and request to have a short informational event at the school for parents and scholars. These events have been very helpful at Summit Prep in CA as they helped to build understanding among local public schools about charter school models, and allowed charter school leaders to better understand the local context in which they work. We hope that we are able to make this types of events happen. VCA was invited to speak with the Parent Council for the Overton Cluster on March 14 and we are hopeful to continue to be able to have such meetings.

4. **Targeted marketing**
 - a. **Mail** – VCA will direct mail all families in the targeted cluster with scholars entering 5th grade with information about the model as well as information about community events being held in their area. We hope to be able to get mailing lists from MNPS for these scholars.
 - b. **Media** – VCA will use varied local media outlets to get information out to possible families and supporters re: upcoming community events.
 - c. **Email** – VCA will build an ongoing email list of interested families and supporters of the model. As of the submission of this charter application, we already have approximately 450 supporters on our email list. We will continue to build the list throughout the next (and upcoming years). We recognize that many low-income families do not have access to email lists so we do not plan on this being our only communication source with potential families.
 - d. **Door to Door** – One of the most effective methods of meeting potential families is talking to them face to face at their houses. VCA will employ a large door to door recruitment process in targeted areas. We will have a goal of having approximately 7-9 events over the 9 months post approval to enrollment deadline, or about one Saturday a month. We will target specific areas that will help to ensure that our application pool reflects the diversity that we desire in the model.

5. **Adaptive marketing** – as applications begin to be processed in the Fall of 2013, we will do a weekly demographic analysis, looking at ethnicity and zip code. We will employ an adaptive marketing strategy that will be dictated by the demographics of the application pool. If we are low in Hispanic scholars we will alter our marketing strategy to increase the Door-to-Door and Direct Mail campaigns to neighborhoods with a higher percentage of Hispanic families. Summit Prep had great success with this strategy in CA. Over the course of the last nine lotteries at Summit they were able to hit their desired demographic percentages within 5% (i.e., if they wanted 35% White scholars to achieve a diverse student body they were always within a range of 30-40% White scholars applying).

6. **Special Populations** – VCA understands that it can be particularly challenging to effectively market to low-income parents. In order for the above strategies to be effective with low-income families, VCA will do the following additional items:
 - a. **Diverse Board** – VCA is committed to having a diverse Board that represents that student body they wish to attract. To this end, we have recruited an excellent Founding Board that includes a mixture of race, gender, and socio-economic status.
 - b. **Specialized Marketing** – VCA is excited that Danielle Austen is on the Founding Board. Mrs. Austen is the CEO of Ignition Marketing which specializes in multi-cultural marketing and will be a great asset in ensuring that VCA is effective in reaching a diverse group of families.
 - c. **Community Partnerships** – VCA has already created strong relationships with Gatluak Thach (NICE), Remziya Suleyman (ACR), Fabian Bedne (Hispanic Councilman), and

Renata Soto (Conexion) in order to ensure that we are able to effectively reach refugee families, the Muslim population, and the Hispanic families in the South Nashville area. All of the respected leaders are excited about the VCA model and VCA plans on engaging them throughout our recruitment process for advice and strategy on ensuring we achieve a truly diverse student population.

Enrollment Policy

Provide as an attachment the school Enrollment Policy, which should include the following:

Tentative dates for the application period and enrollment deadlines and procedures, including an explanation of how the school intends to receive and process application forms.

A timeline and plan for student recruitment/engagement and enrollment.

An explanation of the purpose of any pre-admission activities for students or parents; and Policies and procedures for student waitlists, withdrawals, re-enrollment and transfers.

Valor Collegiate hopes to market the school successfully enough to receive a large number of applications from a richly diverse group of families. The Enrollment Policy details the specifics of the enrollment plans for the first class of scholars (Attachment 22). VCA will comply with all TN requirements regarding legal, fair and equitable treatment of all families interested in applying to VCA.

Provide the Student Handbook and/or forms that will be provided to or required of students and families, including any “contracts” with students and parents.

Student Discipline Policy Scholar Handbook (Contracts)

- The discipline policy that will be part of the Valor Scholar Handbook is in Attachment 5 – Student Discipline Policy. In addition, the DRAFT Valor Student Handbook is Attachment 23 – Student Handbook. As can be seen there is no signed “contract” between families and VCA, although there will a review of the Valor Commitments and the scholar, family, and VCA leadership/mentor agree via eye contact and a handshake that everyone will do their very best to live up to these commitments to ensure that their child is accepted and successful in a four year college.

What school zones within the LEA will the school target? Consider schools both at your tier level and in the tier level below. Why were these schools selected?

Target Zones – As mentioned previously in the charter application, VCA hopes to target students from the Overton, Cane Ridge, Hillsboro, and Glencliff clusters. By locating in the South Nashville area, and by strategically marketing to a wide range of families we are hopeful that we will reflect the rich diversity of these clusters. These clusters were chosen, as discussed on page 8, because they have low academic achievement results for low-income students, they are richly diverse, and they are areas that generally have expanding student populations.

SECTION X – COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND PARENT ENGAGEMENT

Community Involvement and Parent Engagement

Describe how parents and community members were engaged and contributed to the development of the proposed school.

Parent involvement – As previously mentioned, over 250+ parents attended events at parent’s homes over the past 9 months to hear about the VCA school model. In addition VCA intends to do extensive outreach over the next 14 months to parents in South Nashville in order to build positive momentum for the school.

- **Email list** – over the past 9 months VCA has built an email list with over 450 supporters for the VCA model here in Nashville. We are excited and inspired by the number of diverse families that are interested in the Valor model.
- **Letters of support** – Attachment 14 includes 17 letters from a broad range of Nashville community members who support Valor Collegiate, including Mayor Karl Dean, Activist Remziya Suleyman, NICE CEO Gatluak Thak, Councilwoman Jacobia Dowell, and Latino leader Fabian Bedne. Valor has worked tirelessly to garner the support of all of the varying constituencies in South Nashville and are proud of the broad based support they have received from political leaders, community leaders, and parents.

Community involvement – VCA understands that great schools are part of the social fabric of the communities where they reside.

In order to become part of the community, VCA will focus on three areas:

- **Student Recruiting** – having students from the South Nashville community attend the school is the highest leverage way to become an important part of the local community. VCA will therefore spend much of its energy in community engagement around marketing the school to local families. These efforts are documented above in Enrollment, Recruitment, and Marketing.
- **Community involvement with VCA** – VCA hopes to partner with the local community primarily through the **Intersession programs**. VCA will begin work this summer on developing relationships with businesses, local Universities, and community centers that will be able to contract with VCA to offer a wide range of Intersession courses to students. Using the model developed at Summit Prep in CA, we hope to build the program to 25+ different learning opportunities for VCA scholars in the community. We have already begun this process and have identified over 40 different potential partners (see Attachment 17 – Community Partner List).
- **VCA in the community** – VCA also envisions being involved in the community in acts of service. As part of each scholar’s Personalized Learning Plan they are asked to set goals around community service each year. In addition, each mentor teacher is given a goal of doing one community service project with their mentor group over the course of the year. This means that each year there will be hundreds of VCA students who pick individual service commitments to undertake over the course of the year in the community. These can include things such as Habitat for Humanity, cleaning graffiti, going to Capitol Hill to advocate for issues important to the local community, working at local retirement centers, aiding local elementary schools, etc. Many of the VCA Badges will be focused on students and mentor groups that excel in community service.

Outline how the school will engage parents and community members in the life of the school (in addition to any proposed governance roles). Explain the plan for building family-school partnerships that strengthen support for learning and encourage parent involvement. Describe any commitments or volunteer opportunities the school will seek from, offer to, or require of, parents.

Parent Engagement – VCA believes having engaged parents (and guardians, which we include when we refer to parents in this application) is critical to the mission and vision of the organization. One of the most successful aspects of the Summit Prep culture in CA was the strong parent engagement. VCA will model our parent engagement after the Summit Prep model.

Mentor relationship – as documented in multiple areas, the mentor-family relationship is the singularly most effective tool for great parent engagement. Each family is connected to one VCA faculty member for the 4 years they are at the school, creating a personal, high-trust relationship in order that parents feel comfortable communicating and being involved at the school.

Family-school partnerships – VCA purposely runs a thin administration model so that resources are focused on teaching and learning. In order to make this model effective, parent partnerships are important. By effectively recruiting parents to be “part of the VCA team” they naturally feel more part of the community. A few examples:

- **Parent University** – all parents will be encouraged to attend the three 90 minute sessions in the summer of 5th grade for new parents to VCA (transfer parents as well in later years). Parent University will be a comprehensive overview of the VCA program, and also a key way to engage parents in the VCA culture, building trust and common mission.
- **Parenting classes** – the VCA CEO will conduct a series of parenting classes each year that are based on Carol Dweck’s *Mindset* and Daniel Coyle’s *The Talent Code*. The classes will also include key pieces of the VCA educational philosophy.
- **Computer classes** – VCA will have Saturday computer classes that run concurrently with Saturday school for parents. These classes will teach parents the basics of computers in general, but also the Learning Management System at VCA so that parents can engage in their scholar’s learning more effectively.
- **Camping / Study Trips** – VCA will have camping and study trips on which they encourage families to take part. VCA families will help cook, set-up tents, run activities, and drive students to and from the camping trip. For the annual Study Trip, parents will be asked to volunteer to drive students on the trip. We will assign parents to students they do not know so that they can get to know the entire grade level of students over the course of their 8 years at VCA. We envision the annual camping trip and Study Trip to be one of the best bonding experiences for VCA parents.
- **Intersession** – Intersession is an excellent area where parents are encouraged to either volunteer to help coordinate, or to actually teach an Intersession course. At Summit Prep, parents taught courses on Psychology, Spanish Literature, Soccer, and Computer Programming.
- **Tutoring** – VCA will have a strong tutoring program after school from 4-5pm each day. Along with partnering with local Universities, we have found that some of the strongest tutors are parents. We will encourage parents to help with tutoring during these times, and also during Saturday School
- **Student Recruitment** – Parents are encouraged to help with students recruitment in various ways, most often as part of our Saturday Door to Door events where current parents and students walk their neighborhoods to tell their community about the VCA experience.
- **Data Entry / Front Desk** – VCA believes in having a parent at the Front Desk along with the Office Manager who can focus on helping other parents with navigating the VCA system effectively.
- **Athletic Program** – VCA will build a strong sports program over time but in the early years we will rely on parent engagement. Parents will be encouraged to help coach teams, and to aide the Athletic Director.

Discuss the community resources that the school will cultivate for students and parents. Describe any partnerships the school will seek to establish with community organizations, businesses, or other institutions. Specify the nature, purposes, term, and scope of each partnership, including any fee based or in-kind commitments from community organizations or individuals that will enrich student learning opportunities. Include any documentation of pledged support from prospective partners as an Attachment.

Community Resources – Listed below are a few examples of community resources that VCA will be able to bring to VCA families. VCA will work very hard in the upcoming years to continue to expand our community partnerships in order to help every VCA scholar have the opportunity to come to school ready to learn each day.

- **Charter School Incubator** – TCSI will continue to be a resource to VCA through its first two years of existence. TCSI will be an excellent aide to the faculty and leadership at VCA especially in providing a high quality facility to our families.
- **NICE (Nashville International Center for Empowerment)** – CEO Gatluak Thach has been very helpful in advising VCA on how to best reach immigrant and refugee families. VCA would like to partner with NICE in the coming years to aide refugee VCA families in coming to school each day ready to learn.
- **American Center for Outreach** – Remziya Suleyman and the ACR are very well connected to the Muslim community in South Nashville. VCA intends to continue to develop this relationship in order to find ways to connect Muslim VCA families with the supports they need in the community.
- **Casa Azafran** – an excellent community resource for families in South Nashville. VCA is excited about the possibilities of partnering with Casa Azafran on possible Intersession courses (they have an excellent Culinary kitchen that could be great for a Culinary Arts course).
- **Martha O-Bryan Center** – VCA will have a strong relationship with MOB. The Director of Family Services, Daren Dickson, is the twin brother of VCA CEO Todd Dickson and they both envision a strong relationship evolving in the upcoming years between the organizations. MOB is an expert in how to provide partnerships and community support for families and VCA anticipates learning a great deal from their leadership. CEO Marsha Edwards is very supportive of VCA as well (see Letters of Support).
- **Vanderbilt University, Lipscomb University, Belmont University** – one of the best community supports that VCA can provide to scholars and families is tutoring. VCA plans to work over the next 12 months to develop relationships with these Universities (and possibly more) so that they can help to provide excellent after-school tutors to our scholars.

Include, as an Attachment, letters of support, memoranda of understanding, or contracts that indicate the proposed school is welcomed by the community in which the school intends to locate, is viewed as an attractive educational alternative, and reflects a community’s needs and interests.

Community Support - VCA is excited about the amount of community support that has been generated for the proposed school. Attached in Attachment 14 are letters of support from the following individuals and organizations.

Name	Title
Jacobia Dowell	Councilwoman, District 32
Gatluak Thach	CEO, NICE (Nashville International Center for Empowerment)
Alice Randall	Author, Professor at Vanderbilt
Fabian Bedne	Councilman, District 31
Remziya Suleyman	Director of Policy, American Outreach Center
Karl Dean	Mayor of Nashville
Bill DeLoache	Board Chair, TN Charter School Incubator
Marsha Edwards	CEO, Martha O-Bryan
Eric Dewey	CEO, United Way

Chris Harmon	Councilman, District 26
Rogers Hall	Director of Teaching and Learning, Vanderbilt
Lauren Lunsford	Education Professor, Belmont
Emily Evans	Councilwoman, District 23
Jason Potts	Councilman, District 30
Jon Meacham	Author
Brock Kidd	VP, Pinnacle Finance
Taylor Hummel	Director, Stand for Children
David Owens	Professor, Vanderbilt
Ethan Fesperman	Professor, Vanderbilt
Ross Brown	Board Chair, Summit Prep
Bill Kurtz	CEO, DSST

PART II – OPERATIONS PLAN AND CAPACITY

SECTION XI – GOVERNANCE

Describe the legal status of the proposed school, including whether the entity proposing the school is already incorporated as a nonprofit and whether you have obtained federal tax-exempt status.

Valor Collegiate Academy (VCA) will be governed by the Valor Collegiate Academies Board of Directors (the “Board”), which is currently incorporated as a Tennessee Not-for-Profit Public Benefit Corporation. In addition, VCA has applied for federal 501(c)3 tax exempt status. See **Attachment 3** for the VCA’s Articles of Incorporation and application for federal tax exempt status.

Upon approval of the charter application, the Board would oversee and manage a Chief Executive Officer, who would be responsible for day-to-day management of the organization and the supervision and management of a Principal, who would be responsible for day-to-day operations of the proposed school. The founders of the school envision applying for authority to open additional schools in the future following the successful launch of the proposed school.

Explain the governance philosophy that will guide the board, including the nature and extent of involvement by key stakeholder groups. Describe how you will select a parent to serve on the governing board.

The Board firmly believes in and subscribes to a philosophy of policy governance and accountability. The Board understands that the School organization is best able to meet its mission by empowering a strong Chief Executive Officer with the autonomy to make decisions in pursuit of its mission, with appropriate accountability structures in place to ensure organizational effectiveness and success. The Board shall be ultimately responsible for the operation and activities of the School and will be governed in its operations and its actions by its corporate By-laws, included within **Attachment 3**, which shall be consistent with the charter agreement and in compliance with applicable law. The primary methods for executing its responsibilities will be to create, adopt and monitor school policies, provide financial oversight, and to hire and evaluate the Chief Executive Officer. Additional detail regarding specific powers and duties of the Board are outlined below.

The founders of the school understand the value of contributions and involvement of a variety of key stakeholder groups in the governance process. Importantly, the Board will comply with Tennessee Code Annotated § 49-13-104 (3), and include at least one parent representative, whose child is enrolled at the School, who will be appointed to the Board of Directors within six months of the opening of the School. In addition to the parent representative’s voice and contributions, the Board will regularly seek feedback from various stakeholders in a variety of ways, including surveys, family forums, or meetings, from central constituents of the school, including parents and community members, in developing and implementing policies and in providing overall governance for the school organization.

Describe the composition and size of the governing board. Explain how the proposed governance structure and composition will ensure there will be active and effective representation of key stakeholders.

The Board is comprised of a diverse set of eight (8) passionate professionals that are committed to the mission and vision of the School and collectively possess the integrity, skills, experience and expertise to properly exercise their roles. Consistent with its corporate by-laws, the Board is composed of a minimum of five Directors and can legally have a maximum of fifteen Directors. Each Director will serve a two year term and are not be permitted to serve more than three consecutive terms, with the exception of current or former Officers, who can serve a maximum of five consecutive terms. The Board of Directors may elect Advisory Members from time to time, including without limitation employees of the School.

Advisory Members shall serve at the pleasure of the Board of Directors and shall advise and counsel the Board of Directors on appropriate matters as determined by the Board. The Chief Executive Officer shall be an ex-officio, non-voting member of the Board for the duration of his/her employment as Chief Executive Officer. See **Attachment 3** for an organizational chart that outlines the structure of the board and biographies and/or resumes of founding Directors.

The leadership of the Board is organized according to the Officer positions below and include a President, Secretary, Treasurer and Chief Executive Officer.

- The **President** will be the principal officer of the Board and serve as the liaison between the Board and the Chief Executive Officer. He or she will, when present, preside at all meetings of the Board of Directors. The President appoints the members of each standing or ad hoc committee of the Board, and may serve on any standing or ad hoc committee of the Board.
- The **Secretary** will keep the minutes of the proceedings of the Board of Directors, see that all notices are properly given in accordance with applicable law and maintain appropriate financial information pertaining to the Board.
- The **Treasurer** will be responsible for all funds and securities of the School, receive and give receipts for monies due and payable, disburse the funds of the School in accordance with the directives of the Board of Directors, and provide an accounting of financial information to the Board.
- The **Chief Executive Officer** will serve at the pleasure of the Board as an ex-officio, non-voting Member, report directly to the Board as illustrated in **Attachment 2**, be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the School, and will provide regular reports to the Board regarding the performance of the School.

Discuss the powers and duties of the governing board. Identify key skills, areas of expertise, and constituencies that will be represented on the board.

The Board's legal powers include maintaining responsibility for the business and affairs of the School. The board will exercise all of the rights and privileges legally exercisable by the School as a corporate entity, except as may otherwise be provided by law, the Charter, or Bylaws. The Board will have the authority to receive, administer, invest and distribute property on behalf of the School. Generally speaking however, the Board's functional role will be to set overall strategic direction; establish and approve school policies; select, set the compensation for and evaluate the performance of the Chief Executive Officer; and oversee the selection of an annual financial auditor and appropriately review the results of the audit report. More specifically, some of the primary duties the Board is likely to fulfill include:

- To elect and remove Directors;
- To select and remove Officers, agents and employees of the School; to prescribe powers and duties for them, and to fix their compensation;
- To conduct, manage and control the affairs and activities of the School, and to promulgate policies, rules and regulations;
- To enter into contracts, leases and other agreements which are, in the Board's judgment, necessary or desirable in obtaining the purposes of promoting the interests of the School;
- To acquire real or personal property and to dispose of such property;
- To borrow money and incur debt;

- To indemnify and maintain insurance on behalf of any of its Directors, Officers, employees or agents.

From time to time, as the Board deems necessary, it may delegate to an employee of the School any of its duties, with the exception of the selection and removal of directors, budget approval, approval of the fiscal audits, and the adoption of Board policies. The Board however, retains ultimate responsibility over the performance of those powers or duties so delegated.

The board was strategically constructed of individuals with diverse backgrounds and skill sets in order to effectively govern the school. Members of the board must also demonstrate a commitment to the mission and vision of the School and to fulfilling the role of the board as outlined above. Specific expertise contained on the Board includes, but is not limited to non-profit leadership, finance, instruction and assessment, public charter school leadership, legal, real estate, health care and education reform.

Attachment 3 provides additional information about the background, expertise and credentials of each member of the founding Board. In addition, the matrix below illustrates the collective skills of the founding board which are discussed in detail herein and throughout various attachments. It is important to note that the board was constructed with key skills in mind, both individually and as a functioning group.

Valor Collegiate Board of Directors Skills Matrix

	Curriculum	Instruction	Assessment	Finance	Facilities	Business Management	Organization	Governance	Administration	Political/Policy	Legal	Fundraising	Marketing	Community Outreach
Dickson, Todd														
Cigarran, Katherine														
Meacham, Keith														
Goetz, Dave														
Hannon, Bob														
Flowers, Sylvia														
Hooper, Tom														
Austen, Danielle														
Anderson, Malika														

Explain how this governance structure and composition will ensure the school will be an educational and operational success.

For a number of reasons, the governance structure and composition described above will ultimately ensure the School will be an educational and operational success. The Board is keenly aware of the distinction between governance and management, one key factor in ensuring the School’s success. The Board will not interfere with the day-to-day authority of the Chief Executive Officer and his/her designees, yet will provide the necessary support when needed and the accountability necessary to maintain a thriving organization. The Board will involve key constituents when developing policy and setting strategic priorities and thereby ensure that parents and other key stakeholder voices are effectively integrated into the governing process. Finally, using the process and tool below, the Board will hold the

Chief Executive Officer accountable for the overall performance of the School, including up to termination, ensuring the School’s continued success.

Describe how the board will evaluate the success of the school, the school leader and its own performance

The Chief Executive Officer will be supported and evaluated throughout the year by the Board using both formative and summative assessment gathered from faculty, students, and parents. The process will be led by the Governance Committee. A member of the Board will be chosen each year to lead the process. The Board believes that evaluation is not a one-time event; rather, it is an ongoing and reflective process. The lead Board member will deliver the assessment feedback to the Chief Executive Officer throughout the year as part of the evaluation process described below.

Process:

- In April of each year, one member of the Board will be appointed to be the lead of the team, with responsibilities including:
 - Overseeing the process and ensuring the following timeline is followed;
 - Collecting the data from all stakeholders and summarizing it for the Committee, full Board and Chief Executive Officer; and
 - Meeting with the Chief Executive Officer to review the data and to build a development plan based on that data.
- The Evaluation Team (Governance Committee) will oversee the following two areas:
 - Chief Executive Officer Vision and Goals for school year;
 - Formative feedback process; and
 - Final Evaluation.
- Chief Executive Officer Goals
 - Chief Executive Officer and the Evaluation Team will develop a high level set of goals (3-7 goals) that the Chief Executive Officer will present to the Evaluation Team prior to each school year for approval (Clearly defined academic achievement goals will always be part of the high level set of goals); and
 - The Evaluation Team will oversee a year-end survey to identified stakeholders focused on the Chief Executive Officer goals for the year.
- Formative feedback
 - The Chief Executive Officer and Evaluation Team develop a set of specific areas to collect feedback for the Chief Executive Officer that are aligned with the Chief Executive Director Leadership Rubric;
 - Evaluation Team will personally interview each faculty member for about 15 minutes to gather input on the focus areas. The interviews will take place evenly over the course of the school year; and
 - The lead on the Evaluation Team will collect the formative data and will regularly share it with the Chief Executive Officer as well as develop support plans to assist in areas of growth as needed.
- Final Review
 - Evaluation Team will collect data at year-end related to Chief Executive Officer Goals and Formative Feedback and share it with the Chief Executive Officer;
 - Evaluation Team will develop and propose a support plan for the Chief Executive Officer that reflects the needs identified in the data;
 - Evaluation Team will make a recommendation to the Board concerning the Chief Executive Officer’s employment status and performance bonus.

Timeline:

April	Evaluation Team lead appointed at Board retreat
July	Chief Executive Officer and Evaluation Team develop Goals for the year and Focus Areas based on the Chief Executive Officer Leadership Rubric
August	Chief Executive Officer presents Goals and Focus Areas for year to the Board for discussion and the Evaluation team assigns faculty members while establishing an

	interview schedule
September	Evaluation Team approves Chief Executive Officer Goals for the year, begins faculty interviews concentrating on Focus Areas and Evaluation Team lead begins monthly feedback sessions with the Chief Executive Officer
October – April	Evaluation Team continue faculty interview concentrating on Focus Areas and Evaluation Team Lead continues monthly feedback sessions
May	Evaluation Team summarizes faculty feedback in Focus Areas
May – June	Evaluation Team collects year-end feedback on Chief Executive Officer Goals
June	Evaluation Team summarizes Focus Area and Goal feedback and meet with the Chief Executive Officer to review feedback and develop an appropriate support plan
July	Evaluation Team makes recommendation to the full Board regarding Chief Executive Officer employment status and performance bonus

In addition to the important responsibility of evaluating the performance of the Chief Executive Officer, the board also values reflective practice and self-evaluation of its own performance. The success of the School will depend greatly on the Board’s effectiveness in carrying out essential roles and responsibilities. Therefore, board self-evaluation is vital in determining how well the board is performing, and the steps that can be taken for continued improvement. Board self-evaluation refers to a set of practices used to examine and evaluate performance against a set of defined standards and will:

- Have the enthusiastic support of Board leadership;
- Be based on standards and best practices that characterize effective board performance;
- Be formal, conducted on a regular, agreed-upon basis, including a written assessment tool; and
- Include an assessment implementation plan to set goals for board improvement.

Given the accountability measures contained within the application, the Board evaluates itself against specific performance measures annually. The Board will use a tool developed by The High Bar, who provides expertise, training and powerful web-based tools to assist boards to improve public education. Additional information about The High Bar can be located at www.reachthehighbar.com.

List all current and identified board members and their intended roles on the table below (adding rows as needed).

Valor Collegiate Academies is excited about the breadth and depth of experience, commitment and expertise that the founding board brings to the important work of governing the proposed school. Individuals were carefully considered and selected to serve on the founding board. Among the most important considerations were the need for each member to exhibit the core principles of and commitment to the VCA mission, a range of skill sets, overall diversity and the ability to properly fulfill their role as a member of the Board of Directors as outlined above. Below is a list of initial members of the VCA Board.

Full Name	Current Job and Employer	Position
Malika Anderson	Chief Portfolio Officer, Achievement School District	Board Director
Danielle Austen	CEO, Team Ignition	Board Director, Treasurer
Katherine Cigarran	Community Volunteer and Parent	Board Director
Todd Dickson	Senior Fellow, Tennessee Charter School Incubator	Chief Executive Officer and Advisory Member of the Board of Directors

Sylvia M. Flowers	Executive Director, Educator Talent, Tennessee Department of Education	Board Director
Dave Goetz	Vice President, State Government Solutions, Optum Government Solutions	Board Director, President
Bob Hannon	Partner, Bradley, Arant, Boult and Cummings, LLP	Board Director, Secretary
Tom Hooper	Vice President, Jones Lang LaSalle	Board Director
Margaret Keith Meacham	Education and Marketing Consultant, Homer Learning	Board Director

Summarize members' interests in and qualifications for serving on the school's board.

The fundamental interest of each member of the Board listed above is to bring the VCA mission and vision to reality through effective governance practices. As the VCA Board Skill Set Matrix outlined above, and in **Attachment 3 – Governing Board Documents (Founding Team Bios)** demonstrates, each member of the founding Board brings a unique set of skills and experiences. As a result, these individuals have varying strengths that they will apply while exercising their collective governance role, briefly summarized below.

Ms. Malika Anderson is the Chief Portfolio Officer of the Achievement School District (ASD), where she leads the authorization and start-up support of charter school operators and the assessment and accountability system for all ASD schools. Ms. Anderson has 15 years of strategy, leadership development, performance management and operational redesign experience. She has led and consulted organizations undergoing significant transformation efforts in education, social service, healthcare, and commercial fields. Ms. Anderson is an alumnus of the Broad Residency in Urban Education, earned her bachelor's degree in economics from Spelman College, and earned a master's degree in business administration from the Anderson Graduate School of Management at UCLA. Her strengths as a board member include curriculum, assessment, instruction, finance, business management, organizational leadership, governance and community outreach.

Ms. Danielle Austen brings a wealth of leadership and communications skills to the founding board. She is currently the Chief Executive Officer of Team Ignition, an advertising and marketing firm that acts as a single-source solution for its client-partners in developing communications plans for African American, Asian American, United States Hispanic and Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender consumers. She has been instrumental in advising the founding Chief Executive Officer on matters related to marketing, communications and strategy development. As an executive leader, Ms. Austen is also keenly aware of the distinction between governance and management and will provide strong leadership support for the VCA's Chief Executive Officer. Overall, the primary governance skills she brings to the Board include finance, business management, administration, marketing and community outreach.

Ms. Katherine Cigarran brings an extensive background as a community volunteer and organizer to the founding Board. She has made invaluable contributions to a large number of community-based organizations, including public schools, and also serves as a volunteer tutor. Her experience volunteering for and working with non-profit organizations will provide additional expertise while she serves on VCA's Board. Also important to Ms. Cigarran's expertise is her role as a mother of two. Her primary governance strengths include fundraising, marketing and community outreach.

Mr. R. Todd Dickson, VCA’s founder and Chief Executive Officer, will serve as an Advisory Member of the Board. In this capacity, he will not have voting authority but will report to and serve at the pleasure of the Board. He has had an extensive and extremely successful career as a visionary leader in the education reform movement, and has produced dramatic results while improving student achievement. Early in his career, he launched a successful independent commercial real estate company but always knew his true calling was in public education. Following a successful teaching career, he most recently served as Executive Director of Summit Preparatory Charter School, whose accolades are impressive and outlined in **Attachment 3** – Governing Board Documents (Founding Team Resumes). Mr. Dickson’s primary strengths include curriculum, instruction, assessment, facilities, business management, organizational leadership, governance, administration, fundraising, marketing and community outreach.

Ms. Sylvia M. Flowers currently serves as Executive Director of Educator Talent at the Tennessee Department of Education, where she focuses on executing the state’s strategy to improve recruitment and retention of effective teachers and manages a portfolio of strategic compensation pilot projects in approximately 18 public school districts in Tennessee. Ms. Flowers was a chemical engineer early in her career and later transitioned into a number of impactful roles in leadership, non-profit management and education reform. She brings important skills to the Board, including curriculum, instruction and assessment.

Mr. Dave Goetz is Vice President for State Government Solutions at Optum Government Solutions, where he is responsible for advising state government clients to define needs and solutions around managing health care. He has had a distinguished career in state government, non-profit and advocacy-based leadership and previously served in a journalism capacity. Among the strengths he brings to the Board are finance, business management, organization leadership, governance, administration, policy and legal.

Mr. Bob Hannon is an attorney and Partner at Bradley, Arant, Boult, Cummings, LLP where he focuses his practice on the commercial banking industry. Mr. Hannon also served as a teacher early in his career and has remained passionate about providing all students with a high quality education. In addition, he has served a number of non-profit boards and will provide necessary policy and governance expertise to the Board. Other skills he brings to the Board include finance, business management, organizational leadership, legal affairs and fundraising.

Mr. Tom Hooper, currently Vice President of Jones Lang LaSalle, provides leadership for functions related to brokerage, tenant representation and agency representation. He has been recognized by a number of professional associations in providing exemplary service to his clients. His work ethic, market knowledge and attention to detail provide savings to his clients in terms of time and money expended on every project. He brings expertise in facilities, governance and legal affairs to the Board.

Ms. Keith Meacham brings a wealth of education, charter school and other leadership, and management to the board. She currently serves as an Education and Marketing Consultant for the Homer Group where she advises education technology start-up organizations on marketing, social media, website design and language. She brings a wide variety of expertise to the Board, including curriculum, instruction, assessment, business management, organizational leadership, governance, administration, policy, fundraising, marketing and community outreach.

Explain the procedure by which current board members were selected, and how they will be replaced and/or re-elected. How often will the board meet? Discuss the plans for any committee structure.

The distinguished members of the proposed Board presented above were selected strategically and carefully. Through the gracious support of the Tennessee Charter School Incubator, Mr. Dickson recruited members of the founding Board while completing a Senior Fellowship where he had the opportunity to travel across the county enhancing his knowledge and expertise as a charter school leader. During that time, he met with many government officials, community leaders, partners in education

reform and parents in order to assemble the most effective governing Board possible. Mr. Dickson met and interviewed at least 100 individuals in and around Nashville during his board recruitment efforts.

It is important to note that the founding Board will serve as the VCA governing Board. All current members have acknowledged this and committed to service beyond the start-up phase of the proposed school. As the VCA By-laws included in **Attachment 3 – Governing Board Documents** outlines, the Board will consist of between five (5) and fifteen (15) Directors, who will serve two-year terms. Directors will not be permitted to serve more than three consecutive terms, with the exception of Officers, who may serve up to five consecutive terms. As a result, new members will need to be recruited and selected.

New members will be nominated to the Board by an ad hoc or standing committee, as determined by the Board and in compliance with its By-laws. A two-thirds majority vote of existing and sitting Board members is required to elect new members and re-elect existing ones. The nominating process for new Board members will be a progressive one. On an ongoing basis in general, and at least 6 months in advance of a known departure of a Board member in particular, prospective new members will meet with the existing Board Chair and Chief Executive Officer to initially discuss the roles and responsibilities of the board and mission of the school, as well as the prospective members interest, background and relevant expertise. If the Board Chair and Chief Executive Officer determine that a nomination would benefit and strengthen the overall board, the prospective member will meet with one to two additional members of the Board. Following successful interactions with these additional Board members, the candidate's prospects will be discussed by the full Board. A formal nomination would then come from the ad hoc or standing committee referenced above and would be considered by the Board thereafter. It is anticipated that the Board will initially recruit and nominate a member with extensive expertise in technology and systems analysis based on a reflective review of existing Board member strengths, which are outlined in the matrix presented above.

The VCA Board of Directors will meet monthly in order to effectively fulfill its governing role. One way the Board will conduct its business is through an efficient committee structure. The VCA By-laws provide the Board with the authority to establish ad hoc and standing committees. While specific committee designations are not included in the By-laws, the Board anticipates creating two initial standing committees in order for it to properly exercise its fiduciary and governance roles.

The **Governance Committee** of the VCA Board will likely be chaired by the Chair of the full Board. The Governance Committee's primary responsibility will be to provide oversight, monitoring and evaluation of the Chief Executive Officer and to serve as a liaison to the full Board. The Governance Committee will serve as the Evaluation Committee and draft the annual evaluation of the Chief Executive Officer, with the input of other members of the Board and present it to the full Board for approval.

The **Finance Committee** will coordinate the Board's financial oversight responsibilities by recommending policy to the Board and monitoring its implementation. The committee will also provide Board oversight of the organization's financial audit. The Treasurer of the Board will serve as chair, and the Committee will monitor the organization's financial records; review and oversees the creation of accurate, timely, and meaningful financial statements to be presented to the Board; review the annual budget and recommends it to the full Board for approval; monitor budget implementation and financial procedures; monitor assets, ensure compliance with federal, state, and other financial reporting requirements; and help the full Board understand the organization's financial standing.

Depending on the evolving needs of VCA, other committees may include: (1) the **Resource Development Subcommittee**, (drawn from membership of the Finance Committee) which may plan and implement the school's fundraising programs; (2) the **Facilities Committee**, which assesses the short and long term facilities needs and presents a long range facility plan to the board; (3) and a **Strategic Planning Committee**, which develops a 3-5 year blueprint for the school's future.

Public charter schools are subject to the provisions of T.C.A. § 12-4-101 and 102 regarding conflicts of interest. Describe the board's ethical standards and procedures for identifying and addressing conflicts of interest. If you have a completed conflict of interest policy, submit it with the governing body attachments.

The founding VCA Board is aware that it will provide necessary governance and oversight of a public charter school. As such, it will be subject to provisions of T.C.A. § 12-4-101 and 102 regarding conflicts of interest. Due to the need to minimize conflicts of interest, the Board has already developed a draft Conflict of Interest Policy, which is included in **Attachment 3** – Governing Board Documents (Conflict of Interest Policy). In addition, the following general standards of conduct will be expected of all members of the Board and are included in the VCA By-laws. A Director or an Officer of the School shall discharge his or her duties as a Director or as an Officer, including duties as a member of a Committee:

- (a) In good faith;
- (b) With the care an ordinarily prudent person in a like position would exercise under similar circumstances; and
- (c) In a manner he or she reasonably believes to be in the best interest of the School.

The purpose of the conflict of interest provisions in the VCA By-laws is to protect the School's interest when it is contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interest of an Officer or Director or might result in a possible excess benefit transaction. These provisions are intended to supplement but not replace any applicable state and federal laws governing conflict of interest applicable to nonprofit and charitable organizations.

Interested persons, for the purposes of the conflict of interest policy, are any director, principal officer, or member of a committee with governing board delegated powers, who has a direct or indirect financial interest, as defined below, is an interested person. A person will be considered to have a financial interest if the person has, directly or indirectly, through business, investment, or family: (1) an ownership or investment interest in any entity with which the School has a transaction or arrangement; (2) a compensation arrangement with the School or with any entity or individual with which the School has a transaction or arrangement, or (3) a potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which the School is negotiating a transaction or arrangement. Compensation includes direct and indirect remuneration as well as gifts or favors that are not insubstantial.

The Board has established clear and effective procedures for dealing with conflicts of interest and the appearance of such conflicts. In connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest, an interested person must disclose the existence of the financial interest and be given the opportunity to disclose all material facts to the Directors and members of Committees with governing board delegated powers considering the proposed transaction or arrangement. After disclosure of the financial interest and all material facts, and after any discussion with the interested person, he/she shall leave the Board of Directors or Committee meeting while the determination of a conflict of interest is discussed and voted upon. The remaining board or committee members shall decide if a conflict of interest exists.

An interested person may make a presentation at the Board of Director's or Committee meeting, but after the presentation, he/she shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and the vote on, the transaction or arrangement involving the possible conflict of interest. The Board of Directors or committee shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person or committee to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement. After exercising appropriate due diligence, the Board of Directors or Committee shall determine whether the School can obtain with reasonable efforts a more advantageous transaction or arrangement from a person or entity that would not give rise to a conflict of interest.

A transaction in which a Director or Officer of the Board has a conflict of interest may be approved if: (1) a more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably possible under circumstances not producing a conflict of interest, the Board of Directors or Committee shall determine by a majority vote of the disinterested directors whether the transaction or arrangement is in the School's best interest, for its own benefit, and whether it is fair and reasonable. It shall make its decision as to whether to enter into the transaction or arrangement; or (2) approval is obtained from the Attorney General of the State of Tennessee, or from a court of record having equity jurisdiction in an action in which the Attorney General is joined as a party.

If the Board of Directors or Committee has reasonable cause to believe a person has failed to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest, it shall inform the person of the basis for such belief and afford the person an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose. If, after hearing the person's response and after making further investigation as warranted by the circumstances, the Board of Directors or Committee determines the member has failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action.

Describe plans for increasing the capacity of the governing board. Is the current board the founding board only or will it transition to a governing board upon approval? How will the transition take place? Provide a specific timeline by which the transition will occur. How and on what timeline will new members be recruited and added, and how will vacancies be filled? What training will be offered to the board and when? Tennessee law requires at least one board training per year to be certified by the Tennessee Charter School Association. How will this board handle complaints? The draft complaint policy should be clear and follow an appropriate route for resolution of concerns raised by students, parents and/or stakeholders.

The Board is also aware of the need to continue to refine and improve its ability to provide effective governance. In addition to ongoing reflection and an annual board self-evaluation described above, the Board will seek formal governance training and development from some of its organizational partners. In compliance with applicable law, the Board will participate in at least one board training per year that is certified by the Tennessee Charter School Association. The Board has carefully chosen The High Bar, led by Marci Cornell-Feist, to provide governance training and to assist the Board in developing its annual self-evaluation tool. Ms. Cornell-Feist is considered a national expert on charter school governance. She founded her charter school consultancy Meetinghouse Solutions in 2001, and has focused on charter school governance since the mid-1990s. After working with 200+ charter schools, she created The High Bar to implement the most effective strategies and practices of her many clients, and as a means of spreading this information to a wider audience of charter schools. She is author of the Charter School Trustees Guide and numerous articles, including two issue briefs for the National Association of Charter School Authorizers, and is a frequent keynote speaker at major charter school conferences. She is also a co-founder of The Achievement Network, which helps schools use data-driven strategies to raise student achievement. Additional information about The High Bar is available at www.reachthehighbar.com.

Finally, with respect to governing practices, the VCA Board has developed a draft Complaint Policy found in **Attachment 3** – Governing Board Documents, and will abide by it to properly handle complaints from a variety of school stakeholders. The Board holds ultimate responsibility for the School's success, but as described throughout the charter application subscribes to a policy governance philosophy. It believes that the school is best managed by a strong Chief Executive Officer given appropriate levels of autonomy. Consistent with that belief, the VCA Complaint Policy provides a clear avenue to ensure that the School is in compliance with applicable law and that school stakeholders have an opportunity to express their concerns in appropriate ways to the Board. All formal complaints must first be submitted to the Chief Executive Officer, who will have a reasonable amount of time to respond to them. The School's ongoing parental communication and community outreach efforts will undoubtedly reduce the amount and frequency of such formal complaints. However, if an individual or group of individuals is not satisfied with the response of the Chief Executive Officer, they may file a formal complaint directly with the Board in writing, who will respond to each and every such complaint. Because the VCA Board of Directors is ultimately responsible for school governance, the complaint

process ends at the Board level. However, if a complainant alleges a violation of the law or the School's Charter, and is not satisfied with the Board's response, it may file a formal complaint in writing to the School's authorizer. The School is committed to providing prompt, thorough and accurate information to the Tennessee Department of Education in such cases and will abide by any prescribed corrective action it deems necessary.

SECTION XII – PERSONNEL / HUMAN CAPITAL

Personnel/Human Capital

Valor Collegiate Academies deeply understands that any organization, especially those serving the public good, is only as good as its people. To that end, VCA has developed an ambitious strategy to ensure that the school attracts only the best in all areas of operation. The VCA leadership team will continue to work closely with its partner, the Tennessee Charter School Incubator, to ensure that the founding team and future pipeline of human capital will allow the school to meet its mission. What follows is additional detail about the schools plans for personnel structures and human capital strategies.

Explain the relationship that will exist between the proposed school and its employees, whether the employees will be at-will and whether the school will use employment contracts. If the school will use contracts, explain the nature and purpose of the contracts.

Attach a copy of the school’s draft personnel policies and draft copy of the employee manual if developed.

All school employees will serve on an at-will basis. Employees will be offered employment positions that will be individually negotiated based on the credentials of the applicant, relevant experience and overall merit for the position. Employment offers will be renewed on an annual basis following satisfactory performance as measured by the Personalized Educator Plan (PEP). The primary purpose of the employment offer will be to set clear performance expectations for the employee and employer. Please refer to **Attachment 3** - Valor Collegiate Academies draft Personnel Policies and Employee Handbook for additional information.

Will any positions be grant funded? What will be the purpose of these positions and how will they be sustained following the grant period?

As the budget included as **Attachment 9** illustrates, all positions will be funded by regular funding allocations that the School will receive, with the exception of the Chief Executive Officer. The Tennessee Charter School Incubator (TCSI), one of the School’s primary institutional partners, has graciously committed to funding the Chief Executive Officer position for the 2013-2014 School Year. The Valor Board is currently planning to submit a charter for a second middle school in 2015, and will therefore begin to build a Charter Management Organization that will employ the CEO position in the following year. Funding to build the Charter Management Organization is currently being pursued by the Valor Board in order to develop the VCA CMO. It is likely that the VCA CMO will be funded by the Charter School Growth Fund and the Gates Foundation. If for whatever reason the Valor Board is not able to secure funding to build into a CMO the CEO position would be eliminated at the end of the 2013-14 School Year, and Mr. Dickson would assume the role of Principal in the proposed school in this application. TCSI will have no legal or operational authority over the Chief Executive Officer, which will remain exclusively with the Board.

Outline the proposed salary ranges and employment benefits, as well as any incentive or reward structures that may be a part of the compensation system.

Explain the school’s proposed strategy for retaining high-performing teachers. Note that State law requires full-time charter school staff to participate in the same insurance and benefits programs “in the same manner as teachers and other full-time permanent employees of the LEA.” T.C.A. § 49-13-119.

Because VCA understands that its human resources are its most valuable commodity, it has developed a compensation structure and personnel strategy that measures performance, acknowledges significant contributions and rewards performance.

First, VCA will comply fully with T.C.A. § 49-13-119 and provide staff with health care, other insurance, and fringe benefits “in the same manner as teacher and other full-time permanent employees of the LEA.” The budget projections in **Attachment 9** support these plans, which include a comprehensive and competitive health care package and participation in the Tennessee Teachers Retirement System.

To attract and retain high-performing teachers, VCA recognizes that high quality teachers need and deserve a thriving learning community, which will be established in part by implementing the professional development plan described below. In addition, because compensation also matters, every employee of VCA will have a consistent compensation and evaluation structure. The structure will:

- Be clear and transparent;
- Provide an objective framework, but allow for subjectivity when appropriate;
- Be consistent with the school’s philosophical beliefs;
- Reinforce the school’s values; and
- Empower the employee to increase his/her personal compensation.

The compensation framework for every employee, displayed visually below will include the following elements:

- Base Salary;
- Additional, permanent, compensation for mastering higher levels of skill and knowledge;
- An annual performance bonus;
- Opportunities to earn additional compensation through consulting; and
- Opportunities to earn one time, responsive compensation known as “Whatever It Takes.”



Salary

Every employee’s base salary should meet the following criteria:

- Be competitive for the education industry.
- Reflect the current level of demonstrated skills, knowledge and performance of the employee.

For classroom-based employees, the VCA Continuum of Performance defines levels of skill, knowledge and performance, and allows for the transparent and objective assessment and evaluation of them. Thus, the Continuum should be the tool used to determine starting salaries and increases to the salary.

- There will be six levels of performance that correlate to base salary compensation. Under this model, teachers performing at a specific level would receive base salary

compensation within a defined band that would be competitive in the industry with a commensurate level of performance.

- The levels are related to placement on the seven following strands of the continuum.

(1) Emerging	1 or more Basic
(2) Accomplished	4 of 7 Highly Proficient
(3) Master	7 of 7 Highly Proficient and National Board Certification
(4) Expert	7 of 7 Expert

- Any teacher who demonstrates a higher level of proficiency by January 30th of a school year will receive a salary increase consistent with the range for his/her new level of performance. The increase will be reflected in the salary beginning in September of the following school year.

For administrative employees, the Educational Leadership Continuum defines levels of skill, knowledge and performance, and allows for the transparent and an objective assessment and evaluation of them. Thus, the Leadership Rubric should be the tool used to determine the starting salaries and increases to the salary of administrative employees.

- There will be six levels of performance that correlate to base salary compensation. Under this model, administrators performing at a specific level would receive base salary compensation within a defined band that would be competitive in the industry with a commiserate level of performance.
- The levels are related to placement on the seven strands of the continuum.

(1) Emerging	1 or more Basic
(2) Accomplished	4 of 7 Highly Proficient
(3) Master	7 of 7 Highly Proficient and National Board Certification
(4) Expert	7 of 7 Expert
- Any administrator who demonstrates a higher level of proficiency by January 30th of a school year will receive a salary increase consistent with the range for his/her new level of performance. The increase will be reflected in the salary beginning in September of the following school year.

VCA acknowledges that a continuum or its equivalent will need to be developed for other non-classroom based employees, for whom the Leadership Rubric is inappropriate.

Performance Bonus

The performance bonus for all employees will be based upon student and school performance, as a reflection of each individual's imperative role in reaching the School's collective student and school performance goals. Bonuses will be awarded in two parts based upon the availability of data. The first part will be awarded at the end of June and the second at the end of August. Performance bonuses will be earned in three categories with the following weights and as measured by the following metrics:

- **50% School Goals**
 - State and National Testing Results
 - College Acceptance (when applicable)
 - AP Equity and Excellence (when applicable)
 - Surveys
- **25% Grade Level Team Goals (teaching faculty only)**
 - State, National, and Internal Testing Results or AP Equity and Excellence
 - Surveys
- **25% Individual Goals (50% for non-teaching faculty)**
 - State Testing Results

- AP Equity and Excellence
- Surveys
- Specific job related outcomes (non-teaching faculty)

Consulting

One of VCA’s strategic priorities is to develop a consulting practice that allows members of the VCA team to earn additional income by consulting on elements of the VCA Model. All employees who have reached a level four of performance are eligible to, but not required to participate in consulting activities.

Whatever It Takes

This type of performance based incentive is intended to reward significant and extremely impactful behavior that goes above and beyond the call of duty. Bonuses in this category will range in value from \$100 to \$1,000, and be given either in cash or in-kind award.

The criteria for this type of compensation include the following:

- Immediate;
- Public;
- Unexpected;
- Every employee should have the ability to earn it; and
- It should be both objective and subjective.

The objective framework for these bonuses is that an employee has done something that exudes a “whatever it takes” attitude and:

- Has a lasting or profound impact on another individual in the community;
- Has a lasting or profound impact on a group individuals in the community;
- Has achieved a profound improvement in the community or organization that will have a lasting positive impact; or
- Results in the individual performing far and above any previous or anticipated performance on school measures and metrics

Describe your strategy, plans and timeline for recruiting and hiring the teaching staff, including the school’s plan for hiring appropriately licensed “highly qualified” staff in accordance with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Explain other key selection criteria and any special considerations relevant to your school design.

VCA understands that schools are only as great as their teachers. VCA endeavors to have a world-class educator in every classroom, every day. In order to make this intention a realistic reality, the School will focus on three key areas for education talent: Attraction, Development and Retention. While Development and Retention are discussed in more detail below in the section on Professional Development, the School will work closely with its institutional partners and networks to attract exemplary teachers by creating a pipeline of top notch, right fit talent from the following sources.

Local Talent

- Partnerships with local Universities
- Teach for America
- The New Teacher Project
- Private Schools
- Ed Pioneers

National talent

- National Universities and the STEP program
- Relay Graduate School
- Charter School Growth Fund

VCA believes that it is critically important to attract and hire right fit talent. As a result, the founding team has carefully established the following criteria for teacher selection.

Mission and Vision of the School

All faculty and staff of VCA must have a deep, focused alignment and commitment with the mission and vision of the school. There are a series of basic beliefs upon which the school will base its culture and a shared understanding of these beliefs is essential. These include:

- Every child deserves a demanding, high-quality, college-preparatory education.
- Accountable community develops character.
- Great teachers are essential for academic excellence.
- All students, of all races, socioeconomic backgrounds, and life circumstances, can achieve at very high academic levels.
- High expectations are essential for academic success. Students will perform to meet the level of expectation set by the staff, in both academic classes and with regard to behavior.
- Data drives decisions. Decisions about the classroom and the school are informed by the actual student achievement data.

Professional Qualifications

In addition to appropriate alignment with the school’s mission, excellent candidates for employment at VCA will share critical professional qualifications, which include:

- Instructional skills
- Content knowledge
- Experience with classroom teaching, mentoring, and tutoring
- Resilience
- Work ethic
- Teamwork and collaboration skills
- Professionalism in behavior and language
- Verbal fluency and writing skills

Employee Qualifications

- Successful manager of a classroom who has used structure, incentives, and high expectations to drive student success.
- Experienced classroom teacher with demonstrated quantifiable and objective student performance gains that surpass state or local averages.
- Ability to work with a variety of learning abilities, including those with disabilities and low skill level in a heterogeneously grouped classroom setting.
- Demonstrated ability to work well in a team, especially with parents and community members.
- Analytical problem solver.
- Basic understanding of data analysis.
- Minimum three years of urban teaching preferred.
- Appropriate certification in the subject area to be taught preferred.
- Professional demeanor.
- Highly qualified as defined by No Child Left Behind.

The School will ensure that all teachers are appropriately licensed “highly qualified” staff in accordance with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) as it would with any other applicable law, rule or regulation.

To ensure that the school will be a success and meet its mission, the founding team has developed the following timeline for hiring the initial teaching faculty.

Task	Date Range
Charter Application Submitted	April 1, 2013
Potential Approval of Charter Application	July 1, 2013
Recruitment Efforts Begin (ongoing until	July 1, 2013

all positions are filled)	
Multiple Rounds of Interviews for Lead Math and English Teaching Positions*	November, 2013
Reference and Background Checks for final Lead Math and English Teaching Candidates*	December, 2013
Lead Math and English Teachers Hired*	January, 2014
Multiple Rounds of Interviews for all Remaining Teaching Positions	February, 2014 – April, 2014
Reference and Background Checks for all Remaining Teaching Positions	April, 2014 – May, 2014
All Teachers Hired	June 1, 2014
Opening of School	September, 2014

* Assumes external funding to support development of long-term growth plan, including the creation of a network of multiple high quality charter schools as discussed in various sections of this charter application.

Define and elaborate on the draft procedures for hiring and dismissing school personnel, including conducting criminal background checks.

Describe how the proposed school intends to handle unsatisfactory leadership or teacher performance, as well as leadership/teacher changes.

VCA has developed a set of draft procedures for hiring and dismissing school personnel. The hiring process for teachers will include:

- (1) Initial screen of application materials for minimum qualifications
- (2) First round of interviews with the selection team, to take place in person or by phone if needed
- (3) Second round of interview with the selection team, as well as additional rounds if needed, as well as the review and analysis of a demonstration lesson
- (4) Complete and thorough reference checks, credentials confirmation and additional due diligence as necessary
- (5) Offer of employment, contingent upon the completion of any background checks required by applicable law.

Unfortunately, from time to time an employee does not exhibit the type of performance necessary to maintain employment in a school. Of course, VCA hopes that this is never the case, but is prepared to address underperformance if and when it arises. In general, the Personalized Educator Plan (PEP) will be the instrument used to facilitate the evaluation process, including up to termination if necessary. The basic steps in the dismissal process will include the following, notwithstanding the at-will nature of employment at VCA and the authority of the School to terminate employment for any reason, particularly if staff exhibit serious behavior detrimental to the School. Additional information about the school’s personnel policies and a draft Employee Manual are available in **Attachment 3**.

- (1) Employee will be provided immediate verbal feedback when exhibiting unsatisfactory performance of any kind.
- (2) Employee will be provided a written explanation of the unsatisfactory performance and suggested steps for corrective action.
- (3) Supervisor will develop a Performance Improvement Plan.
- (4) Supervisor will monitor the employee’s progress toward meeting the goals and objectives contained in the Performance Improvement Plan.
- (5) After ample opportunity for improvement, employment is terminated.

Give a thorough description of the process for hiring the school leader. Explain how the school leader will be supported, developed, and provide a draft evaluation instrument for the school leader.

The lead applicant, Mr. R. Todd Dickson will serve as the School's founding Chief Executive Officer. As his resume and biography in **Attachment 3** demonstrate, Mr. Dickson is an accomplished educational leader with exemplary results. Most recently, under his leadership, Summit Preparatory Charter School (Summit Prep) was named the #118 best public high school in America for the first time in 2008, and the #76 best public high school in 2009. In 2010, Summit Prep was named one of the Top 10 Transformational Schools in the country by Newsweek (using comparative graduation rates, SAT scores, AP performance, and number of low-income students). 100% of Summit Prep's graduates exceed the entrance requirements for the UC/CSU system and 96% of the four graduating classes have been accepted to at least one four year college, over three times the rate of similar students and high schools in California. For low-income students (over 40% of Summit Prep's student body), Summit Prep sends almost eight times as many students to four year colleges as similar schools in California. Summit has been featured as an education solution in the nationally acclaimed documentary *Waiting for Superman*.

It is important to note that Mr. Dickson's compensation as Chief Executive Officer will be funded through the generosity and investment of the TCSI. As a result, VCA will be able to hire a Principal as outlined in **Attachment 2** to run the day-to-day operations of the School with oversight, strategy and development from Mr. Dickson. However, should the School be unable to find a candidate for the Principal position that is not a suitable fit and does not meet the rigorous criteria listed below, Mr. Dickson is prepared to serve in the Principal position to ensure a highly successful launch of the School. The ideal candidate will be hired by June 2013 and will have a development year, working in concert with Mr. Dickson, to prepare to open the school. The development year will include a comprehensive and structured leadership development experience currently being developed by Mr. Dickson in collaboration with TCSI. Additional detail regarding the role and responsibilities of the Principal, organizational relationship, and qualifications are outlined below.

The Founding Principal Role

VCA is currently in serious discussion with Dr. Richard Best to be the Founding Principal at Valor Collegiate. Dr. Best has had a distinguished career as a Principal, Superintendent, and Leadership Trainer over the past 25 years and would be an outstanding candidate to fulfill the role of Founding Principal at Valor Collegiate. We are hopeful that we will hire Dr. Best by this Summer, but if we do not we will look for someone with a similar background. If we cannot find an extremely highly qualified candidate then Mr. Dickson will assume the role of Principal for at least the first two years of the school as he trains an Assistant Principal to transition into the Principal role.

Dr. Richard Best Qualifications

School and District Leader

For twenty years he has served in roles ranging from assistant principal, to principal, to director of curriculum, and superintendent of schools in addition to his current role as Executive Director of Teaching and Learning. He has extensive experience in working in highly diverse school communities. Furthermore, he has worked in school and district communities deeply committed to excellence and which were awarded the Blue Ribbon of Excellence by the United States Department of Education. Dr. Best was a highly successful District Principal for 12 years in Chicago at a mixed-income middle school.

Outlined below are core practices and values for his work as an educational leader that have served as the underpinnings for his leadership practice. He believes there is a strong congruence between his core values and the priorities that VCA recognize as essential for this position of Founding School Principal. As we reviewed his resume and credentials, we were impressed with these core beliefs that have been instrumental in his capacity to successfully create learning environments that results in students achieving high levels of learning success.

Leadership Coach and Professional Developer

It is these core values that have served him well in how he has defined his work as a leadership mentor. Throughout his career he has worked with a rich variety of organizations that provide exemplary coaching to school leaders as well as contracting directly with schools and districts directly to provide essential guidance and resources to building level and central office leadership. More specifically,

- Has served on faculty with National Louis University in Educational Leadership providing ongoing instruction and training with both Master’s and Doctoral students. Of particular note, has worked extensively with current and prospective leaders who are affiliated with the Academy of Urban School Leadership (AUSL), supporting their growing need for leadership as they add additional schools to their organization.
- Has maintained a very substantial relationship with the KIPP Charter Foundation over the past eight years, coaching school leadership in the Chicago KIPP Schools along with mentoring current and prospective KIPP leaders around the country. Furthermore, has served as a primary architect in the design and implementation of the KIPP partnership with National Louis University that has involved working with KIPP leadership throughout the country in enabling them to achieve a graduate degree program that closely aligns the core values of both organizations.
- In addition to KIPP, has worked closely with a wide array of charter organizations, both within Chicago and throughout the country.
 - Youth Connection Charter Schools—These 21 charter high schools in Chicago provide its students with important learning opportunity to support their access to a rigorous colleague education. Many of these schools possess strong affiliations to post secondary schooling opportunities.
 - Chicago International Charter Schools—These 16 charter schools throughout the Chicago area are offering to its students a rigorous educational environment and offering an important alternative in challenged communities.
- Has provided mentorship and leadership support directly with New Leaders for New Schools in Chicago and the surrounding suburbs in a broad variety of settings (i.e., elementary, secondary, public, charter, private).

Has extensive experience serving as a leader in high performing schools and districts as well as providing coaching and guidance to current and developing leaders that will serve him well in building a strong foundation for assuming this position of Founding School Principal.

As evidenced by the likely Principal described above, VCA will attract and retain an experienced and innovative educator with exemplary academic and professional credentials for the position of Founding Principal. The ideal principal will be a visionary who yearns to put his/her experience, knowledge, and drive into action, laying the groundwork (including hiring the founding teaching staff) and setting the tone for an inspiring and welcoming school climate. Under the Principal’s leadership, the School’s structure and climate will challenge and motivate diverse students, teachers, and families to achieve world-class academic excellence, develop as kind human beings, and positively impact the communities in which they live. Resourcefulness, flexibility, and an entrepreneurial spirit are key qualities. A commitment to the educational philosophy of the School and demonstrated passion about VCA’s ideals is imperative are non-negotiable. A wider commitment to being a steward of positive change within the entire Nashville public school system is expected as well. Finally, the ideal candidate is inspired and driven by the idea of being an important part of social change in the South by helping to create the first college preparatory, integrated school in Nashville, and all of TN.

Organizational Relationships

The Founding Principal will be the instructional leader of the school and will report to the Chief Executive Officer. This Principal position will require establishing and maintaining strong

working relationships with parents and community members, in addition to teachers and students. The school will eventually be part of a small, local network of charter schools, and will provide opportunities to work with school leaders at other VCA sites as they open.

Key Responsibilities

Educational Leadership

- Own, as leader of the school, responsibility for world-class student academic achievement, character strength development, and social-emotional development;
- Provide instructional leadership, coaching and support to teachers who are working with a diverse student body, drawing on best practices and methods that ensure the proper amount of differentiation and support to ensure all students are performing at high levels and developing as critical thinkers;
- Recruit, hire, retain, support and supervise talented teaching staff and outside consultants in implementing an educational program that is consistent with Valor Collegiate Academies core philosophies, including differentiation, blended learning, balanced literacy, and social-emotional intelligences;
- Facilitate the use of a wide array of assessments that, together, reflect the educational philosophy of VCA that also prepare students to excel on standardized measures. Use multiple sources of data to develop a plan for the ongoing improvement of student achievement by overseeing the collection, analysis, and utilization of this data in relationship to specific students, teachers and curricula. This will include analyzing the data by various sub-groups including English language learners, special education, and cultural groupings; and
- Supervise and lead site-based teacher professional development (including a 2-3 week summer institute), and external professional development opportunities. Create and support ongoing professional development plans and opportunities for each individual educator in the school.

Communication, Outreach and Community-Building

- Facilitate the development of supportive communities among students, faculty, staff and external stakeholders to ensure that all members are engaged and valued;
- Communicate the school's vision and goals in a way that ensures understanding and commitment from a racially, culturally, and socio-economically diverse community of parents, students, faculty, staff and board members;
- Oversee the development of regular family education workshops, town hall meetings, newsletters and other forms of communication with families, ensuring that all such communication and work with families is accessible and understandable to all families; and
- Maintain positive relationships with Metro Nashville Public Schools and other charter organizations, serving as an active leader in the Nashville community and sharing VCA's best practices.

School Management

- Oversee the day-to-day management of the school site with a commitment to ensuring the health and safety of students, faculty and staff, including supervision of janitorial/custodial staff;
- Manage non-teaching support staff, including office personnel, business manager, resource specialists, etc.;
- Collaborate with the Chief Executive Officer on school budgets, fundraising, charter renewal, outreach, partnerships and other duties as required; and
- Report on activities, organizational development progress and student achievement to the Board.

Qualifications

- A strong personal commitment to ongoing learning and growth;
- At least 5 years of relevant teaching experience, with demonstrated student results;
- Masters or Ph.D. degree in Education;
- Experience selecting, training and supervising highly effective teachers, ideally in a charter, independent or public school setting that has a record of high achievement;
- A sophisticated understanding of and experience with differentiation, balanced literacy, social-emotional intelligence theory, backward design, Teach Like a Champion, and the creation of project-based curriculum;
- Demonstrated experience in data-based assessments and incorporating learning goals beyond the state standards;
- Experience with diverse student populations, including English learners, special education and GATE;
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills;
- Experience motivating and working with a variety of diverse stakeholders and local community members;
- Experience with school finance, budgets and organizational management; and
- Maturity, humility, strong work ethic, sense of humor and a can-do attitude.

Attach a copy of the school’s organizational chart and highlight the areas of this organizational structure that relate directly to the school’s vision, mission.

Attachment 2 has the Organizational Chart for VCA along with a description of how the structure relates to the vision and mission.

Fill out the staffing chart below outlining your staffing projections. Adjust or add functions and titles as needed to reflect variations in school models.

Position	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Chief Executive Officer	1*	1	1	1	1
Chief Operating Officer	1*	1	1	1	1
Principal	1	1	1	1	2
AP: Director of Curriculum and Instruction	0	1	1	1	2
Director of Special Education	1	1	1	1	2
AP: Culture	0	0	1	1	2
Registrar	0	0	1	1	1
Classroom Teachers (core subjects)	7	14	20	26	34
Classroom Teachers (non-core – special education, EL, foreign language, etc.)	1	2	3	4	7
Director of Student Support	1	1	1	1	2
Director of Operations	1	1	2	2	4

*Note: If VCA decides to have Mr. Dickson lead the school as Principal, the FTE for CEO would be eliminated and an Assistant Principal: Director of Curriculum and Instruction would be added. In addition, the Chief Operating Officer role will be hired only if VCA is successful in receiving funding from the Charter School Growth Fund this June. If that funding is not secured, VCA would operate without the COO role, instead just having the Director of Operations role at the school site.

SECTION XIII – PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional Development

Describe the proposed school’s professional development plan and opportunities and how they relate to the chosen academic focus and plan. Explain career growth and development opportunities for staff to maximize the contribution and retention of highly effectively employees

Describe the core components of your plan and how those components will support effective implementation of the academic plan.

Provide a schedule and overview of professional development that will take place prior to school opening. Explain the topics that may be included during the induction period and how teachers will be supported in delivering unique or particularly challenging aspects of the chosen curriculum.

Describe the expected number of days and hours for professional development throughout the school year and explain how the school’s calendar, daily schedule, and staffing structure support this plan. Include time scheduled for collaborative planning and how such time will typically be used.

Describe how the school’s culture and leadership team will support professional growth.

Describe the plan to cultivate future leadership capacity

Explain how the school’s staff will demonstrate a spirit of collaboration to share innovative practices across the entire district

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

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

VCA understands that schools are only as great as their teachers and leaders. VCA will have a goal to have a world-class educator in every classroom everyday, as well as a world-class school leader. In order to a make this intention a realistic reality, we intend to focus on three key areas for education talent:

1. **Attraction** – creating a pipeline of top notch, right fit talent
2. **Development** – developing talented educators efficiently and effectively
3. **Retention** – ensuring that our best educators have a career ladder and development plan that keeps them long-term

VCA will focus on these three areas for our talent management strategy. Each area is discussed in detail below.

Attraction

Pipeline: Having a strong, consistent, and varied pipeline of talent is the key first step in a talent strategy. VCA will work very hard at developing a world-class talent pipeline as follows:

1. **Local talent**
 - a. **Partnerships with local Universities:** VCA intends to build strong relationships with the local university teaching programs. Candice McQueen, Dean of Education at Lipscomb University, visited with Mr. Dickson in California for two days to study the unique partnership that he helped develop for Summit Prep Charter and Stanford University. Lipscomb and Valor are interested in developing a similar type of relationship. In addition, Mr. Dickson has presented his school model to the faculty at the Center for Teaching and Learning at Vanderbilt University and Director Rogers Hall

is helping to coordinate an event in September 2013 where Mr. Dickson and the VCA team will present to a wider audience of Vanderbilt faculty and students. In addition, Mr. Dickson has built a good relationship with the Belmont education school, particularly Lauren Lunsford. Letters of support from Rogers Hall and Lauren Lunsford can be found in the attachments.

- b. Teach for America:** VCA intends to have a very strong relationship with Teach For America. Director Shani Dowell's letter of support is attached in Attachment 14.
 - c. The New Teacher Project:** VCA also intends to have a strong relationship with TNTP. Director Baily Cato's letter of support is attached in Attachment 14.
 - d. Private Schools:** At Summit Prep in CA, we were very successful at attracting excellent talent from the private schools. Many were interested in the mixed-income, high expectations environment, as well as the intense professional development opportunities. We hope that VCA will be a similarly inviting place to work for talented teachers currently working in private schools.
 - e. Ed Pioneers and Broad Fellows:** VCA is currently in discussions with both Education Pioneers and the Broad Fellowship about securing fellows starting in the 2014 school year. Both programs are renowned for attracting top notch talent into the education field. They would serve in leadership roles within the schools.
- 2. National talent**
- a. National Universities:** Mr. Dickson has developed strong relationships with many of the best teacher education programs in the country, especially Stanford, Berkeley, UCLA, Harvard, and Columbia. VCA intends to leverage these strong relationships in order to attract top talent from these education schools here to Nashville.
 - b. Tennessee Charter School Incubator:** Due to this Fellowship with TCSI, Mr. Dickson has access to their talent pool of candidates interested in becoming school leaders and teachers in Nashville. The Incubator has a Director of Talent, Rebecca Lieberman, who is in regular contact with Mr. Dickson regarding top talent that they are recruiting.
 - c. Charter School Growth Fund:** The Charter School Growth Fund is one of the premier charter organizations in the country and they have very deep and expansive ties to talent in the education field. The Growth Fund is actively helping Valor locate talent.

Right Fit: Finding talent that is a great organizational fit is critically important. VCA intends to create a transparent and rigorous hiring process that allows both VCA and the candidate to evaluate if working at VCA will be a great philosophical and career fit.

- 1. Core Beliefs, Values, and Character Strengths:** No matter how talented in other areas, if a candidate is not an excellent fit in regards to their alignment with the common beliefs and values of the organization it will inevitable be a poor decision to hire them. VCA will use the following hiring process to help maximize the chance that we find candidates who are a great fit for the organization.
- 2. Hiring Process:** In the first year of the organization VCA will partner with Nashville Prep Charter School in order to have the following process work without a building and classrooms. We may potentially partner with LEAD Public schools as well.
 - a. Initial Screening:** VCA will use iApplicant to manage our application process. iApplicant allows for organizations to organize and track their incoming resumes and hiring process. The initial screener will look for technical qualifications necessary, and then rate the candidate as red, yellow, or green. The CEO and Principal will then read all yellow and green candidates.
 - b. Initial Interview:** The CEO and Principal will conduct a first round interview with select candidates. The initial interview will be focused nearly exclusively on if the candidate is a good philosophical fit for the organization. iApplicant will track the opinion of VCA on how well the candidate is aligned with the various Beliefs, Values, and Character Strengths that are the foundation of the VCA organization.
 - c. Pedagogical Interview:** For candidates that are deemed a great fit in the initial interview, a second interview is scheduled that focuses nearly all on their content and pedagogical knowledge. As part of this interview candidates bring a backwards planned unit if they are an experienced teacher, or are asked to complete an outline of a backwards planned unit if they are new teachers. The Principal will conduct these

interviews in year 1 – in subsequent years either teachers or other VCA faculty (Dean of Curriculum and Instruction) that are knowledgeable in the candidate’s content area will conduct this interview. Applicant will again track the results of each candidate on their depth of content and pedagogical knowledge.

- d. **Teaching Demonstration:** In year 1, candidates that make it to the Teaching Demonstration will teach a demo lesson at Nashville Prep. Candidates will be asked to prepare a 15 minute lesson on a topic, and to send their lesson plan to the Principal the night before the activity. The candidate will then receive feedback on the lesson from the CEO and Principal and will then re-teach the lesson to a second group of students. As VCA matures these demo lessons will take place at VCA.
- e. **Final Interview:** A final interview is conducted with all members of the VCA team. This group interview is meant to gauge how well the candidate will work with the current faculty. The candidate will be given various short scenarios by faculty and staff and will be asked to role play their responses. At the end of the final interview current faculty will have a 24 hour window to communicate directly with the CEO with input about the candidate.
- f. **Offer:** For the select candidates that have made it through this rigorous process, the CEO and Principal will make a consensus decision on whether to offer each candidate a job.

Development

Once we have attracted the right talent, where we hope to differentiate VCA from other high performing school organizations is in our ability to develop that talent into world-class educators. We will utilize the following development plan for our educators:

Teacher Development Cycle

1. **Personalized Educator Plan:**

Each faculty member will have a PEP that will guide their personalized learning plan as educators while at Valor. A copy of the PEP is shown in **Attachment 21**. The PEP document has a thoughtful mixture of academic goals at the school, grade, and classroom level, development goals that are aligned with the Valor Professional Continuum (to be described shortly), and personal goals that help to maintain teacher’s resiliency. Table 37 below shows the basic timeline for developing and reviewing the PEP.

Table 37: PEP Meeting Schedule

Meeting Type	Date	Involved
Initial PEP	July	Principal and Teacher
PEP Peer Review	October	Buddy Teachers
PEP Mid-Year Review	January	Principal and Teacher
PEP Peer Review	March	Buddy Teachers
PEP Year-End	May	Principal and Teacher

There are 5 opportunities each year for teachers to update and reflect on their PEP document. Buddy teachers are chosen during Summer Professional Development with partners ideally complimenting each other in ways that are deemed advantageous to both teachers development. All members of the VCA organization will have a PEP and Buddy (even non-teaching employees).

- 2. **Bloomboard – online talent management:** VCA will most likely use Bloomboard, an excellent online talent management system to manage our faculty development.
 - a. **PEP rubrics:** All employee PEP documents will be tracked electronically through Bloomboard. As changes and updates are made to the document they are stored in the cloud, including across years.
 - b. **Observation tracking:** The VCA observation cycle will be described shortly. All observation data is stored within Bloomboard.

- c. **Coaching tracking / video tracking:** An exciting part of Bloomboard (and other emerging teacher development tools) is their addition of video tracking. Video of teachers will be uploaded to Bloomboard as both evidence for faculty PEPs, as well as for Professional Development for other faculty members.
3. **Schedule of PD for School Year:** The VCA professional development Calendar is shown below in Table 38. VCA will spend 57 days per year developing teachers and leaders. This is an incredible amount of time dedicated to developing great teachers and is made possible by Intersession Calendar where students take elective course with contracted community organizations.

Table 38: VCA Professional Development Calendar

Month	Dates	Type	Total Days
July	15-19	New Teacher Orientation	5
July	21-31	All School Orientation	8
September	1,2	Data Days 1	2
Sept/Oct	29,30, 1-10	Intersession 1	10
November	6,7	Data Days 2	2
December	8,9	Data Days 3	2
January	5,6-10	Intersession 2	10
February	5,6	Data Days 4	2
March	9,10	Data Days 5	2
April/May	27-8	Intersession 3	10
June	8,9	Data Days 6	2
			57

Weekly Professional Development: Teachers will also meet for 1.5 hours per week (in the afternoon on shortened Wednesdays). These meetings will mostly be on school culture, RtI check-ins, and grade level team checkins.

4. **Typical Teacher Schedule / Collaboration Time:** In order to grow as educators, teachers need time to analyze data, collaborate with colleagues, get coaching from leadership and peers, write lessons plans and curriculum, and grade assessments. In order to ensure that VCA faculty have this time, the schedule has been created in order to give faculty large amounts of planning time each day. The teacher schedules for 5th and 6th grade are shown below in **Attachment 26**. While the actual number of minutes varies by grade level and content area, on average in Stage 1 of the VCA model teachers have about **150 minutes of planning time per day**. This is a large amount of planning each day compared to most school models, and VCA budgets for this by having a relatively thin administration structure. Instead, many of the aspects of leading the school are distributed across the faculty, allowing for teachers to have more authentic input into the leadership of the school.
5. **Summer Orientation:** In order to ensure a high performing teaching faculty, VCA will have a very detailed summer orientation session for all teachers and leaders. In year 1 the orientation will be 13 days long. In subsequent years the orientation will be 13 days for new teachers, and 10 days for returning teachers. The Professional Development Calendar for these sessions is shown in Attachment 28. Listed below are a few of the topics covered in the Summer Orientation sessions.
- a. **VCA Culture:** Faculty will be given a clear and vivid introduction to what they VCA culture for faculty and students looks and feels like. VCA leadership will use video, role playing, students, and parents to describe the VCA culture. In the first year VCA will use students and families from DSST and Summit Prep (we will fly them out for the first day, and also use videos of faculty, students, and parents describing the cultures at these

schools). Faculty will also role play certain situations and be given feedback by VCA leadership.

- b. Special Education Development:** VCA leadership will conduct SPED training along with Martha O'Bryan expert Daren Dickson on best practices with IEP students, including reviewing and practicing the VCA RtI system, referral system, Grade Level team agendas, and typical high-yield strategies that are effective in the classroom.
 - c. ELL Development:** Teachers will be trained for 2 days on the SIOP ELL model. This training will be integrated into the next two sessions (i.e., as faculty develop their assessments and curriculum for the school year, they will practice embedding high quality SIOP strategies into their lesson plans and curriculum – VCA leadership will give feedback on their implementations of the SIOP strategies.
 - d. Assessment and Curriculum Development:** Faculty will be lead by the Principal and CEO through an extensive build out of each faculty members assessment and curriculum for the year. It will be the major goal of the Summer Orientation that every faculty member will have worked with the Leadership team and fellow teachers for 6-8 days on developing their year-long curriculum.
 - e. Execution of Lessons:** Faculty will practice and receive feedback on their execution of lessons. Faculty will work as a group and role-play classroom settings where each teacher will practice a select group of common classroom management techniques that will be used across the grade level. VCA leadership will introduce these common techniques and then give feedback and coaching on their implementation.
 - f. Non-classroom time:** Having crisp, safe, and organized transitions during non-classroom time is very important. VCA will practice every non-classroom time transition with the faculty and ensure that everyone is clear on their responsibilities at all times during the schoolday.
 - g. Mentor 101:** The VCA SPED team will lead the faculty through 2 sessions on how to be an excellent mentor, mostly training faculty on the Social-Emotional models that they will use to coach students in their non-cognitive growth.
 - h. Technology/Blended:** Faculty will be trained on their laptops and all technology software that will be used at VCA.
- 6. Observation Cycles:** VCA will use the following observation cycle, which is based off of Paul Bambrick-Santoyo's *Leverage Leadership*:
 - a.** Teachers will be **observed by VCA leadership at least 1x per week.**
 - b.** Teachers will have a **20-30 minute debrief meeting each week** with VCA leadership. These sessions will be focused on bite-sized, quickly implementable steps that will have high leverage impacts on student learning. Most of the actions will involve classroom management techniques, systems/transitions improvements, warmth and joyful culture, and rigor of questioning and lesson.
 - c.** Teachers will have **12 Data Days** (6 separate sessions after 4 weeks of teaching) that will be focused on student learning as measured by internal and external assessments. These session will be focused on analyzing student work and assessment results. Teachers will work independently, on teacher teams, and with VCA leadership to analyze their data, reflect on instruction, and plan for the next cycle of instruction.
- 7. Leadership Team meetings:** VCA leadership and faculty will meet for 1.5 hours per week (on shortened Wednesdays as an entire faculty for 45 minutes, and on Tuesday and Thursdays in Math/Science (Tu) and English/History (Th) for 45 minutes). These meetings will be focused on school culture and relevant timely professional development.
- 8. Intersession:** As shown in Table 38, teachers have approximately 30 days during the school year to focus on professional development. This time will be used developing teachers in the following areas:
 - a. Data analysis and planning:** teachers will work with each other and VCA leadership to analyze student data, reflect, and plan upcoming teaching cycles.
 - b. Continuum:** teachers will each set goals around development in certain areas on their PEP document. Workshops and opportunities for development in these areas will be designed for teachers so that they may receive coaching in their major goal areas for the year. For example, if a teacher is focusing on classroom management then they will

work with other teachers who also have this as a goal. This group will work with VCA leadership (and perhaps outside advisors from other schools or Universities) to develop in this area.

- c. **Small group teaching:** part of the Continuum development will include teaching small groups of students who are using Intersession to continue to master the standards of various courses. Teachers will spend part of days teaching these students in small groups – giving those students very focused remediation from all teachers, but also giving teachers a chance to teach with a partner so that they can receive feedback on their performance.
- d. **School-wide decisions:** Teachers at VCA will have considerable input into major decisions made at VCA. A Decision Grid will be used in order to give clarity to whether teachers have Input or Decision making power over certain decisions. In both cases faculty will be informed of likely decisions that will affect the school and will have structured opportunities to discuss as a faculty the Pros and Cons of those decisions. These opportunities are valuable to VCA because they give real voice to teachers, they allow teachers to feel more invested in the school, and they allow VCA to promote grass-roots innovation by allowing teachers to tell leadership what is working/not working on the ground.

Professional Educator Continuum: The Professional Educator Continuum is the central development tool that will be used at VCA for teachers. A copy of the current version is in **Attachment 25**. We anticipate improving upon this over the next year and will have an updated version ready by June 2014. The Continuum is currently based off of the National Board Certification Standards, with the addition of Emotional Intelligence and Mentoring Strands, as we believe that in order to be a great VCA educator you must excel in these areas as well as more traditional strands such as Curriculum and Instruction.

1. **Compensation Strategy:** Teachers at VCA will be paid about the same as teachers in MNPS when they first start teaching at VCA. However, instead of being paid each year using a traditional Step and Ladder format, VCA will instead utilize a **Skill Based Step and Ladder** system for its employees. Teachers will be base-lined as one of four categories when they are first hired at VCA (Resident, Emerging, Accomplished, and Master). Once base-lined, they will set goals each year in the Personalized Educator Plan (PEP) around certain strands in the Continuum upon which both they and VCA leadership agree would be the most useful areas to develop. Teachers then will have opportunities and professional development that is focused on helping ensure that they develop in these goal areas.

For example, a teacher may choose to develop from Basic to Proficient in differentiation. They will propose this goal to the VCA Principal in their July PEP meeting and they will come to agreement that it is an appropriate goal. The teacher then refers to the Continuum Rubric to see evidence and data that they will need to show by the end of the year in order to demonstrate they have indeed grown from Basic to Proficient in Differentiation. They will focus on this goal over the course of the year, and collect evidence that they will share with VCA leadership throughout the year. VCA leadership will track what areas teachers are developing in that year (in Bloomboard) and will create Intersession and year-long experiences that support each teacher in meeting their goals. At year end the teacher and VCA leadership meet to analyze the evidence and then make a decision as to whether the teacher has grown on the Continuum. When teachers move up a Level they are paid a higher Base Salary starting the following school year. The tentative salary bands for each Level are shown in **Attachment 27**.

Overall, VCA intends to be a leader in developing great teachers. By spending large amounts of time in thoughtful, teacher-friendly ways we hope to attract high quality teachers, and subsequently develop them into great teachers.

Retention

Being great at attracting and developing teachers is only helpful if you are able to successfully retain a large percentage of your teachers. VCA's strategy for retention of great teachers is described below:

1. **Teacher as Professional:** VCA’s primary strategy for retaining great teachers is to treat teachers as true professionals. VCA teachers are given large amounts of time to develop, large amounts of time to collaborate with Leadership and their peers, significant input into the major decisions of the school, and a compensation structure that values growth and performance. VCA teachers are also expected to be leaders: they coach younger teachers and take on some of the leadership roles usually done by administration in typical schools such as scheduling for their grade level, tracking student performance in their grade level, and designing and organizing curriculum and assessments. As a result, VCA anticipates being a place that great teachers love to be: surrounded by similar teacher-leaders who desire to be in this type of high-trust environment.
2. **Career lattice:** VCA will have dual development tracks for teachers. The **Master Teacher** track will be for teachers who want to make teaching in a classroom a career. The second track will be the **Emerging Leader** track – for teachers that would like a leadership role outside of the classroom.
 - a. **Master teacher** – the Master teacher track will be developed by June 2014 and will be closely tied to the new Valor Professional Continuum.
 - b. **Emerging leader** – the Emerging leader track will be part of the LaunchTN Leadership Program that is currently being developed by the leadership at VCA, Nashville Prep, the Tennessee Charter School Incubator, and the Office of Innovation at MNPS. This program (pending funding from the TNDOE through the TNLead Grant we submitted March 2013) will take young leaders with promise and given them a “medical residency” experience by working in various District and Charter schools as well as high quality workshop sessions over the course of a development year. VCA anticipates sending the Principal of VCA and possibly the Assistant Principal of VCA through this program (if funded) for the 2013-2014 school year.
3. **High Trust, Joyful Culture:** VCA will aim to be a high-trust organization, and will work tirelessly to ensure that all decisions have input from key stakeholders and are communicated transparently. Faculty and leadership will be trained yearly by the CEO on having “courageous conversations” and on the elements of high-trust organizations. In addition, VCA will work hard to ensure that faculty feel valued and truly enjoy their working experience at VCA. Careful attention will be paid to ensure that VCA faculty work extremely hard, but also relax and rest extremely hard in a thoughtful cycle throughout the year.
4. **Meeting the Mission:** One of the best retention strategies of great organizations is that employees feel successful. To that end, VCA intends to retain great talent by ensuring that we successfully meet our ambitious vision of graduating all scholars college accepted and college ready.

SECTION XIV – OPERATIONS CAPACITY

Operations Capacity

Describe the capacity of school leadership (current or proposed) in terms of skills, experience, and available time to identify and respond to the needs of the staff and also balance the needs of the school and students.

Founding team members, Mr. Dickson in particular, have demonstrated great capacity to identify and respond to the needs of the staff and also balance the needs of the school and students. Mr. Dickson is currently completing a leadership fellowship with the Tennessee Charter School Incubator and can exclusively dedicate his time to planning and preparing to launch the proposed school. In addition, as described above, through leveraging organizational partnership, VCA is confident that a Principal will be hired that fulfills the rigorous selection criteria also outlined above.

The organizational structure outlined in **Attachment 2** also provides clear lines of authority and responsibility, which is necessary in order to balance the needs of everyone in the school community. From the onset of school launch, the Principal will be supported by the CEO with a focus on Curriculum and Instruction. As the School grows into its third year, an Assistant Principal is added to focus on school culture. Adding a Registrar position in Year 3 will assist the operations staff in carrying out related functions. Finally, as the School adds ninth grade in Year 5, equivalent administrative, leadership and support roles are implemented within the high school program. This thoughtful approach to growth and staffing will provide the foundation to be able to meet the needs of staff.

If you intend to contract with specific educational service providers, such as a charter management organization (CMO), please include: Selection process and criteria, Division of roles between the board and the service provider, How performance of the provider will be measured, Conditions for renewal and termination of the agreement, and How you will check for and manage any potential conflicts of interest.

VCA does not intend to contract with an educational service provider. However, as referenced in several areas of this application, the founders do envision applying for authority to open additional schools and to create a network of high-performing public charter schools and the creation of a CMO at a later date.

PART IV - ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: START UP PLAN

A proposed timeline highlighting the major action items that must be addressed prior to the opening of the school is found on the following below. The timeline also highlights the general timeframe for each action item. This timeline will be reviewed periodically to ensure timely progress on all action items and will be revised, as needed, to ensure the successful start-up of the school. The timeline and our working assumptions are based on our current beliefs and expectations, as well as on the experience of our advisors. As part of the development process for Valor Collegiate Academies, the founding team has attempted to identify the most significant action items and to provide reasonable timing estimates. We expect, however, that the process and timing of many of these items will need adjusting as the school periodically evaluates and updates the working assumptions. Upon receipt of a charter, VCA will undertake a more specific and comprehensive action plan, detailing each action step, responsible party, and deadline. Please see the following pages for a timetable for commencing.

Valor Collegiate Academies Start-Up Plan			
ORGANIZATION			
Timeframe	Project Description	Important Dates/Notes	Manager
Phase I Upon Approval of Charter – Summer and Early Fall 2013	Initial financing secured	Submit grants for new charter funding Identify other grant sources Organize fundraising events and solicit contributions from individual donors	Board, Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
	CEO recruits/hires Principal	Goal to Hire Principal by July 1	CEO
	Community outreach; student and teacher	CEO and Principal presents at community organizations; launch website/social media	CEO, Principal, Board
Phase II November- December 2013	Community outreach; student recruitment	Open houses; conduct information sessions at the school we will transform; community orgs, feeder schools, churches; advertising and marketing materials	CEO, Principal, Board
	Recruitment and Hiring of Initial Staff (pending external funding)	Assistant Principals and/or English and Math Lead Teachers	CEO, Principal
Phase III January – March 2014	Recruiting/hiring additional key personnel	Director of Operations, Teachers, Support Staff	CEO, Principal
	CEO and key personnel identify and hire qualified faculty and staff	Recruiting/interviewing at existing school; extensive outreach for candidates; interviews	CEO, Principal
	Review, update, and approve all policies	Finance, enrollment, grievance, discipline, education, HR & personnel, operations, etc.	Board, CEO
	Complete student and employee handbooks; conduct legal		CEO, Principal Board

Valor Collegiate Academies Start-Up Plan

ORGANIZATION			
Timeframe	Project Description	Important Dates/Notes	Manager
	review		
	Complete uniform policy		CEO, Board
	Continue community outreach; student recruitment	Open houses; conduct information sessions existing school; community orgs, feeder schools, churches; advertising and marketing materials	CEO, Principal, Board
Phase IV March-May 2014	Identify eligible suppliers and vendors; order office equipment; lease copiers, phone service, IT support		CEO, Principal
	Plan teacher orientation & training; develop summer and year-long professional development plan		CEO, Principal
	Develop family involvement policies, family contract, and family surveys		CEO, Principal
	Community outreach; student recruitment	Continue open houses, recruiting at community events; newspaper radio advertising	CEO, Principal
	Distribute information to families regarding dates of information night and back to school night		Principal and Lead Teachers
	School safety plan; schedule fire drills and crisis drills		Principal, Ops Director
	Hire custodians and office support staff		Principal, Ops Director
	Identify community partners		CEO, Principal
	Order uniforms		Ops Director
	Ready student database for records, test scores, grades, attendance, tardy students, discipline	PowerSchool\PowerGrade	Principal, Ops Director
	Prepare for DOE and Title I reimbursements and entitlements; conduct search for independent auditor		CEO, Principal, Ops Director, Treasurer

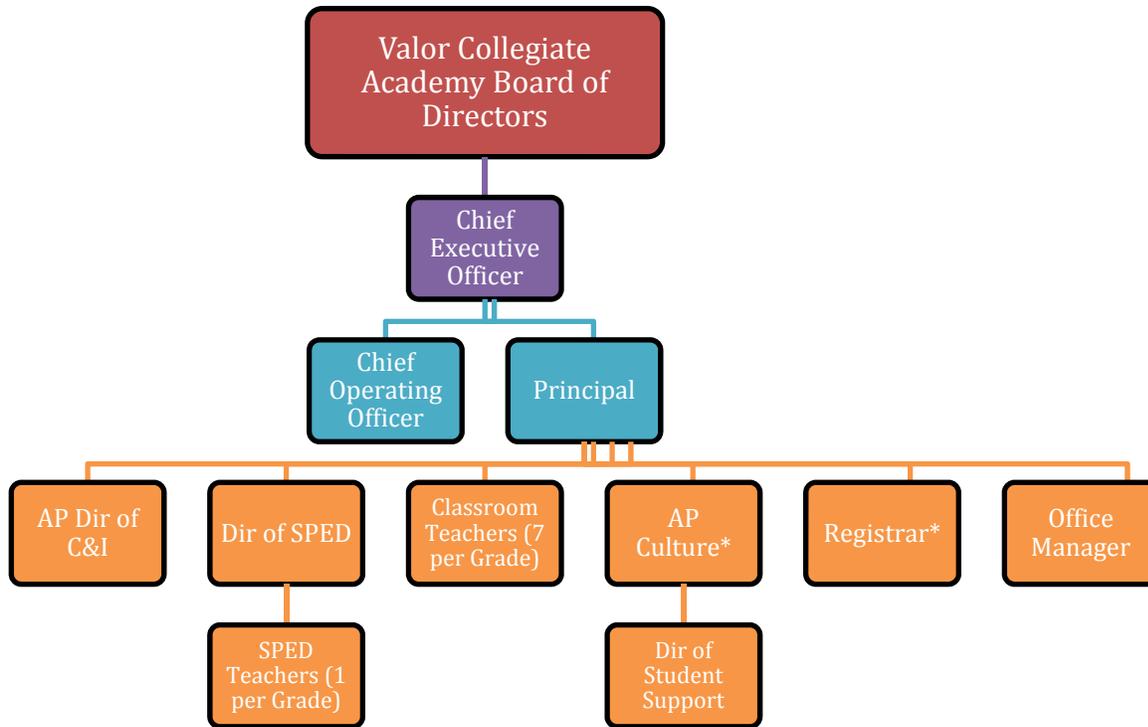
Valor Collegiate Academies Start-Up Plan

ACADEMICS

Timeframe	Project Description	Important Dates/Notes	Manager
Phase I January - March 2014	Refine curriculum maps as necessary	Performance standards and benchmarks must align with state and national standards	Principal, AP, Lead Teachers
	Confirm curriculum resource selection	Order additional materials by March 1	Principal, AP, Lead Teachers
	Review scope and sequence documents; make adjustments as necessary		Principal, AP, Lead Teachers
Phase II March - May 2014	Develop detailed assessment calendar aligned to curriculum maps and school calendar		Principal, AP, Lead Teachers
	Purchase data analysis/warehouse tools	PowerSchool\PowerGrade	CEO, Principal, Ops Director
	Special education program and service delivery	Ongoing review of incoming student records for services; schedule and hold IEP meetings; budget for student needs	Principal, AP
	Conduct ELL home language survey		Principal, AP, Ops Director
	Request student records; develop secure filing system for all student records		Principal, AP, Ops Director
	Finalize Intersession programs		CEO, Principal
Phase III June – August 2014	Select supplemental instructional resources and materials		Principal, AP
	Develop common procedures and protocols		Principal, AP, Lead Teachers
	Plan Information Night and Back to School Night		CEO, Principal, Ops Director
	Finalize master schedule	Teacher assignments, common planning time, fieldtrips, Information Night, Back to School Night	Principal, Ops Director
	Create daily student and teacher schedules		Principal, AP, Ops Director
	Conduct Information Night and Back to School Night	Both will be completed prior to Labor Day	Principal, Ops Director
	Conduct teacher orientation and development		CEO, Principal, AP, Lead Teachers
	Develop additional instructional plans	During teacher orientation	Principal, AP, Teachers
	School is in session		

Valor Collegiate Academies Start-Up Plan			
FACILITIES/OPERATIONS			
Timeframe	Project Description	Important Dates/Notes	Manager
Phase I Upon Approval of Charter – Summer to Early Fall 2013	Secure facility using either lease option or purchase option outlined in Attachment 6 – Facilities Plan		CEO, Board
	Secure all permits and approvals for occupancy		CEO, Board
Phase II Fall –March 2014	Conduct needs analysis – classroom furniture, technology, office equipment, books		CEO, Principal, Ops Director
	Identify transportation vendor. Develop a detailed transportation plan, including types of vehicles, authorized drivers and student eligibility.		CEO, Ops Director
Phase III March-May 2014	Order all classroom furniture, technology, accessories, and equipment	Conduct needs/assessment of existing furniture, technology. LCD projectors and screens, computers, tables, desks, chairs, shelving, white boards	CEO, Principal, Ops Director
	Prepare building for opening – paint rooms and halls, order cleaning supplies		CEO, Principal, Ops Director
	Order/install signage for inside and outside of building		ED, Principal, Ops Director
Phase IV June - July 2014	Develop an arrival and dismissal plan, including traffic flow	Consult with local police and adjacent schools	Principal, Ops Director
	Inventory and tag all computers, monitors, projectors; ensure network and technology are functional		Principal, Ops Director
	Order student and classroom and office supplies		Principal, Ops Director, Office Manager
	Schedule final health and safety inspections; secure approval of crisis plan		Principal, Ops Director

Attachment 2 - ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



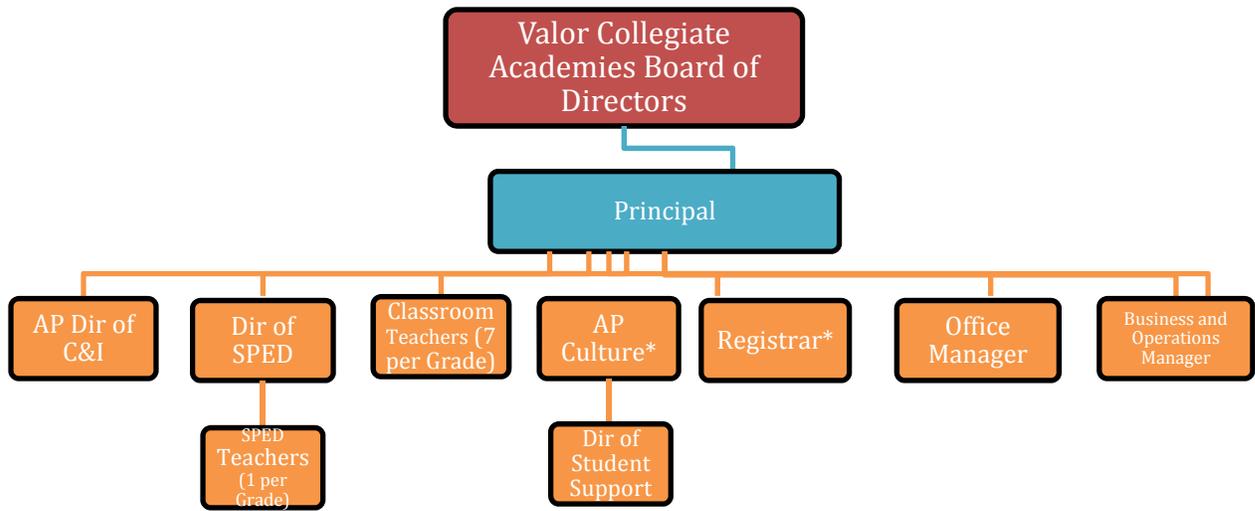
*Positions to be added in year 3 of operation. Director of Student Support will report directly to the Principal in Years 1 and 2.

The Valor Collegiate Academy organizational chart above illustrates how core functions and personnel will be managed in order for the school to meet its mission. In particular, the overall leadership structure will allow the Principal, who will serve as the instructional leader of the school, to focus on teaching and learning. The Chief Executive Officer will provide overall leadership, while the Chief Operating Officer will lead all functions related to operations and finance.

Additional personnel will be added in year 3 as the school continues its growth projections, including a second Assistant Principal focusing on school culture and a Registrar. Further yet, in year 5 a High School Principal will be added with the same organizational structure under him/her that is outlined for the founding Middle School Principal in Year 1.

Assistant Principals will have varying levels of supervisory duties over some teachers in their respective areas of focus. They will contribute to the teacher evaluation process as appropriate, yet the Principal will remain the primary supervisor.

The organizational chart and functional description above assumes the growth plan described in brief throughout the application, namely growing to a high performing charter management organization. If VCA does not employ this growth plan, decides to postpone growth and/or does not secure philanthropic resources in order to support initial CMO infrastructure, VCA will operate as a highly effective independent charter school with a Principal as the chief school official in place of the Chief Executive Officer included in the chart above. In addition, a Business and Operations Manager would report to the Principal and fulfill the role of the Chief Operating Officer.



ATTACHMENT 3 – GOVERNING BODY DOCUMENTS

3A – NON-PROFIT AND EXEMPT STATUS



BILL GARRETT, Davidson County

Trans: T20120078995 CHARTER

Recvd: 10/17/12 13:00 6 pgs

Fees: 7.50 Taxes: 0.00



20121017-0095296

STATE OF TENNESSEE

Tre Hargett, Secretary of State

Division of Business Services

William R. Snodgrass Tower

312 Rosa L. Parks AVE, 6th FL

Nashville, TN 37243-1102

Valor Collegiate Academies
STE 416
209 10TH AVE S
NASHVILLE, TN 37203-0772

October 16, 2012

Filing Acknowledgment

Please review the filing information below and notify our office immediately of any discrepancies.

SOS Control # :	698059	Formation Locale:	TENNESSEE
Filing Type:	Corporation Non-Profit - Domestic	Date Formed:	10/16/2012
Filing Date:	10/16/2012 2:35 PM	Fiscal Year Close:	12
Status:	Active	Annual Report Due:	04/01/2013
Duration Term:	Perpetual	Image # :	7106-2534
Public/Mutual Benefit:	Public		
Business County:	DAVIDSON COUNTY		

Document Receipt

Receipt # : 836542	Filing Fee:	\$100.00
Payment-Check/MO - BRADLEY ARANT BOULT CUMMINGS LLP, Nashville, TN		\$100.00

Registered Agent Address:
ROBERT C. HANNON
STE 700
1600 DIVISION ST
NASHVILLE, TN 37203-2771

Principal Address:
STE 416
209 10TH AVE S
NASHVILLE, TN 37203-0772

Congratulations on the successful filing of your **Charter for Valor Collegiate Academies** in the State of Tennessee which is effective on the date shown above. You must also file this document in the office of the Register of Deeds in the county where the entity has its principal office if such principal office is in Tennessee. Visit the TN Department of Revenue website (apps.tn.gov/bizreg) to determine your online tax registration requirements.

You must file an Annual Report with this office on or before the Annual Report Due Date noted above and maintain a Registered Office and Registered Agent. Failure to do so will subject the business to Administrative Dissolution/Revocation.

Tre Hargett
Secretary of State

Processed By: Kathy Sherrell

Phone (615) 741-2286 * Fax (615) 741-7310 * Website: <http://tnbear.tn.gov/>

STATE OF TENNESSEE
CHARTER
OF
VALOR COLLEGIATE ACADEMIES

FILED

ARTICLE I: NAME AND FILING

The name of the nonprofit corporation is Valor Collegiate Academies (the "Corporation"). The Charter is being filed pursuant to the Tennessee Nonprofit Corporation Act, as amended from time to time (the "Act").

ARTICLE II: NOT-FOR-PROFIT PUBLIC BENEFIT CORPORATION

The Corporation is a nonprofit public benefit corporation. It is intended that the Corporation shall have the status of a corporation that is exempt from federal income taxation under Section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, or any corresponding provisions of any future federal tax laws (hereinafter referred to as the "Code"), as an organization described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Code.

ARTICLE III: OFFICE, REGISTERED AGENT AND INCORPORATOR

The initial principal office of the Corporation is located at 209 10th Avenue South, Suite 416, Nashville, Davidson County, Tennessee 37203, Attention: Todd Dickson.

The registered agent of the Corporation is Robert C. Hannon, and the initial registered office of the Corporation is 1600 Division Street, Suite 700, Nashville, Davidson County, Tennessee 37203.

The incorporator of the Corporation is Robert C. Hannon whose mailing address is 1600 Division Street, Suite 700, Nashville, Davidson County, Tennessee 37203.

ARTICLE IV: MEMBERS

The Corporation shall not have members.

ARTICLE V: PURPOSE

The Corporation is organized exclusively for charitable, scientific, literary and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Code including operating a charter school management organization specializing in grade 5 – 12 junior and high schools.

The Corporation is organized to engage in any activity, and to exercise any and all powers, rights and privileges afforded a nonprofit corporation under the Act. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Charter, the Corporation shall not carry on any activities not permitted

7/2981571.1

to be carried on by a corporation organized as a nonprofit corporation under the laws of the State of Tennessee pursuant to the Act which is exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Code, contributions to which are deductible under Sections 170(c)(2), 2055(a) or 2522(a) of the Code.

ARTICLE VI: ACTION OF INCORPORATOR

The incorporator shall adopt the initial Bylaws of the Corporation; shall elect the initial Board of Directors and officers pursuant to the terms of the Corporation's Bylaws; and shall take such other appropriate action incident to the organization of the Corporation.

ARTICLE VII: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The affairs of the Corporation shall be managed by a Board of Directors, whose members, designated as directors, shall act as the directors of the Corporation, and by such officers, as shall be described in the Bylaws of the Corporation. The initial directors shall be appointed by the incorporator to serve until the first meeting of the Board of Directors. Thereafter, directors shall be appointed as provided in the Bylaws of the Corporation, but the number of directors shall not be less than three.

ARTICLE VIII: LIMITED PERSONAL LIABILITY OF DIRECTORS

No person who is or was a director of the Corporation, nor such person's heirs, executors, administrators, or legal representatives (collectively referred to as a "director"), shall be personally liable to the Corporation for monetary damages for breach of fiduciary duty as a director. However, this provision shall not eliminate or limit the liability of a director (a) for any breach of a director's duty of loyalty to the Corporation, (b) for acts or omissions not in good faith or which involve intentional misconduct or a knowing violation of law, or (c) under Section 48-58-304 of the Act. No repeal or modification of the provisions of this Article, either directly or by the adoption of provisions inconsistent with the provisions of this Article, shall adversely affect any right or protection, as set forth herein, existing in favor of a particular individual at the time of such repeal or modification.

ARTICLE IX: INDEMNIFICATION AND ADVANCEMENT OF EXPENSES

1. Mandatory Indemnification of Directors and Officers. To the maximum extent permitted by the provisions of Sections 48-58-501, *et seq.*, of the Act, as amended from time to time (provided, however, that if an amendment to the Act in any way limits or restricts the indemnification rights permitted by law as of the date hereof, such amendment shall apply only to the extent mandated by law and only to activities of persons subject to indemnification under this paragraph 1 which occur subsequent to the effective date of such amendment), the Corporation shall indemnify and advance expenses to any person who is or was a director or officer of the Corporation, or to such person's heirs, executors, administrators and legal representatives, for the defense of any threatened, pending, or completed action, suit, or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative, and whether formal or informal (any such action, suit, or proceeding being hereinafter referred to as the "Proceeding"), to which such person was, is, or is threatened to be made, a named defendant or respondent, which indemnification and advancement of expenses shall include counsel fees actually incurred

as a result of the Proceeding or any appeal thereof, reasonable expenses actually incurred with respect to the Proceeding, all fines, judgments, penalties and amounts paid in settlement thereof, subject to the following conditions:

(a) The Proceeding was instituted by reason of the fact that such person is or was a director or officer of the Corporation; and

(b) The director or officer conducted himself or herself in good faith, and he or she reasonably believed (i) in the case of conduct in his or her official capacity with the Corporation, that his or her conduct was in its best interest; (ii) in all other cases, that his or her conduct was at least not opposed to the best interest of the Corporation; and (iii) in the case of any criminal proceeding, that he or she had no reasonable cause to believe his or her conduct was unlawful. The termination of a proceeding by judgment, order, settlement, conviction, or upon a plea of nolo contendere or its equivalent is not, of itself, determinative that the director or officer did not meet the standard of conduct herein described.

2. Permissive Indemnification of Employees and Agents. The Corporation may, to the maximum extent permitted by the provisions of Section 48-58-501, *et seq.*, of the Act, as amended from time to time (provided, however, that if an amendment to the Act in any way limits or restricts the indemnification rights permitted by law as of the date hereof, such amendment shall apply only to the extent mandated by law and only to activities of persons subject to indemnification under this paragraph 2 which occur subsequent to the effective date of such amendment), indemnify and advance expenses in a Proceeding to any person who is or was an employee or agent of the Corporation, or to such person's heirs, executors, administrators and legal representatives, to the same extent as set forth in paragraph 1 above, provided that the Proceeding was instituted by reason of the fact that such person is or was an employee or agent of the Corporation and met the standards of conduct set forth in subparagraph 1(b) above. The Corporation may also indemnify and advance expenses in a Proceeding to any person who is or was an employee or agent of the Corporation to the extent, consistent with public policy, as may be provided by its Bylaws, by contract, or by general or specific action of the Board of Directors.

3. Non-Exclusive Application. The rights to indemnification and advancement of expenses set forth in paragraphs 1 and 2 above are contractual between the Corporation and the person being indemnified, and his or her heirs, executors, administrators and legal representatives, and are not exclusive of other similar rights of indemnification or advancement of expenses to which such person may be entitled, whether by law, by this Charter, by a resolution of the Board of Directors, by the Bylaws of the Corporation, by the purchase and maintenance by the Corporation of insurance on behalf of a director, officer, employee, or agent of the Corporation, or by an agreement with the Corporation providing for such indemnification, all of which means of indemnification and advancement of expenses are hereby specifically authorized.

4. Non-Limiting Application. The provisions of this Article IX shall not limit the power of the Corporation to pay or reimburse expenses incurred by a director, officer, employee, or agent of the Corporation in connection with such person's appearing as a witness in a Proceeding at a time when he or she has not been made a named defendant or respondent to the Proceeding.

5. Prohibited Indemnification. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Article IX, the Corporation shall not indemnify or advance expenses to or on behalf of any director, officer, employee, or agent of the Corporation, or any such person's heirs, executors, administrators, or legal representatives:

(a) If a judgment or other final adjudication adverse to such person establishes his or her liability for any breach of the duty of loyalty to the Corporation, for acts or omissions not in good faith or which involve intentional misconduct or a knowing violation of law, or under Section 48-58-304 of the Act; or

(b) In connection with a Proceeding by or in the right of the Corporation in which such person was adjudged liable to the Corporation; or

(c) In connection with any other Proceeding charging improper personal benefit to such person, whether or not involving action in his or her official capacity, in which he or she was adjudged liable on the basis that personal benefit was improperly received by him or her.

6. Repeal or Modification Not Retroactive. No repeal or modification of the provisions of this Article IX, either directly or by the adoption of a provision inconsistent with the provisions of this Article, shall adversely affect any right or protection, as set forth herein, existing in favor of a particular individual at the time of such repeal or modification.

ARTICLE X: NO PRIVATE INUREMENT

No part of the net earnings of the Corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to, its directors, officers, or other private persons. However, the Corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered to it or on its behalf, pay reimbursements for expenses incurred on its behalf, and make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article V hereof.

ARTICLE XI: NO LEGISLATIVE OR POLITICAL ACTIVITY

No substantial part of the activities of the Corporation shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation; and the Corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distributing of statements), any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for public office.

ARTICLE XII: PRIVATE FOUNDATION LIMITATIONS

In the event the Corporation is a private foundation within the meaning of Section 509 of the Code for a taxable year, the Corporation:

(a) shall make distributions at such time and in such manner as not to subject the Corporation to tax under Section 4942 of the Code;

(b) shall not engage in any act of self-dealing, as defined in Section 4941(d) of the Code;

(c) shall not retain any excess business holdings, as defined in Section 4943(c) of the Code;

(d) shall not make any investments in a manner that would subject it to tax under Section 4944 of the Code; and

(e) shall not make any taxable expenditures, as defined in Section 4945(d) of the Code.

ARTICLE XIII: DISTRIBUTIONS ON DISSOLUTION

Upon the dissolution of the Corporation, after paying or making provision for the payment of all liabilities of the Corporation then outstanding and unpaid, the Board of Directors shall distribute the assets of the Corporation exclusively for the charitable, scientific, literary and educational purposes of the Corporation within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Code, in such manner as the Board of Directors shall determine. Any assets not so distributed shall be distributed to one or more governmental units then described under Section 170(c)(1) of the Code, or to one or more organizations then described under Section 501(c)(3) of the Code and Section 170(c)(2) of the Code, as the Board of Directors shall determine. Any assets not so disposed of by the Board of Directors shall be disposed of by a court having equity jurisdiction in the county in which the principal office of the Corporation is then located, with the distribution of assets to be made for such charitable purposes, or to such governmental units then described under Section 170(c)(1) of the Code, or to such organization or organizations then described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Code and Section 170(c)(2) of the Code, as such court shall determine.

This Charter shall be effective upon the filing with the Secretary of State of the State of Tennessee.



Robert C. Hannon, Incorporator



Bill Garrett

Davidson

CUSTOMER RECEIPT - RECORDING SERVICES

Receipt Number: T20120078995
Date/Time: 10/17/2012 13:00:51
Method Received: Walk-In
Clerk: aduncan

HOLD AT COUNTER

Customer Name : CHARLES

Transaction Detail

Table with columns: Instrument Number, Instrument Type, Gen. Fee, Equip. Fee, Transfer Tax, Mortgage Tax, Copy, Cert. Copy, # Pgs, Consideration, Subtotal. Includes fees for CHARTER and VALOR COLLEGIATE ACADEMIES.

Payment Information

Table with columns: Method of Payment, Payment Control ID, Authorized Agent, Company, Amount. Shows payment via Check for \$7.00.

AMOUNT PAID: \$7.50
LESS AMOUNT DUE: \$7.50
CHANGE RECEIVED: \$0.00

10/17/2012 1:01PM

Davidson County Register of Deeds * 501 Broadway * Nashville, TN 37203

Page 1 of 1
CustomerReceipt

ATTACHMENT 3B - BYLAWS

BYLAWS

OF

VALOR COLLEGIATE ACADEMIES

ARTICLE II

NAME

The name of the nonprofit corporation is Valor Collegiate Academies (the “**Corporation**”). It is intended that the Corporation shall have the status of a corporation which is exempt from federal income taxation under Section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, or any corresponding provisions of any future federal tax laws (hereinafter referred to as the “**Code**”), as an organization described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Code.

ARTICLE III

OFFICES

Section 3.1 Corporate Office. The principal office of the Corporation shall be located at 1600 Division Street, Suite 700, Nashville, Davidson County. The Corporation may have such other offices, either within or without the State of Tennessee, as the Board of Directors may designate or as the affairs of the Corporation may require from time to time.

Section 3.2 Registered Office. The registered office of the Corporation required to be maintained in the State of Tennessee by the Tennessee Nonprofit Corporation Act, as amended from time to time (the “**Act**”) may, but need not, be identical with the principal office in the State of Tennessee; and the address of the registered office may be changed from time to time by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE IV

PURPOSE AND USE OF FUNDS

Section 4.1 Purpose. The Corporation is organized exclusively for charitable, scientific, literary and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Code (hereinafter referred to as “**Charitable Purposes**”), including operating a public charter school management organization specializing in grade 5 – 12 junior and high schools.

The Corporation is organized to engage in any activity, and to exercise any and all powers, rights and privileges, afforded a nonprofit corporation under the Act. Notwithstanding any other provision of these Bylaws, the Corporation shall not carry on any activities not permitted to be carried on by a corporation organized as a nonprofit corporation under the laws of the State of Tennessee, which is exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Code, contributions to which are deductible under Sections 170(c)(2), 2055(a) or 2522(a) of the Code.

Section 4.2 Use of Funds. In making distributions to effectuate the religious, charitable, scientific, literary and educational purposes of the Corporation, as delineated in Section 3.1 above, the Board of Directors shall have the authority to make distributions of both income and principal in such proportions and amounts as the Board of Directors, in its discretion, determines advisable, provided that all such distributions are consistent with all applicable federal tax laws and regulations, as herein provided. The Corporation is not formed for financial or pecuniary gain; and no part of the assets, income, or profits of the Corporation shall be distributable to, or inure to, the benefit of its directors or officers or any other private person, except as provided in Section 5.11, Section 6.10 and Article XI as reimbursement for expenses or reasonable compensation for services rendered to the Corporation, and except to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the Charitable Purposes of the Corporation, as set forth in the Charter and Section 3.1 above. No substantial part of the activities of the Corporation shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation; and no part of the activities of the Corporation shall be the participation in, or intervention in (including the publishing or distributing of statements), any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for public office.

Section 4.3 Administration of Funds. In the event the Corporation is a private foundation within the meaning of Section 509 of the Code for a taxable year, the Corporation: (a) shall distribute its income for each tax year in such manner so that it will not become subject to the tax on undistributed income imposed by Section 4942 of the Code; (b) shall not engage in any act of self-dealing, as defined in Section 4941(d) of the Code; (c) shall not retain any excess business holdings, as defined in Section 4943(c) of the Code; (d) shall not make any investments in a manner that would incur tax liability under 4944 of the Code; and (e) shall not make any taxable expenditures, as defined in Section 4945(d) of the Code. In order fully to effectuate the

provisions of this Section, the Corporation shall adopt such procedures, and shall otherwise adhere to such administrative requirements as may from time to time be necessary, in order fully to comply with all applicable federal tax laws and regulations.

Section 4.4 Termination of Corporation. The Board of Directors shall have the authority to terminate the Corporation at any time that, by a unanimous vote, it deems such termination appropriate or advisable. In such event, after paying, or making provision for the payment of, all liabilities of the Corporation then outstanding and unpaid, the Board of Directors shall distribute the assets of the Corporation exclusively for Charitable Purposes. Any assets not so distributed shall be distributed to one or more Qualified Beneficiaries, as the Board of Directors shall determine. Any assets not so disposed of by the Board of Directors shall be disposed of by a court having equity jurisdiction in the county in which the principal office of the Corporation is then located, with the distribution of assets to be made for such Charitable Purposes, or to such Qualified Beneficiaries, as such court shall determine.

ARTICLE V

MEMBERS

Section 5.1 Members. The Corporation shall not have members.

ARTICLE VI

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 6.1 General Powers. The business and affairs of the Corporation shall be supervised by its Board of Directors (sometimes referred to herein as the Board), which shall exercise in the name of and on behalf of the Corporation all of the rights and privileges legally exercisable by the Corporation as a corporate entity, except as may otherwise be provided by law, the Charter, or these Bylaws. The Board of Directors, as the governing body of the Corporation, shall have the authority to receive, administer, invest and distribute property on behalf of the Corporation in accordance with the provisions set forth in these Bylaws.

Section 6.2 Number, Tenure, Qualifications and Election. The number of the members of the Board of Directors shall be not less than five (5) nor more than fifteen (15). The initial members of the Board of Directors shall be appointed by the Incorporator and thereafter shall be elected by a majority of the Directors then in office. Directors shall serve for two (2) year terms with the initial term commencing on the first July 1st after appointment (or election); provided that directors may serve on the Board as a director, with all duties and powers arising therefrom, prior to commencement of initial term. Directors may not serve more than three (3) consecutive terms; provided that current or former Officers of the Board may serve up to five (5) consecutive terms. Directors shall be natural persons who have attained the age of twenty-one (21) years, but need not be residents of the State of Tennessee. Directors shall be natural persons who have attained the age of twenty-one (21) years, but need not be residents of the State of Tennessee.

Section 6.3 Advisory Members. The Board of Directors may elect advisory members from time to time, including without limitation employees of the Corporation, who may attend, without vote, all meetings of the Board of Directors. Advisory members shall serve at the pleasure of the Board of Directors and shall advise and counsel the Board of Directors on appropriate matters.

Section 6.4 Ex-Officio Non-voting Members. The Chief Executive Officer shall be an Ex-officio, non-voting member of the Board of Directors. The CEO will partake in all Board activities but will not having voting rights.

Section 6.5 Annual Meeting. The annual meeting of the Board of Directors shall be held within or without the State of Tennessee as close as practicable to the end of the Corporation's fiscal year. The purpose of the annual meeting shall be to approve the budget for the upcoming fiscal year, elect Officers, and address such other business matters as may be pertinent at such time.

Section 6.6 Special Meetings. Special meetings of the Board of Directors may be called by the President, or at the request of any director. The President shall fix the time and place, either within or without the State of Tennessee, of any special meeting.

Section 6.7 Notices. Notice of any special meeting shall be given at least three (3) business days prior thereto. The attendance of a director at a meeting shall constitute a waiver of notice of such meeting, except where a director attends a meeting for the express purpose of objecting to the transaction of any business because the meeting was not lawfully called or convened. The business to be transacted at, or the purpose of, any special meeting of the Board of Directors must be specified in the notice of such meeting and no other business shall be transacted at that meeting.

Section 6.8 Quorum. A majority of the total number of directors in office shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Board of Directors.

Section 6.9 Participation in Meeting. Each director, other than an advisory member, shall be entitled to one (1) vote upon any matter properly submitted for a vote to the Board of Directors. The affirmative vote of a majority of the directors present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Board of Directors, except as may otherwise be specifically provided by law, by the Charter, or by these Bylaws. Members of the Board of Directors absent from any meeting shall be permitted to vote at such meeting by written proxies. The members of the Board of Directors, or any committee designated by the Board of Directors, may participate in a meeting of the Board of Directors, or of such committee, by means of conference telephone or similar communications equipment by means of which all persons participating in the meeting can hear one another; and participation in a meeting pursuant to this provision shall constitute presence in person at such meeting. The directors shall be promptly furnished a copy of the minutes of the meetings of the Board of Directors.

Section 6.10 Action Without a Meeting. Any action required or permitted to be taken at a meeting by the Board of Directors, or by any committee thereof, may be taken without a meeting if all members of the Board of Directors or committee, as the case may be, consent in writing to taking such action without a meeting. If all members entitled to vote on the action shall consent in writing to taking such action without a meeting, the affirmative vote of the number of votes that would be necessary to authorize or take such action at a meeting shall be the act of the Board of Directors. The action must be evidenced by one (1) or more written consents describing the action taken, signed in one (1) or more counterparts by each member entitled to vote on the action, indicating each signing member's vote or abstention on the action taken. All such written consents and actions shall be filed with the minutes of the proceedings of the Board of Directors or committee. A consent signed under this Section shall have the same force and effect as a meeting vote of the Board of Directors, or any committee thereof, and may be described as such in any document.

Section 6.11 Compensation and Reimbursement of Expenses. No director shall be entitled to receive compensation for services rendered to the Corporation in the person's capacity as a director. Each director may be paid his or her reasonable expenses incurred by the director directly related to the affairs of the Corporation upon prior approval by the Board of Directors and proper substantiation of such expenses.

Section 6.12 Presumption of Assent. A director of the Corporation who is present at a meeting of the Board of Directors at which action on any Corporation matter is taken shall be presumed to have assented to the action taken, unless his or her dissent shall be entered in the minutes of the meeting, or unless he or she shall file his or her written dissent to such action with the person acting as the secretary of the meeting before the adjournment thereof, or forward such dissent by registered mail to the Secretary of the Corporation immediately after the adjournment of the meeting. Such right to dissent shall not apply to a director who voted in favor of such action.

Section 6.13 Removal. Any or all of the directors may be removed for cause or without cause by vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the total number of the voting directors in office. Removal of a director shall also constitute removal as an officer of the Corporation and as a member of all committees of the Board of Directors.

Section 6.14 Resignation. A director may resign his or her membership at any time by tendering his or her resignation in writing to the President or, in the case of the resignation of the President, to the Secretary. A resignation shall become effective upon the date specified in such notice or, if no date is specified, upon receipt of the resignation by the Corporation at its principal place of business.

ARTICLE VII

OFFICERS

Section 7.1 Number. There shall be a President, Treasurer, Secretary and Chief Executive Officer (subject to timing qualifications set forth below) of the Corporation, each of whom shall be elected in accordance with the provisions of this Article. The Board of Directors may also elect such additional officers as the Board of Directors may from time to time deem necessary or appropriate. Any two or more offices may be held by the same person, except for the offices of President and Secretary.

Section 7.2 Election and Term of Office. The initial officers of the Corporation shall be appointed by the Incorporator for a term of office expiring at the first annual meeting of the Corporation. The officers of the Corporation shall be elected annually by the Board of Directors at its annual meeting. If the election of the officers shall not be held at such meeting, such election shall be held as soon thereafter as may be convenient. Each officer shall hold office for a term of one (1) year expiring immediately following the annual meeting at which he or she was elected and until his or her successor shall have been duly elected and qualified, or until his or her earlier death, resignation, or removal from office in the manner hereinafter provided. A retiring officer may succeed himself or herself in his or her office.

Section 7.3 President. The President shall be the principal officer of the Corporation and shall serve as the principal liaison between the Board and the Chief Executive Officer. He or she shall, when present, preside at all meetings of the Board of Directors. The President shall be charged with the responsibility of appointing the members of each standing or ad hoc committee of the Board, and the President shall be entitled to serve on any standing or ad hoc committee of the Board. The President may sign, with the Secretary or any other proper officer thereunto authorized by the Board of Directors, deeds, mortgages, bonds, contracts, or other instruments which the Board of Directors has authorized to be executed, except in cases where the signing and execution thereof shall be expressly delegated by the Board of Directors or these Bylaws to some other officer or agent of the Corporation, or shall be required by law to be otherwise signed or executed. The President shall have such other powers and perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Board.

Section 7.4 Treasurer. The Treasurer shall have charge and custody of, and be responsible for, all funds and securities of the Corporation; receive and give receipts for monies due and payable to the Corporation from any source whatsoever, and deposit all such monies in the name of the Corporation in such banks, trust companies, or other depositories as shall be selected in accordance with the provisions of Article VIII of these Bylaws; disburse the funds of the Corporation in accordance with the directives of the Board of Directors, taking proper vouchers for such disbursements, and render to the Board of Directors, at its annual meeting and at such other times as may be requested by the Board of Directors, an accounting of all the transactions of the Treasurer and of the financial condition of the Corporation; and in general perform all duties incident to the office of Treasurer and such other duties as may from time to time be assigned to him or her by the President or by the Board of Directors.

Section 7.5 Secretary. The Secretary shall keep the minutes of the proceedings of the Board of Directors in one or more books provided for that purpose; see that all notices are duly given in accordance with the provisions of these Bylaws or as required by law; be custodian of the corporate records and of the seal, if any, of the Corporation and see that the seal is affixed to all documents, the execution of which is duly authorized on behalf of the Corporation under its seal; keep a register of the post office address of each member of the Board of Directors, which address shall be furnished to the Secretary by each director; and in general perform all duties incident to the office of Secretary and such other duties as may from time to time be assigned to him or her by the President or by the Board of Directors.

Section 7.6 Removal. Any member of the Board of Directors removed from office pursuant to Section 5.13 shall be automatically removed as an officer. The Board of Directors may by a two-thirds (2/3) vote remove any officer when, in its judgment, the best interests of the Corporation will be served thereby.

Section 7.7 Vacancies. A vacancy in any office, because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification, or otherwise, may be filled by the affirmative vote of a majority of the Board of Directors for the unexpired portion of the term.

Section 7.8 Resignation. An officer may resign his or her office at any time by tendering his or her resignation in writing to the President or, in the case of the resignation of the President, to the Secretary. A resignation shall become effective upon the date specified in such notice, or, if no date is specified, upon receipt of the resignation by the Corporation at its principal place of business.

Section 7.9 Salaries and Expenses. The officers of the Corporation shall not be entitled to receive compensation for services rendered to the Corporation in the person's capacity as an officer. Reasonable expenses incurred by all of the officers of the Board of Directors in the course of coordinating the affairs of the Corporation shall be reimbursed by the Corporation upon proper substantiation.

Section 7.10 Chief Executive Officer. In addition to the other officers described herein, the Corporation shall, at all times after approval of any initial public charter school application and during the operation of any such, or subsequently approved, public charter school, have a Chief Executive Officer, who shall be an employee of the Corporation, shall serve at the pleasure of the Board, shall report directly to the Board, and shall not be subject to the limitations set forth in Section 6.9 hereof. The Chief Executive Officer shall be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Corporation. The Chief Executive Officer shall perform such other duties as may from time to time be prescribed by the Board. The Chief Executive Officer shall be an ex-officio, non-voting member of the Board of Directors, as described within Section 5.4 hereof. At each meeting of the Board of Directors, the Chief Officer shall report to the Board on the operations of the Corporation for which he or she has direct responsibility.

ARTICLE VIII

COMMITTEES

Section 8.1 Standing Committees. The Board of Directors may maintain such standing committees as it may determine from time to time to be necessary or desirable for its proper functioning. Such committees shall consist of at least one (1) Director, and may include advisory members as contemplated by Section 5.3 hereof, as appointed by the President, shall be under the control and serve at the pleasure of the Board of Directors, shall have charge of such duties as may be assigned to them by the Board of Directors or these Bylaws, shall maintain a permanent record of their actions and proceedings, and shall regularly submit a report of their actions to the Board of Directors, which shall ratify the actions of each committee. The President shall

serve on each committee as a non-voting member, unless specifically designated by the Board as a voting member. Such standing committees shall have such authority as the Board of Directors may stipulate.

Section 8.2 Ad Hoc Committees. The President, with the approval of the Board of Directors as evidenced by resolution, may from time to time create such ad hoc committees as the President believes necessary or desirable to investigate matters or advise the Board of Directors. Ad hoc committees shall limit their activities to the accomplishment of the tasks for which created and shall have no power to act except as specifically conferred by resolution of the Board of Directors. Such committees shall operate until their tasks have been accomplished or until earlier discharged by the Board of Directors. Members of ad hoc committees do not need to be members of the Board of the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE IX

CONTRACTS, LOANS, CHECKS, DEPOSITS, INVESTMENTS

Section 9.1 Contracts and Employment of Agents. The Board of Directors may authorize any director, officer, or agent to enter into any contract, or execute and deliver any instrument, in the name of and on behalf of the Corporation. The Board of Directors shall be specifically authorized, in its sole discretion, to employ and to pay the compensation of such agents, accountants, custodians, experts, consultants and other counsel, legal, investment, or otherwise, as the Board of Directors shall deem advisable, and to delegate discretionary powers to, and rely upon information furnished by, such individuals or entities. Such authority may be general or confined to specific instances.

Section 9.2 Loans. No loans shall be contracted on behalf of the Corporation, and no evidences of indebtedness shall be issued in its name, unless authorized by a resolution of the Board of Directors. Such authority may be general or confined to specific instances.

Section 9.3 Checks, Drafts, etc. All checks, drafts, or other orders for the payment of money, notes, or other evidences of indebtedness issued in the name of the Corporation shall be signed by such officer or officers, agent or agents, of the Corporation, and in such manner, as shall from time to time be determined by resolution of the Board of Directors.

Section 9.4 Deposits. All funds of the Corporation not otherwise employed shall be deposited from time to time to the credit of the Corporation with such banks, trust companies, brokerage accounts, investment managers, or other depositories as the Board of Directors may from time to time select.

Section 9.5 Investment Authority. The Board of Directors shall be authorized to retain assets distributed to the Corporation, even though such assets may constitute an over-concentration in one or more similar investments. Further, the Board of Directors shall have the authority to make investments in unproductive property, or to hold unproductive property to the extent necessary until it can be converted into productive property at an appropriate time, provided the retention of such property is in the best interest of the Corporation and does not in any way jeopardize the tax-exempt status of the Corporation.

ARTICLE X

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

Section 10.1 Standards of Conduct. A director or an officer of the Corporation shall discharge his or her duties as a director or as an officer, including duties as a member of a committee:

- (a) In good faith;
- (b) With the care an ordinarily prudent person in a like position would exercise under similar circumstances; and
- (c) In a manner he or she reasonably believes to be in the best interest of the Corporation.

Section 10.2 Reliance on Third Parties. In discharging his or her duties, a director or officer is entitled to rely on information, opinions, reports, or statements, including financial statements and other financial data, if prepared or presented by:

- (a) One or more officers or employees of the Corporation whom the director or officer reasonably believes to be reliable and competent in the matters presented;
- (b) Legal counsel, public accountants, or other persons as to matters the director or officer reasonably believes are within the person's professional or expert competence; or

(c) With respect to a director, a committee of the Board of Directors of which the director is not a member, as to matters within its jurisdiction, if the director or officer reasonably believes the committee merits confidence.

Section 10.3 Bad Faith. A director or officer is not acting in good faith if he or she has knowledge concerning the matter in question that makes reliance otherwise permitted by Section 9.2 unwarranted.

Section 10.4 No Liability. A director or officer is not liable for any action taken, or any failure to take action, as a director or officer, if he or she performs the duties of his or her office in compliance with the provisions of this Article, or if he or she is immune from suit under the provisions of Section 48-58-601 of the Act. No repeal or modification of the provisions of this Section 9.4, either directly or by the adoption of a provision inconsistent with the provisions of this Section, shall adversely affect any right or protection, as set forth herein, existing in favor of a particular individual at the time of such repeal or modification.

Section 10.5 No Fiduciary. No director or officer shall be deemed to be a fiduciary with respect to the Corporation or with respect to any property held or administered by the Corporation, including, without limitation, property that may be subject to restrictions imposed by the donor or transferor of such property.

Section 10.6 Prohibition on Loans. No loans or guarantees shall be made by the Corporation to its directors or officers. Any director who assents to or participates in the making of any such loan shall be liable to the Corporation for the amount of such loan until the repayment thereof.

ARTICLE XI

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Section 11.1 Purpose. The purpose of the conflict of interest provisions is to protect the Corporation's interest when it is contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interest of an officer or director of the Corporation or might result in a possible excess benefit transaction. These provisions are intended to supplement but not replace any applicable state and federal laws governing conflict of interest applicable to nonprofit and charitable organizations.

Section 11.2 Definitions.

(a) **Interested Person.** Any director, principal officer, or member of a committee with governing board delegated powers, who has a direct or indirect financial interest, as defined below, is an interested person.

(b) **Financial Interest.** A person has a financial interest if the person has, directly or indirectly, through business, investment, or family:

1. An ownership or investment interest in any entity with which the Corporation has a transaction or arrangement,
2. A compensation arrangement with the Corporation or with any entity or individual with which the Corporation has a transaction or arrangement, or
3. A potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which the Corporation is negotiating a transaction or arrangement.

Compensation includes direct and indirect remuneration as well as gifts or favors that are not insubstantial.

Section 11.3 Procedures.

(a) **Duty to Disclose.** In connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest, an interested person must disclose the existence of the financial interest and be given the opportunity to disclose all material facts to the directors and members of committees with governing board delegated powers considering the proposed transaction or arrangement.

(b) **Determining Whether a Conflict of Interest Exists.** After disclosure of the financial interest and all material facts, and after any discussion with the interested person, he/she shall leave the Board of Directors or committee meeting while the determination of a conflict of interest is discussed and voted upon. The remaining board or committee members shall decide if a conflict of interest exists.

(c) **Procedures for Addressing the Conflict of Interest.**

1. An interested person may make a presentation at the Board of Director's or committee meeting, but after the presentation, he/she shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and the vote on, the transaction or arrangement involving the possible conflict of interest.

2. The Board of Directors or committee shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person or committee to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement.

3. After exercising due diligence, the Board of Directors or committee shall determine whether the Corporation can obtain with reasonable efforts a more advantageous transaction or arrangement from a person or entity that would not give rise to a conflict of interest.

(d) Manner of Approval. A transaction in which a director or officer of the Corporation has a conflict of interest may be approved if:

1. A more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably possible under circumstances not producing a conflict of interest, the Board of Directors or committee shall determine by a majority vote of the disinterested directors whether the transaction or arrangement is in the Corporation's best interest, for its own benefit, and whether it is fair and reasonable. In conformity with the above determination it shall make its decision as to whether to enter into the transaction or arrangement; or

2. Approval is obtained from the Attorney General of the State of Tennessee, or from a court of record having equity jurisdiction in an action in which the Attorney General is joined as a party.

(e) Violations of the Conflicts of Interest Policy.

1. If the Board of Directors or committee has reasonable cause to believe a person has failed to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest, it shall inform the person of the basis for such belief and afford the person an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose.

2. If, after hearing the person's response and after making further investigation as warranted by the circumstances, the Board of Directors or committee determines the member has failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action.

Section 11.4 Records of Proceedings. The minutes of the Board of Director's meetings and all committees with board delegated powers shall contain:

(a) The names of the persons who disclosed or otherwise were found to have a financial interest in connection with an actual or possible conflict of interest, the nature of the financial interest, any action taken to determine whether a conflict of interest was present, and the Board's or committee's decision as to whether a conflict of interest in fact existed.

(b) The names of the persons who were present for discussions and votes relating to the transaction or arrangement, the content of the discussion, including any alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement, and a record of any votes taken in connection with the proceedings.

Section 11.5 Compensation.

(a) A voting member Board of Directors who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the Corporation for services is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to that member's compensation.

(b) A voting member of any committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the Corporation for services is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to that member's compensation.

(c) No voting member of the governing board or any committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the Corporation, either individually or collectively, is prohibited from providing information to any committee regarding compensation.

ARTICLE XII

INDEMNIFICATION AND ADVANCEMENT OF EXPENSES

Section 12.1 Mandatory Indemnification of Directors and Officers. To the maximum extent permitted by the provisions of Sections 48-58-501, *et seq.*, of the Act, as amended from time to time (provided, however, that if an amendment to the Act in any way limits or restricts the indemnification rights permitted by law as of the date hereof, such amendment shall apply only to the extent mandated by law and only to activities of persons subject to indemnification under this Section which occur subsequent to the effective date of such amendment), the Corporation shall indemnify and advance expenses to any person who is or was a director or officer of the Corporation, or to such person's heirs, executors, administrators and legal representatives, for the defense of any threatened, pending, or completed action, suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative, and whether formal or informal (any such action, suit or proceeding being hereinafter referred to

as the “**Proceeding**”), to which such person was, is or is threatened to be made, a named defendant or respondent, which indemnification and advancement of expenses shall include counsel fees actually incurred as a result of the Proceeding or any appeal thereof, reasonable expenses actually incurred with respect to the Proceeding, all fines, judgments, penalties and amounts paid in settlement thereof, subject to the following conditions:

(a) The Proceeding was instituted by reason of the fact that such person is or was a director or officer of the Corporation; and

(b) The director or officer conducted himself or herself in good faith, and he or she reasonably believed (i) in the case of conduct in his or her official capacity with the Corporation, that his or her conduct was in its best interest; (ii) in all other cases, that his or her conduct was at least not opposed to the best interests of the Corporation; and (iii) in the case of any criminal proceeding, that he or she had no reasonable cause to believe his or her conduct was unlawful. The termination of a proceeding by judgment, order, settlement, conviction, or upon a plea of *nolo contendere* or its equivalent is not, of itself, determinative that the director or officer did not meet the standard of conduct herein described.

Section 12.2 Permissive Indemnification of Employees and Agents. The Corporation may, to the maximum extent permitted by the provisions of Section 48-58-501, *et seq.*, of the Act, as amended from time to time (provided, however, that if an amendment to the Act in any way limits or restricts the indemnification rights permitted by law as of the date hereof, such amendment shall apply only to the extent mandated by law and only to activities of persons subject to indemnification under this Section which occur subsequent to the effective date of such amendment), indemnify and advance expenses in a Proceeding to any person who is or was an employee or agent of the Corporation, or to such person’s heirs, executors, administrators and legal representatives, to the same extent as set forth in Section 11.1 above, provided that the Proceeding was instituted by reason of the fact that such person is or was an employee or agent of the Corporation and met the standards of conduct set forth in subsection 11.1(b) above. The Corporation may also indemnify and advance expenses in a Proceeding to any person who is or was an employee or agent of the Corporation to the extent, consistent with public policy, as may be provided by the Charter, by these Bylaws, by contract, or by general or specific action of the Board of Directors.

Section 12.3 Non-Exclusive Application. The rights to indemnification and advancement of expenses set forth in Sections 11.1 and 11.2 above are contractual between the Corporation and the person being indemnified, and his or her heirs, executors, administrators and legal representatives, and are not exclusive of other similar rights of indemnification or advancement of expenses to which such person may be entitled, whether by contract, by law, by the Charter, by a resolution of the Board of Directors, by these Bylaws, by the purchase and maintenance by the Corporation of insurance on behalf of a director, officer, employee, or agent of the Corporation, or by an agreement with the Corporation providing for such indemnification, all of which means of indemnification and advancement of expenses are hereby specifically authorized.

Section 12.4 Non-Limiting Application. The provisions of this Article XI shall not limit the power of the Corporation to pay or reimburse expenses incurred by a director, officer, employee, or agent of the Corporation in connection with such person’s appearing as a witness in a Proceeding at a time when he or she has not been made a named defendant or respondent to the Proceeding.

Section 12.5 Prohibited Indemnification. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Article XI, the Corporation shall not indemnify or advance expenses to or on behalf of any director, officer, employee, or agent of the Corporation, or such person’s heirs, executors, administrators or legal representatives:

(a) If a judgment or other final adjudication adverse to such person establishes his or her liability for any breach of the duty of loyalty to the Corporation, for acts or omissions not in good faith or which involve intentional misconduct or a knowing violation of law, or under Section 48-58-304 of the Act; or

(b) In connection with a Proceeding by or in the right of the Corporation in which such person was adjudged liable to the Corporation; or

(c) In connection with any other Proceeding charging improper personal benefit to such person, whether or not involving action in his or her official capacity, in which he or she was adjudged liable on the basis that personal benefit was improperly received by him or her.

Section 12.6 Repeal or Modification Not Retroactive. No repeal or modification of the provisions of this Article XI, either directly or by the adoption of a provision inconsistent with the provisions of this Article, shall adversely affect any right or protection, as set forth herein, existing in favor of a particular individual at the time of such repeal or modification.

ARTICLE XIII

NOTICES AND WAIVER OF NOTICE

Section 13.1 Notices. The notices provided for in these Bylaws shall be communicated in person, by telephone, facsimile or email transmission, telegraph, teletype, or by mail or private carrier. Written notice is effective at the earliest of (a) receipt, (b) five (5) days after its deposit in the United States mail, if mailed correctly addressed and with first-class postage affixed thereon, (c) on the date shown on the return receipt, if sent by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested, and the receipt is signed by or on behalf of the addressee, (d) twenty (20) days after its deposit in the United States mail, if mailed correctly addressed, and with other than first-class, registered, or certified postage affixed, or (e) in the case of facsimile or e-mail transmission, when successfully sent to the email address or fax number shown on the records of the Corporation. Whenever any notice is required to be given to any director, officer, or committee member of the Corporation under the provisions of the Charter, these Bylaws, or the Act, a waiver thereof in writing signed by the person or persons entitled to such notice, whether before or after the time stated therein, shall be deemed equivalent to the giving of such notice.

ARTICLE XIV

FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the Corporation shall end on June 30th, or on such other date as may be fixed from time to time by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE XV

AMENDMENTS

These Bylaws and the Charter may be altered, amended, or repealed, and a new Charter or Bylaws adopted, upon the affirmative vote of two thirds (2/3) members of the Board of Directors at any annual or special meeting, except to the extent that such alteration, amendment, or repeal is inconsistent with Article XV hereof.

ARTICLE XVI

EXEMPT STATUS

The Corporation has been organized and will be operated exclusively for exempt purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Code and, as such, will be exempt from taxation under Section 501(a) of the Code. The Corporation intends to apply for recognition of its exempt status by filing Internal Revenue Service Form 1023 within the time prescribed under Section 508 of the Code and Treasury Regulation Section 1.508-1(a)(2). Any provision of these Bylaws or of the Charter which would in any manner adversely affect the Corporation's tax exempt status shall be void and shall be deleted or modified as necessary to comply with all applicable federal and state requirements for the maintenance of the Corporation's tax exempt status.

ATTACHMENT 3C – COMPLAINT POLICY

VALOR COLLEGIATE ACADEMIES

COMPLAINT POLICY

I. ADOPTION AND INTRODUCTION

Any individual or group who believes a charter school has violated its charter, the Tennessee Charter Schools Act 2002, or any other law relating to the management or operation of the charter school, can bring a complaint to the charter school's board of trustees (the "charter school's board"). If the individual making the complaint, after presenting the complaint to the charter school's board, is unsatisfied with the charter school's board's response, then he or she has the right to present the complaint to the entity which authorized the charter school: The Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) Board of Education, as the Charter Authorizer, upon being presented with a complaint, has the right to issue remedial orders when appropriate and necessary. As such, the MNPS will both receive and review complaints on behalf of its Board of Education, and make determinations and issue appropriate remedial orders.

In compliance with the Charter Schools Act of 2002, Valor Collegiate Academies (VCA) hereby adopts this Complaint Policy ("Policy").

II. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

Governance of a charter school is the sole province of the school's Board of Directors. The MNPS, on behalf of the MNPS Board of Education cannot undertake the review of a complaint until the complainant has presented his or her complaint to the Valor Collegiate Academies Board of Directors, that Board has had the opportunity to respond to the complaint, and the complainant has determined that it has not adequately addressed the complaint. All complaints must minimally include the following:

1. The specific nature of the complaint;
2. Any employee, officer, representative, volunteer or other individual, or group of individuals involved in the nature of the complaint;
3. The date and time in which the nature of the complaint occurred;
4. Explicit reference to any applicable law or reference to the School's Charter that the complainant alleges violation of; and
5. The complainants requested resolution to the complaint.

In general, a group or individual should not file with the MNPS until after the VCA Board of Directors has acted on the complaint and provided a written response to the complainant and if the complaint alleges a violation of applicable law or VCA's Charter. VCA has established a process under which complaints must be reviewed by its Board of Directors. All school stakeholders have the right to be provided with a copy of that policy upon request.

III. COMPLAINT PROCESS

1. All interested parties for encouraged to find resolution to complaints by first verbally bringing such a complaint to the attention of the appropriate school personnel in order to seek immediate resolution.
2. All complaints must first be filed in writing with the Principal of the School. Such complaints must be filed at the school's principal location, the address for which is provided below:

Valor Collegiate Academies
Address to be determined

Nashville, TN

3. Individuals or groups who file a written complaint must allow the Chief Executive Officer of the School ten (10) business days to respond in writing to such a complaint before proceeding through the remainder of the process outlined herein.
4. If the complainant is not satisfied with the Chief Executive Officers response, or a response is not provided within ten (10) business days, the complaint shall be filed in writing to the Valor Collegiate Academies Board

of Directors at its principal business address, which is provided below:

Valor Collegiate Academies Board of Directors

Address to be determined

Nashville, TN

5. The Valor Collegiate Academies Board of Directors will respond to each complaint filed with it, following the process outlined herein, within 30 days. If the complainant is not satisfied with such a response, and is not alleging a violation of applicable law or the School's Charter, the complaint process ends due to the authority of the Board to address such complaints.
6. If the complainant either 1) does not receive a written response from the Valor Collegiate Academies Board of Directors within the timeframe identified above, or 2) is not satisfied with the written response of the Board and is alleging a violation of applicable law or the School's Charter, shall file the complaint with the School's authorizer, the MNPS on behalf of the MNPS Board of Education at the address listed below:

Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools

Attn: Office of Innovation

2601 Bransford Avenue

710 James Robinson Parkway

Nashville, TN 37204

ATTACHMENT 3D

FOUNDING BOARD OF DIRECTORS BIOGRAPHIES

Ms. Malika Anderson, Valor Collegiate Academies Board Director

Malika Anderson is the Chief Portfolio Officer of the Achievement School District (ASD), where she leads the authorization and start-up support of charter school operators and the assessment and accountability system for all ASD schools. Ms. Anderson has 15 years of strategy, leadership development, performance management and operational redesign experience. She has led and consulted organizations undergoing significant transformation efforts in education, social service, healthcare, and commercial fields. Prior to becoming the ASD's Chief Portfolio Officer, Ms. Anderson was the Director of School Turnaround for the District of Columbia Public Schools. In this role, she led school improvement planning and progress monitoring processes for all schools, and shaped the district's program management model for turning around low performing schools. In a previous role, Ms. Anderson facilitated leadership development for school leaders through a Principals' Academy and created the district's first leadership development academy for assistant principals. Ms. Anderson is an alumnus of the Broad Residency in Urban Education, earned her bachelor's degree in economics from Spelman College, and earned a master's degree in business administration from the Anderson Graduate School of Management at UCLA.

Ms. Danielle Austen, Valor Collegiate Academies Board Director

Danielle Austen is a founder and the Managing Partner, CEO of Team Ignition. Team Ignition is an advertising and marketing firm that acts as a single-source solution for its client-partners in developing communications plans for African American, Asian American, US Hispanic and LGBT consumers.

Prior to starting her own company, Danielle worked on the corporate and ad agency sides of marketing with both the general and multicultural markets. She has held several marketing and leadership positions working with strong brands including: Nissan North America, GlaxoSmithKline, Bombay Sapphire, Mercedes-Benz, Sony Electronics, Jaguar Cars and Nordstrom.

Danielle holds a Bachelor's degree from Emory University and a Master's degree from Northwestern University. She currently serves as an Executive Committee Member for the AAF's Mosaic Council and its Advertising Hall of Achievement. Danielle was born and raised in Chicago, but currently resides in Nashville, TN.

Ms. Katherine Cigarran, Valor Collegiate Academies Board Director

Katherine Cigarran, a Community Volunteer and proud mother of two, moved to Tennessee via New York and Colorado to happily make Nashville her home. With a background in Advertising, Promotions, and Sales, Katherine joined The Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee as a Donor Services Coordinator in 2002. Working with professionals, donors, and volunteers, she helped increase donor participation and raise support for a variety of charitable funds including The Women's Fund and The Tomorrow Fund. Since then she has Co-Chaired The AWA event for the YWCA, Co-chaired several school auctions, annual campaigns, and volunteered her time with numerous organizations. Currently her greatest interest is working to improve education for all and volunteers as a tutor with the Pencil Foundation.

Mr. Todd Dickson, Founder of Valor Collegiate Academies, Chief Executive Officer and Advisory Member of the Valor Collegiate Board of Directors

Mr. Dickson came to the field of education as a second career in 2000 after successfully building the Melton Group, a residential real estate company in Colorado, from 1995-2000. After attending Stanford for a Master's degree in education, he taught physics for five years at the nationally acclaimed public Hillside High School, the private International School of Lisbon, and Summit Preparatory Charter School (Summit Prep) before taking the role of Executive Director at Summit Prep.

Under his leadership, Summit Prep was named the #118 best public high school in America for the first time in 2008, and the #76 best public high school in 2009. In 2010, Summit Prep was named one of the top 10 Transformational Schools in the country by Newsweek (using comparative graduation rates, SAT scores, AP performance, and number of low-income students). 100% of Summit Prep's graduates exceed the entrance requirements for the University of California and California State University system and 96% of the four graduating classes have been accepted to at least one four year college, over three times the rate of similar students and high schools in California. For low-income students, Summit Prep sends almost eight times as many students to four year colleges as similar schools in California. Summit has been featured as an education solution in the nationally acclaimed documentary *Waiting for Superman*.

Mr. Dickson is a guest lecturer in the Stanford Education and Business schools, and an inaugural member of the Stanford Principal Fellow program. He has presented nationally on differentiation, teacher development, and school leadership.

Mr. Dickson holds a Bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering from the University of Denver where he was named the Colorado Engineering Student of the Year amongst all Colorado colleges. He was also was an All-American lacrosse player and team captain. In addition, he holds a Master's degree in Electrical Engineering from Cornell University.

When not thinking about how to transform public education, Mr. Dickson enjoys spending time with his wife of 12 years and their three young children, ages 5, 3, and 1. He also enjoys running, surfing, and watching all things Colorado sports. Mr. Dickson's full resume is provided below.

Ms. Sylvia M. Flowers, Valor Collegiate Academies Board Director

Sylvia Flowers currently serves as Executive Director of Educator Talent at the Tennessee Department of Education. In this role, she focuses on executing the state's strategy to improve recruitment and retention of effective teachers and manages a portfolio of strategic compensation pilot projects in approximately 18 districts in Tennessee. Previously, she served as Director of Technical Assistance at the State Collaborative on Reforming Education (SCORE), a nonprofit and non-partisan advocacy and research institution, founded by former U.S. Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist. Motivated to connect her personal passion with her leadership and management expertise, Sylvia joined the prestigious Broad Residency in Urban Education in 2004, a leadership development program that places qualified participants into high-level managerial positions in urban school districts and CMOs to help strengthen and transform public schools. Before joining the movement to improve public education, Sylvia spent approximately eight years in the private sector, working as a chemical engineer at Monsanto and as a finance professional at Duke Energy. A native of St. Louis, Sylvia holds a B.S. in Chemical Engineering from the University of Missouri-Columbia and an M.B.A. from the Darden School of Business at the University of Virginia. Ms. Flowers full resume is provided below.

Mr. Dave Goetz, Valor Collegiate Academies Board Director

Dave Goetz currently is Vice President, State Government Solutions for Optum Government Solutions. In that role he works with state government clients to define needs and solutions around managing health care.

From 2003 through 2010, Mr. Goetz served as Commissioner of Finance and Administration and in that role was the chief fiscal officer and administrative official for the State of Tennessee. The Department of Finance and Administration is responsible for preparing and executing the spending authorized by the state budget each year. It also oversees the state's information infrastructure, accounts payable, payroll, contracting and capital building projects. In that role, he was also responsible for the state's Medicaid program, TennCare, as well as the state employee health plan and a member of several state financial oversight boards.

Prior to entering State Government, Mr. Goetz served as President of the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce & Industry, formerly the Tennessee Association of Business. From 1990 to 1996, he served as Executive Director of the Tennessee Business Roundtable, a Nashville-based association of business executives. From 1988 to 1990 he was Director of Government Affairs for the Tennessee Association of Business. Before that, he was the chief political reporter for WTVF-TV in Nashville. He has been a member of the Vestry of Christ Church Cathedral, and also served two terms on the Board of the Tennessee Hospital Association. A Nashville native, he is a graduate of Montgomery Bell Academy and received his Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Virginia at Charlottesville. Goetz and his wife Katy have two children.

Mr. Bob Hannon, Esq., Valor Collegiate Academies Board Director

Mr. Bob Hannon is a partner with Bradley Arant Boult Cummings, LLP, who specializes in representing commercial banks in connection with a wide range of commercial finance transactions. Mr. Hannon received his B.A. from Vanderbilt University in 1993 with a major in English and minor in Business Administration and his J.D. from Vanderbilt University in 1998. In between undergraduate and law school, he taught 5th and 6th grades at Barnard Elementary School in the Washington, D.C. public school system through Teach for America. Mr. Hannon has served on both the McNeilly Center for Children's board (where at different times he served as Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary and Chair of the McNeilly in May fundraising event) and the Belcourt Theatre's board (where he served as Chair of Membership Committee). He is married to Lloyd Hannon (who is currently finishing her Masters in Library Science from the University of Tennessee and plans to become a school librarian) and is the father of Murray Hannon (a 13 year old girl who attended Eakin Elementary and West End Middle School and is now an 8th grader at Harpeth Hall) and Ivey Hannon (an 11 year old boy who attended Eakin Elementary and West End Middle School and is now a 6th grader at Meigs Magnet Middle School).

Mr. Tom Hooper, Valor Collegiate Academies Board Director

As Vice President of Jones, Lang, and LaSalle, Mr. Hooper provides local leadership and with his partner, Bo Tyler oversees the Middle and East Tennessee region. With over ten years of diversified experience in general brokerage, tenant representation and agency representation, Mr. Hooper has a broad understanding of the important principles that must be incorporated into successful transactions. His work ethic, market knowledge and attention to detail provide savings to his clients in terms of time and money expended on every project.

In 2005, Mr. Hooper was named a "Rising Star" in the Commercial Real Estate Industry by the *Nashville Business Journal* (NBJ). He earned his CCIM designation in 2006, and in 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011 was named a "Heavy Hitter" in the NBJ's list of office brokers. In 2009, Mr. Hooper was named a Commercial Real Estate MVP by the NBJ. The Nashville Post named him to their "CRE Top 50" in 2010, 2011, and 2012. CoStar Group, Inc. named Mr. Hooper as one of their Nashville Power Brokers five times.

Mr. Hooper has worked with many companies and Landlords in the Nashville area, such as, TBWA/Chiat Day, Baird, the National MS Society, NaviHealth, My Patient Credit, HealthTeacher, Hearing Planet, Amstar Group and DZL Management.

Mr. Hooper is a native of Brownsville, TN and graduated from Washington and Lee University in Lexington, VA. Upon graduation from college, he joined the Tennessee Republican Party, serving as campaign manager for a State Senate race and then as Deputy Political Director. He and wife Collins have three young daughters.

MEMBERSHIPS, RECOGNITION & COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

Current:

Chairman, West End United Methodist Church Board of Trustees
Member, NAIOP Gov't. Affairs Committee
NBJ 2011 Office Broker Heavy Hitter
Nashville Downtown Rotary

Past:

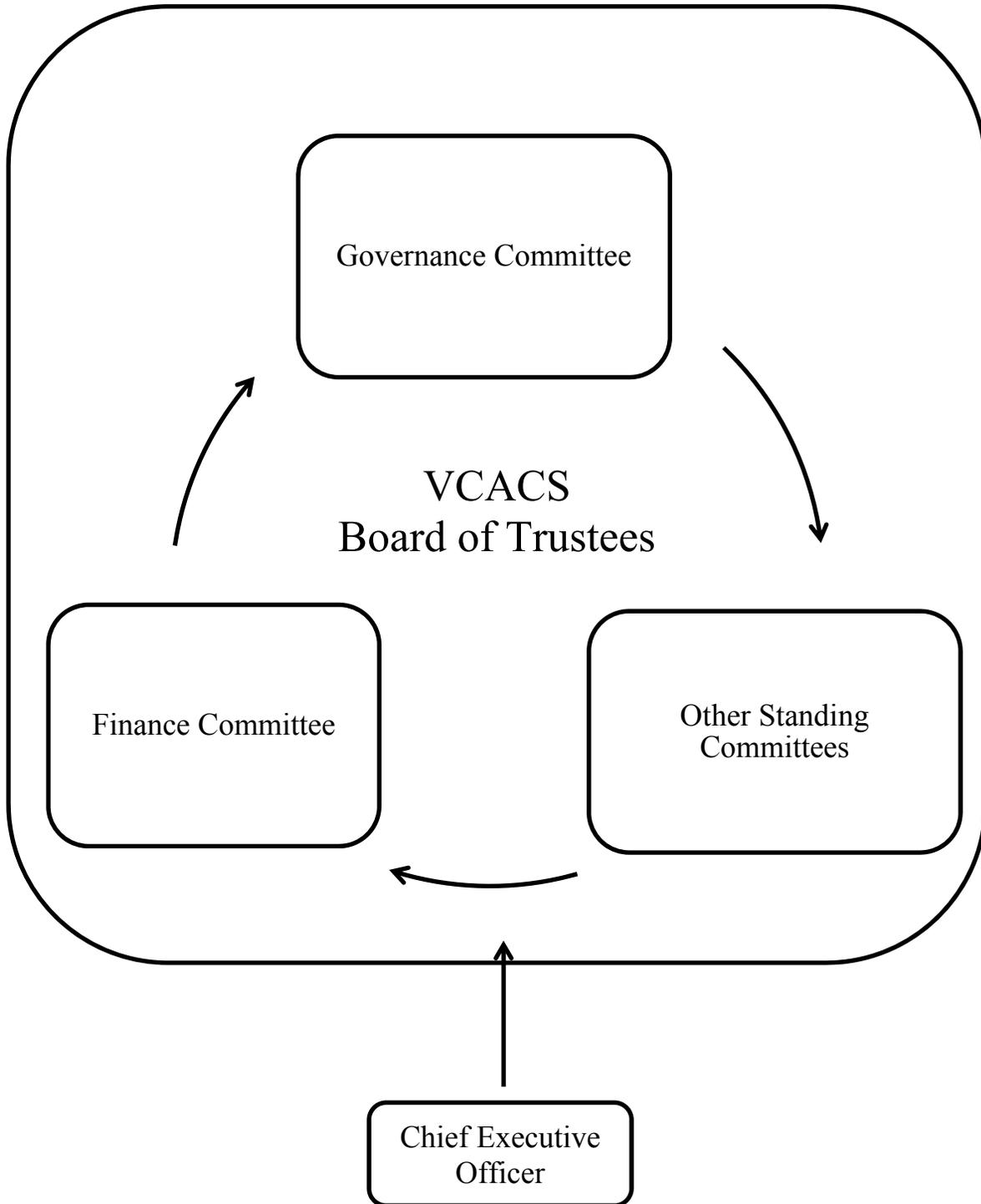
Chairman, 2005-06, Delta Waterfowl Dinner
President, 2006, Washington and Lee Alumni
Board Member, Rooftop
Board Member, First Steps, Inc.
Volunteer, Boy Scouts of America

Ms. Margaret Keith Meacham, Valor Collegiate Academies Board Director

Ms. Keith Meacham has an extensive background in education, consulting and fundraising/development efforts. She is currently an Education and Marketing Consultant for Homer Learning where he advises technology start-up organizations with marketing, social media and website design. She previously served as a Senior Consultant for Student Achievement Partners in New York City and an Independent Consultant advising the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation on strategic technology efforts. Ms. Meacham also led private fundraising efforts to seed reform projects within the New York City Department of Education as the Director of The Fund for Public Schools.

Ms. Meacham is also familiar with charter school leadership challenges as a result of serving as the Director of Operations and Development, and later Interim Executive Director, at the Harlem Prep Charter School. Early in her career he served as an English and French teacher. Ms. Meacham holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in English *magna cum laude* from the University of Virginia and a Master of Arts Degree in Educational Leadership from Columbia University's Teachers College.

ATTACHMENT 3F
GOVERNANCE ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



The governance structure employed by Valor Collegiate Academy (VCA) is intended to support the Board of Directors' belief that its main duty is to ensure financial stability of the organization and to be stewards of the school's mission and vision. To that end, the diagram above illustrates how the Board will ensure the school meets its mission and the rigorous academic goals contained in its charter application, remain financial sound and in operate in compliance with applicable law. As outlined in the VCA By-Laws, the following standing committees will be utilized in order for the board to best meets its roles and responsibilities:

- A. Governance Committee: Chaired by the President of the VCA Board of Directors, the primary responsibilities of the Governance Committee include, but are not limited to providing overall leadership for the board and its annual strategic activities, drafting the annual performance evaluation of the Chief Executive Officer for the consideration of the full board and manage communication on behalf of the board.

- B. Finance Committee: Chaired by the Treasurer of the VCA Board of Directors, the primary responsibilities of the Finance Committee include, but are not limited to the oversight of the annual budgeting process, development of financial policies and oversight of the annual audit.
- C. Other Standing Committee: At its discretion, the board may add additional standing committees in order to carry out its overall responsibilities and obligations. Examples of standing committees that may be established Governance, Fundraising/Development, External Relation and Facilities.

As the VCA By-Laws indicate, the board may delegate any of its authority to a respective committee, with the exception of the following: the election of directors; filling vacancies on the board or any committee; the amendment or repeal of By-Laws, or adoption of new By-Laws; and the appointment of new committee or members of committees.

The governance philosophy of the VCA Board of Directors is clear and includes a belief that it should not dictate the processes that the Chief Executive Officer and leadership team choose to use to achieve the mission of the school. In this respect, however, a core responsibility of the board will be the annual evaluation of the Chief Executive Officer. The Chief Executive Officer will then be responsible for the oversight of the school organization, either directly or indirectly through the leadership team. Additional information about process by which the board will use to evaluate the Chief Executive Officer can be found in the governance responses within the application.

ATTACHMENT 3G

VALOR COLLEGIATE ACADEMIES

OPEN MEETINGS AND PUBLIC RECORDS POLICY

I. ADOPTION AND INTRODUCTION

The Tennessee Open Meetings Act declared it to be the policy of the state that the formation of public policy and decisions shall not be conducted in secret. Because the Valor Collegiate Academies (VCA) will make public decisions, meetings of its Board of Directors and its records, as appropriate, will comply with Tennessee Code Annotated § 49-13-105 and 111.

II. OPEN MEETINGS DEFINED

"Meeting" means the convening of the VCA Board of Directors for which a quorum is required in order to make a decision or to deliberate toward a decision on any matter. "Meeting" does not include any on-site inspection of any project or program.

Nothing in this policy shall be construed as to require a chance meeting of two (2) or more members of the VCA Board of Directors to be considered a public meeting. No such chance meetings, informal assemblages, or electronic communication shall be used to decide or deliberate public business in circumvention of the spirit or requirements of this part.

III. NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETINGS

Notice of Regular Meetings: Any regular meeting of the VCA Board of Directors will be posted not less than five (5) business days prior to its commencement at the principal business location of the VCA Board of Directors and on the VCA website.

Notice of Special Meetings: Any special meeting of the VCA Board of Directors not scheduled by statute, ordinance or resolution, or for which notice is not already provided by law will be posted not less than twenty-four (24) hours prior to its commencement at the principal business location of the VCA Board of Directors and on the VCA website.

Notices of Regular and Special Meetings will minimally include the following: date of the meeting, time of the meeting, location of the meeting, purpose of the meeting and instructions on how to inspect public records that result from the meeting.

The notice requirements of this part are in addition to, and not in substitution of, any other notice required by law.

IV. MEETING MINUTES

The minutes of a meeting of the VCA Board of Directors will be promptly and fully recorded, and be open to public inspection, and shall include, but not be limited to, a record of persons present, all motions, proposals and resolutions offered, the results of any votes taken, and a record of individual votes in the event of roll call. The minutes of any meeting will be available for public inspection not less than fifteen (15) business days following their approval by the VCA Board of Directors.

All votes of any such meeting of the VCA Board of Directors will be by public vote or public ballot or public roll call. No secret votes, or secret ballots, or secret roll calls will be allowed. A "public vote" is defined for the purposes of this policy as the "aye" faction vocally expresses its will in unison and in which the "nay" faction, subsequently, vocally expresses its will in unison.

Any action taken at a meeting in violation of this policy shall be void and of no effect; provided, that this nullification of actions taken at such meetings shall not apply to any commitment, otherwise legal, affecting the public debt of the entity concerned.

V. PARTICIPATION IN OPEN MEETINGS BY ELECTRONIC AND OTHER MEANS

The VCA Board of Directors may, but is not required to, allow participation by electronic or other means of communication for the benefit of the public and the VCA Board of Directors in connection with any meeting authorized by law; provided, that a physical quorum is present at the location specified in the notice of the meeting as the location of the meeting.

If a physical quorum is not present at the location of a meeting of the VCA Board of Directors, then in order for a quorum of members to participate by electronic or other means of communication, the VCA Board of Directors must make a determination that a necessity exists. Such determination, and a recitation of the facts and circumstances on which it was based, will be included in the minutes of the meeting.

"Necessity" means that the matters to be considered by the VCA Board of Directors at that meeting require timely action by the body, the physical presence by a quorum of the members is not practical within the period of time requiring action, and that participation by a quorum of the members by electronic or other means of communication is therefore necessary.

VI. ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

The VCA Board of Directors can, but is not required to, allow electronic communication between members by means of a forum over the Internet only if the Board:

- (1) Makes sure the forum through which the electronic communication is conducted is available to the public at all times other than that necessary for technical maintenance or unforeseen technical limitations;
- (2) Provides adequate public notice of the Board's intended use of such electronic communication forum;
- (3) Controls who may communicate through the forum;
- (4) Controls the archiving of the electronic communications to ensure that the electronic communications are publicly available for at least one (1) year after the date of the communication; provided, that access to the archived electronic communications is user-friendly for the public; and
- (5) Provides reasonable access for members of the public to view the forum at the local public library, the building where the governing body meets, or other public building.

Electronic communications posted to a forum shall not substitute for decision making by the VCA Board of Directors in a meeting held in accordance with this policy. Communications between members of the VCA Board posted to a forum complying with this policy shall be deemed to be in compliance with the open meetings laws. Prior to the VCA Board of Directors initially utilizing a forum to allow electronic communications by its members which meets the requirements of applicable law, the VCA Board of Directors shall file an appropriate plan with the office of open records counsel.

ATTACHMENT 3H – DRAFT Employment Handbook

INTRODUCTION TO HANDBOOK

This Handbook is designed to help employees get acquainted with Valor Collegiate Academies (hereinafter referred to as “VCA” or “School”). It explains some of our philosophies and beliefs, and describes in general terms, some of our employment guidelines. Although this Handbook is not intended to be an official policies and procedures manual, we hope that it will serve as a useful reference document for employees throughout their employment at the School. Employees should understand, however, that this Handbook is not intended to be a contract (express or implied), nor is it intended to otherwise create any legally enforceable obligations on the part of the School or its employees. In no way does the Handbook replace the official plan documents (i.e., health insurance, retirement plan, etc.) or insurance contracts, which will govern in all cases. This Handbook supersedes and replaces all previous personnel practices, and guidelines.

Because the School is a growing and changing organization, it reserves full discretion to add to, modify, or delete provisions of this Handbook, or procedures on which they may be based, at any time without advance notice. The School also reserves the right to interpret any of the provisions set forth in this Handbook in any manner it deems appropriate.

No individual other than the Chief Executive Officer or Chair of the Board of Directors has the authority to enter into any employment or other agreement that modifies the guidelines and practices outlined in this Handbook. Any such modification *must* be in writing.

This Handbook is the property of the School, and it is intended for personal use and reference by employees of the School.

Employees should sign the acknowledgment form at the back of this Handbook, tear it out, and return it to the Personnel Manager. This will provide the School with a record that each employee has received this Handbook.

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

Equal Employment Opportunity Is Our Policy

VCA is an equal opportunity employer. It is the policy of VCA to afford equal employment and advancement opportunity to all qualified individuals without regard to race, creed, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, age, physical or mental disability, marital status, citizenship status, medical condition, or any other legally protected status. This policy extends to all employees and to all aspects of the employment relationship, including the hiring of new employees and the training, transfer, promotion, compensation and benefits of existing employees.

To comply with applicable laws ensuring equal employment opportunities to qualified individuals with a disability, VCA will make reasonable accommodations for the known physical or mental limitations of an otherwise qualified individual with a disability who is an applicant or an employee unless undue hardship would result.

Any applicant or employee who requires an accommodation in order to perform the essential functions of the job should contact a VCA representative with day-to-day personnel responsibilities and request such an accommodation. The individual with the disability should specify what accommodation he or she needs to perform the job. VCA then will conduct an investigation to identify the barriers that interfere with the equal opportunity of the applicant or employee to perform his or her job. VCA will identify possible accommodations, if any, that will help eliminate the limitation. If the accommodation is reasonable and will not impose an undue hardship, VCA will make the accommodation.

Employment At Will Policy

Except if stated expressly otherwise by employment contract, it is the policy of VCA that all employees are employed at the will of School for an indefinite period. Accordingly, either VCA or the employee can terminate this relationship at any time, for any reason, without cause, and with or without notice.

Nothing contained in this Handbook, employment applications, VCA memoranda or other materials provided to employees in connection with their employment shall require VCA to have “cause” to terminate an employee or otherwise restrict VCA right to terminate an employee at any time for any reason. Statements of specific grounds for termination set forth in this Handbook or elsewhere are not all-inclusive and are not intended to restrict VCA’s right to terminate at will. Other than the Chief Executive Officer or Chair of the Board of Directors or designee, no VCA representative is authorized to modify this policy for any employee.

No VCA representative is authorized to modify this policy for any employee or to make any representations to employees or applicants concerning the terms or conditions of employment with VCA that are not consistent with VCA policy on “at will” employment.

Policy Against Harassment

All employees should be able to work in an atmosphere free of sexual harassment. VCA will not condone or tolerate harassment of any type by any employee. This policy applies to all employee actions and relationships, regardless of position or gender. VCA will promptly and thoroughly investigate any complaint of harassment and take appropriate corrective action, if warranted.

Verbal or physical conduct of a nature constitute harassment when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment.
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for personnel decisions, including but not limited to appraisals, promotion, salary increases, and termination.
3. Such behavior has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's performance on the job or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

Management, ultimately the Chief Executive Officer, has the responsibility to maintain a work place free from any form of harassment. Consequently, should a manager or department head become aware of any conduct which may constitute harassment or other prohibited behavior, immediate action should be taken to address such conduct.

Employees are expected to act in a positive and professional manner and to contribute to a productive work environment that is free from harassing or disruptive activity.

While in most situations a personal relationship is a private matter, these relationships are not appropriate in a professional setting, particularly where one of the parties has management or leadership responsibilities.

Any employee who has experienced or is aware of a situation, which is believed to be harassing, has a responsibility to report the situation immediately to the individual's manager and/or to the Chief Executive Officer, or his designee. A Harassment Complaint Form may be obtained from the office. The Chief Executive Officer and the individual's manager will conduct an immediate investigation into the allegation(s) and determine whether the allegations have merit. A written report, including findings related to the allegations, will be completed. In all cases, when the allegation(s) is determined to be valid, appropriate remedial action will be taken immediately and may include disciplinary action up to and including termination.

If the alleged harassment involves the employee's manager or department head, or if the employee is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, the employee should bring the matter to the attention of VCA The Board of Directors.

All complaints of harassment will be investigated promptly, objectively and as-confidentially as possible. Employees are required to cooperate in any investigation. Retaliation against any employee for filing a complaint or participating in an investigation is strictly prohibited and shall be cause for termination.

All matters regarding the investigation will be treated with confidentiality and on a need-to-know basis.

Drug-Free Workplace

VCA is committed to providing a drug- and alcohol-free workplace and to promoting safety in the workplace, employee health and well-being, customer confidence and a work environment that is conducive to attaining high work standards. The use of drugs and alcohol by employees jeopardizes these goals, since it adversely affects health and safety, security, productivity, and public confidence and trust.

The bringing to the work place, possession or use of intoxicating beverages or drugs on any VCA premises is prohibited and will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Attendance and Tardiness

If you find it necessary to be absent or late, you are expected to email the faculty including the direct manager and Chief Executive Officer the evening prior or at the very latest one-hour before school starts. If you are absent from work longer than one day, you are expected to keep your supervisor sufficiently informed of your situation.

As noted in the section of this Handbook concerning prohibited conduct, excessive or unexcused absences or tardiness may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. Absence for more than (3) consecutive days without notifying the manager and Chief Executive Officer will be considered a voluntary resignation from employment.

Use of E-Mail, Voicemail and Internet Access

VCA will permit employees to use its electronic mail, voicemail systems and Internet access subject to the following:

1. Minimal personal use as long as it does not interfere with timely job performance and is consistent with law and appropriate protocols.
2. The E-mail system and Internet access is not to be used in any way that may be disruptive, offensive to others, or harmful to morale. For example, sexually explicit images, ethnic slurs, racial epithets, or anything else that may be construed as harassment or disparagement of others based on their race, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, religious beliefs or political beliefs may not be displayed or transmitted.
3. Employees should not attempt to gain access to another employee's personal file of E-mail or voicemail messages without the latter's express permission.
4. VCA staff will not enter an employee's personal E-mail files or voicemail unless there is a business need to do so. VCA retains a copy of all passwords; passwords unknown to VCA may not be used. System security features, including passwords and delete functions, do not neutralize VCA's ability to access any message at any time. Employees must be aware that the possibility of such access always exists.

Personal Business

VCA's facilities for handling mail and telephone calls are designed to accommodate VCA business. Please have your personal mail directed to your home address and limit personal telephone calls to an absolute minimum. Personal calls should not be made outside your immediate dialing area. Do not use VCA material, time or equipment for personal projects.

Conflict of Interest

All employees must avoid situations involving actual or potential conflict of interest.

An employee involved in any relationships or situations which may constitute a conflict of interest should immediately and fully disclose the relevant circumstances to his or her immediate supervisor, or the board of directors, for a determination about whether a potential or actual conflict exists. If an actual or potential conflict is determined, the School may take whatever corrective action appears appropriate according to the circumstances. Failure to disclose facts shall constitute grounds for disciplinary action.

Personal Appearance

Employees are expected to wear clothing appropriate for the nature of our business and the type of work performed. Because each employee is a representative of VCA in the eyes of the public, each employee must report to work properly groomed, wearing appropriate clothing and maintaining a professional appearance.

Smoking

All VCA buildings, activities and facilities are no-smoking facilities.

THE WORKPLACE

Health and Safety Policy

The School is committed to providing and maintaining a healthy and safe work environment for all employees.

You are required to know and comply with the School's General Safety Rules and to follow safe and healthy work practices at all times. You are required to report immediately to the Chief Executive Officer any potential health or safety hazards, and all injuries or accidents.

Security Protocols

VCA has developed guidelines to help maintain a secure workplace. Be aware of unknown persons loitering in parking areas, walkways, entrances and exits and service areas. Report any suspicious persons or activities to your manager or department head. Secure your desk or office at the end of the day. When called away from your work area for an extended length of time, do not leave valuable or personal articles around your work station that may be accessible. You should immediately notify your supervisor when keys are missing or if security access codes have been breached.

Occupational Safety

VCA is committed to the safety of its employees, students, parents, vendors, contractors and the public.

The prevention of accidents is the responsibility of every VCA employee. It is also the duty of all employees to accept and promote the established safety regulations and procedures. Every effort will be made to provide adequate safety training. If an employee is ever in doubt how to perform a job or task safely, assistance should be requested. Unsafe conditions must be reported immediately.

It is the policy of VCA that accident prevention shall be considered of primary importance in all phases of operation and administration. Failure to comply with or enforce VCA safety and health rules, practices and procedures could result in disciplinary action up to and including possible termination.

EMPLOYEE WAGES AND HEALTH BENEFITS

Payroll Withholdings

VCA is required by law to withhold Federal Income Tax, State Income Tax, Social Security (FICA) and State Disability Insurance from each employee's pay as follows:

1. Federal Income Tax Withholding: The amount varies with the number of exemptions the employee claims and, of course, the gross pay amount.
3. Social Security (FICA): The Federal Insurance Contribution Act requires that a certain percentage of employee earnings be deducted and forwarded to the federal government, together with an equal amount contributed by VCA.
4. State Disability Insurance (SDI): This state fund is used to provide benefits to those out of work because of illness or disability.

Every deduction from your paycheck is explained on your check voucher. If you do not understand the deductions, ask the Personnel Manager to explain them to you.

You may change the number of withholding allowances you wish to claim for Federal Income Tax purposes at any time by filling out a new W-4 form and submitting it to the Personnel Manager. The office maintains a supply of these forms.

All Federal, State, and Social Security taxes will be automatically deducted from paychecks. Federal Withholding Tax deduction is determined by the employee's W-4 form. The W-4 form should be completed upon hire and it is the employee's responsibility to report any changes in filing status to the Personnel Manager and to fill out a new W-4 form.

At the end of the calendar year, a "withholding statement" (W-2) will be prepared and forwarded to each employee for use in connection with preparation of income tax returns. The W-2 shows Social Security information, taxes withheld and total wages.

Overtime Pay

Whether an employee is exempt from or subject to overtime pay will be determined on a case-by-case basis and will be indicated in the employee's job description. Generally, teachers and administrators are exempt. Non-exempt employees may be required to work beyond the regularly scheduled workday or workweek as necessary. Only actual hours worked in a given workday or workweek can apply in calculating overtime for non-exempt employees. VCA will attempt to distribute overtime work load evenly and accommodate individual schedules. All overtime work must be previously authorized by your supervisor. VCA provides compensation for all overtime hours worked by non-exempt employees in accordance with state and federal law. (This explanation of how overtime works is not specific enough, so do not include it as part of the handbook. Have another more complete form available for those employees that are non-exempt)

Exempt employees may have to work hours beyond their normal schedules as work demands require. No overtime compensation will be paid to these exempt employees.

Paydays

Paydays are scheduled on the last working day of each month. If you observe any error in your check, please report it immediately to the Personnel Manager.

Wage Attachments and Garnishments

Under normal circumstances, VCA will not assist creditors in the collection of personal debts from its employees. However, creditors may resort to certain legal procedures such as garnishments, levies or judgments that require VCA, by law, to withhold part of your earnings in their favor.

Medical Benefits

Eligibility

You are eligible for medical coverage if you are a full-time regular employee working for VCA or if you are a part time employee who works a minimum of twenty-five (25) hours per week. Temporary, and internship employees are not eligible to participate in the plans.

Employees who go from part-time to full-time employment become eligible for full benefits on the first day of the month following the effective date of the change.

The VCA plan covers employee, domestic partner and dependant coverage up to total of 75% of total costs per month per employee.

When Coverage Starts

Your coverage will begin on the first day of employment or if hired mid-month it will start on the first day of the next month. Your enrollment form must be submitted to the Personnel Manager as soon as possible. This form serves as a request for coverage, and authorizes any payroll deductions necessary to pay for your coverage.

COBRA Benefits

Continuation of Medical and Dental

WHEN COVERAGE UNDER ANY OF SPCHS'S HEALTH PLANS ENDS, YOU OR YOUR DEPENDENTS MAY CONTINUE COVERAGE IN SOME SITUATIONS.

When your coverage under VCA's medical and/or dental plans ends, you or your dependents can continue coverage for 18 or 36 months, depending upon the reason benefits ended. To continue coverage, you must pay the full cost of coverage - your contribution and SPCHS's previous contribution plus a possible administrative charge.

Medical coverage for you, your spouse and your eligible dependent children can continue for up to 18 months if coverage ends because:

- Your employment ends, voluntarily or involuntarily, for any reason other than gross misconduct; or
- Your hours of employment are reduced below the amount required to be considered a full-time employee or part-time, making you ineligible for the plan.

This 18-month period may be extended an additional 11 months if you are disabled at the time of your termination or reduction in hours if you meet certain requirements. This 18-month period also may be extended if other events (such as a divorce or death) occur during the 18-month period.

Your spouse and eligible dependents can continue their health coverage for up to 36 months if coverage ends because:

- You die while covered by the plan;

- You and your spouse become divorced or legally separated;
- You become eligible for Medicare coverage, but your spouse has not yet reach age 65; or
- Your dependent child reaches an age which makes him or her ineligible for coverage under the plan (age 19 or if a full-time student age 25).

Rights similar to those described above may apply to retirees, spouses and dependents if the employer commences a bankruptcy proceeding and those individuals lose coverage.

VCA will notify you or your dependants if coverage ends due to termination or a reduction in your work hours. If you become eligible for Medicare, divorced or legally separated, die, or when your child no longer meets the eligibility requirements, you or a family member are responsible for notifying VCA within 30 days of the event. VCA will then notify you or your dependents of your rights.

Health coverage continuation must be elected within 60 days after receiving notice of the end of coverage, or within 60 days after the event causing the loss, whichever is later.

There are certain circumstances under which coverage will end automatically. This happens if:

- Premiums for continued coverage are not paid within 30 days of the due date;
- You (or your spouse or child) become covered under another group health plan which does not contain any exclusion or limitation with respect to any pre-existing condition you (or your spouse or child, as applicable) may have;
- SPCHS stops providing group health benefits;
- You (or your spouse or child) become entitled to Medicare; or
- You extended coverage for up to 29-months due to disability and there has been a final determination that you are no longer disabled.

PERSONNEL EVALUATION AND RECORD KEEPING

Employee Reviews and Evaluations

All employees will be reviewed on an annual basis for performance beginning July 1st and concluding June 30th.

The Chief Executive Officer will be evaluated by the Board of Directors. All other employee will be evaluated by the Chief Executive Officer and/or his/her designee.

The Personalized Educator Plan (PEP) document will be used to communicate the official written evaluation.

For each employee who is eligible for an annual performance bonus, the awarding of his/her bonus will be based upon the written PEP evaluation.

Personnel Files and Record Keeping Protocols

At the time of your employment, a personnel file is established for you. Please keep your supervisor advised of changes that should be reflected in your personnel file. Such changes include: change in address, telephone number, marital status, number of dependents and person(s) to notify in case of emergency. Prompt notification of these changes is essential and will enable the School to contact you should the change affect your other records.

You have the right to inspect certain documents in your personnel file, as provided by law, in the presence of a VCA representative, at a mutually convenient time. You may add your comments to any disputed item in the file. VCA will restrict disclosure of your personnel file to authorized individuals within VCA. A request for information contained in the personnel file must be directed to your supervisor. Only the Director or designee is authorized to release information about current or former employees. Disclosure of information to outside sources will be limited. However, VCA will cooperate with requests from authorized law enforcement or local, state or federal agencies conducting official investigations or as otherwise legally required.

HOLIDAYS, VACATIONS AND LEAVES

Holidays

Non-exempt employees may receive the following annual paid holidays:

- New Year's Day
 - Martin Luther King, Jr., Birthday
 - President's Day
 - Memorial Day
 - July 4th
 - Labor Day
 - Thanksgiving
 - Friday After Thanksgiving
 - Day before and after Christmas
 - Christmas Day
- Other days during the school year such as days during the School's "Spring Break" shall be paid time for all non-exempt employees in active status.
 - Religious Holidays - Recognized religious holidays may be taken off by an employee whose religion requires observance of the particular day. Employees must request the day off in advance by written notice to the employee's supervisor.
 - When a holiday falls on Saturday, the preceding Friday will be celebrated as the holiday; if it falls on Sunday, the following Monday will be celebrated as the holiday. When Christmas falls on a Saturday, the Day before Christmas will be celebrated on Thursday. If Christmas falls on a Sunday or Monday, the day before Christmas will be celebrated on the preceding Friday.
 - Employees on any leave of absence do not earn holiday pay.

Personal Days

Regular full-time employees shall receive 2 paid personal days each year. Part-time employees will earn personal days on a pro-rated basis.

While the School recognizes the importance of personal time as a period of rest and rejuvenation away from the job, personal days must be scheduled with due consideration for "peak traffic periods" in the school.

Any personal time taken during the school year or otherwise should be coordinated and cleared by the Chief Executive Officer, subject to scheduling.

An employee whose employment terminates will not be paid for unused personal days. Personal days will not carry over from one year to the next.

Unpaid Leave of Absence

VCA recognizes that special situations may arise where an employee must leave his or her job temporarily. At its discretion, VCA may grant employees leaves of absence.

The granting of a leave of absence always presumes the employee will return to active work by a designated date or within a specific period.

If you are currently covered, medical, and dental coverage will remain in force during a medical or worker's compensation leave of absence, provided you pay the appropriate premiums. Whether you are required to pay your own premiums will depend upon the length of your leave of absence. During a family/medical leave, your medical and dental benefits will remain in force provided you pay the appropriate premiums. Benefits are terminated the day any other type of leave begins.

No personal days are accrued during any type of unpaid leave of absence.

Sick Leave

Sick leave is a form of insurance that employees accumulate in order to provide a cushion for incapacitation due to illness or injury. It is intended to be used only when actually required to recover from illness or injury; sick leave is not for "personal" absences. The School will not tolerate abuse or misuse of your sick leave privilege.

The School offers paid sick leave to regular full-time employees. You will receive paid sick leave at the rate of five (5) days allotted to each school year. Sick leave does not carry over from year to year and the School does not pay employees in lieu of unused sick leave.

If you are absent longer than three (3) days due to illness, medical evidence of your illness and/or medical certification of your fitness to return to work satisfactory to the School will be required before you can return to work and before the School honors any sick pay requests.

Once an employee has exhausted sick leave, the employee may continue on an unpaid medical leave depending upon the facts and circumstances of the employee's basis for leave beyond accrued sick leave.

Family Care and Medical Leave

VCA complies with the federal Family and Medical Leave Act ("FMLA") which requires VCA to permit each eligible employee to take up to 12 workweeks of FMLA leave in any 12-month period for the birth/adoption of a child, the employee's own serious illness or to care for certain family members who have a serious illness.

Pregnancy Disability Leave

This policy explains how VCA complies with the California Pregnancy Disability Act, which requires VCA to give each female employee an unpaid leave of absence of up to four (4) months, as needed, for the period(s) of time a woman is actually disabled by pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. The California Pregnancy Disability Act is more comprehensive than TN and VCA believes strongly in supporting employees considering having children and will therefore use the following guidelines:

- **Employee Eligibility Criteria**

To be eligible for pregnancy disability leave, the employee must be disabled by pregnancy, childbirth, or a related medical condition and must provide appropriate medical certification concerning the disability.

- **Events That May Entitle An Employee to Pregnancy Disability Leave**

The four-month pregnancy disability leave allowance includes any time taken (with or without pay) for any of the following reasons:

1. The employee is unable to work at all or is unable to perform any one or more of the essential functions of her job without undue risk to herself, the successful completion of her pregnancy, or to other persons because of pregnancy or childbirth, or because of any medically recognized physical or mental condition that is related to pregnancy or childbirth (including severe morning sickness); or
2. The employee needs to take time off for parental care.

- **Duration Of Pregnancy Disability Leave**

Pregnancy disability leave may be taken in one or more periods, but not to exceed four months total. "Four months" means the number of days the employee would normally work within four months. For a full-time employee, four months means 88 working and/or entitlement based on an average of 22 working days for four months.

Pregnancy disability leave does not count against the leave which may be available as Family Care and Medical Leave.

- **Pay During Pregnancy Disability Leave**

1. An employee on pregnancy disability leave must use all accrued paid sick leave at the beginning of any otherwise unpaid leave period.
2. The receipt of sick leave pay, or state disability insurance benefits will not extend the length of pregnancy disability leave.
3. Sick pay accrues during any period of unpaid pregnancy disability leave only until the end of the month in which the unpaid leave began.

- **Health Benefits**

The provisions of VCA various employee benefit plans govern continued eligibility during pregnancy disability leave and these provisions may change from time to time. When a request for pregnancy disability

leave is granted, SPCHS will give the employee written confirmation of the arrangements made for the payment of insurance premiums during the leave period.

- Seniority

An employee on pregnancy disability leave remains an employee of SPCHS and a leave will not constitute a break in service. When an employee returns from pregnancy disability leave, he or she will return with the same seniority he or she had when the leave commenced.

- Medical Certifications

1. An employee requesting a pregnancy disability leave must provide medical certification from her healthcare provider on a form supplied by VCA. Failure to provide the required certification in a timely manner (within fifteen (15) days of the leave request) may result in a denial of the leave request until such certification is provided.
2. Recertifications are required if leave is sought after expiration of the time estimated by the healthcare provider. Failure to submit required recertifications can result in termination of the leave.

- Requesting And Scheduling Pregnancy Disability Leave

1. An employee should request pregnancy disability leave by completing a Request for Leave form and submitting it to the Chief Executive Officer. An employee asking for a Request for Leave form will be referred to VCA's then current pregnancy disability leave policy.
2. Employee should provide not less than thirty (30) days or as long of notice as is practicable, if the need for the leave is foreseeable. Failure to provide such notice is grounds for denial of the leave request, except if the need for pregnancy disability leave was an emergency and was otherwise unforeseeable.
3. Where possible, employees must make a reasonable effort to schedule foreseeable planned medical treatments so as not to unduly disrupt VCA's operations.
4. Pregnancy disability leave may be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule when medically advisable, as determined by the employee's healthcare provider.
5. If an employee needs intermittent leave or leave on a reduced leave schedule that is foreseeable based on planned medical treatment, the employee may be transferred temporarily to an available alternative position for which he or she is qualified that has equivalent pay and benefits that better accommodates recurring periods of leave than the employee's regular position.
6. In most cases, VCA will respond to a pregnancy disability leave request within two (2) days of acquiring knowledge that the leave qualifies as pregnancy disability and, in any event, within ten (10) days of receiving the request. If a pregnancy disability leave request is granted, VCA will notify the employee in writing and leave will be counted against the employee's pregnancy disability leave entitlement. This notice will explain the employee's obligations and the consequences of failing to satisfy them.

- Return To Work

1. Upon timely return at the expiration of the pregnancy disability leave period, an employee is entitled to the same position unless the employee would not otherwise have been employed in the same position (at the time reinstatement is requested). If the employee is not reinstated to the same position, she must be reinstated to a comparable position unless there is no comparable position available, but filling that position with the returning employee would substantially undermine VCA's ability to operate the business safely and efficiently. A "comparable" position is a position that involves the same or similar duties and responsibilities and is virtually identical to the employee's original position in terms of pay, benefits, and working conditions.
2. When a request for pregnancy disability leave is granted to an employee, VCA will give the employee a written guarantee of reinstatement at the end of the leave (with the limitations explained above).
3. Before an employee will be permitted to return from a pregnancy disability leave of three days or more, the employee must obtain a certification from her healthcare provider that she is able to resume work.

4. If the employee can return to work with limitations, VCA will evaluate those limitations and, if possible, will accommodate the employee as required by law. If accommodation cannot be made, the employee will be medically separated from VCA.

- Employment During Leave

An employee on pregnancy disability leave may not accept employment with any other employer without VCA's written permission. An employee who accepts such employment will be deemed to have resigned from employment with VCA.

Payment during Maternity or Paternity Leave:

VCA will pay up to 2 weeks salary for leave taken due to the birth (or adoption) of an employee's child.

Industrial Injury Leave (Workers' Compensation)

VCA provides insurance coverage for employees in case of work-related injuries. Workers' compensation benefits provided to injured employees may include:

- Medical care;
- Cash benefits, tax-free to replace lost wages; and
- Vocational rehabilitation to help qualified injured employees return to suitable employment.

To ensure you receive any worker's compensation benefits to which you may be entitled, you will need to:

- Immediately report any work-related injury to your manager or department head;
- Seek medical treatment and follow-up care if required;
- Complete a written Employee's Claim Form (DWC Form 1) and return it to your supervisor; and
- Provide VCA with a certification from your health care provider regarding the need for worker's compensation disability leave as well as your eventual ability to return to work from the leave.

It is VCA's policy that when there is a job-related injury, the first priority is to insure that the injured employee receives appropriate medical attention. VCA, with the help of its insurance carrier has selected medical centers to meet this need. Each medical center was selected for its ability to meet anticipated needs with high quality medical service and a location that is convenient to the VCA operation.

- If an employee is injured on the job, he/she is to go or be taken to the approved medical center for treatment. If injuries are such that they require the use of emergency medical systems (EMS) such as an ambulance, the choice by the EMS personnel for the most appropriate medical center or hospital for treatment will be recognized as an approved center.
 - All accidents and injuries must be reported to the employee's manager or department head and to the individual responsible for reporting to VCA's insurance carrier. Failure by an employee to report a work-related injury by the end of his/her shift could result in loss of insurance coverage for the employee. An employee may choose to be treated by his/her personal physician at his/her own expense, but he/she is still required to go to VCA approved medical center for evaluation. All job-related injuries must be reported to the appropriate State Worker's Compensation Bureau and the insurance carrier.
 - When there is a job-related injury that results in lost time, the employee must have a medical release from a medical facility before returning to work.
- Any time there is a job-related injury, VCA's requires drug/alcohol testing along with any medical treatment provided to the employee.

Bereavement Leave

Salaried employees are entitled to a leave of up to five (5) work days without loss of pay due to a death in the immediate family (parent, spouse, domestic partner, son/daughter, sister/brother, parents-in-law, son/daughter-in-law, grandparents, grandchild).. Any scheduled days off (including, holidays and vacations) falling during the absence will be counted as both bereavement leave and scheduled days off.

Jury Duty or Witness Leave

For all exempt employees, VCA will pay for time off if you are called to serve on a jury. For all non-exempt employees, VCA will pay for up to three (3) days if you are called to serve on a jury.

Voting Time Off

If an employee does not have sufficient time outside of working hours to vote in an official state-sanctioned election, the employee may take off enough working time to vote. Such time off shall be taken at the beginning or the end of the regular working shift, whichever allows for more free time and the time taken off shall be combined with the voting time available outside of working hours to a maximum of two (2) hours combined. Under these circumstances, an employee will be allowed a maximum of two (2) hours of time off during an election day without loss of pay. When possible, an employee requesting time off to vote shall give his or her manager or department head at least two (2) days notice.

DISCIPLINE AND TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

Rules of Conduct

The following conduct is prohibited and will not be tolerated by VCA. This list of prohibited conduct is illustrative only and applies to all employees of VCA; other types of conduct that threaten security, personal safety, employee welfare and VCA operations also may be prohibited. Further, the specification of this list of conduct in no way alters the at-will employment relationship as to at-will employees of the School. If an employee is working under a contract with the School which grants procedural rights prior to termination, the procedural terms in the contract shall apply.

1. Insubordination - refusing to perform a task or duty assigned or act in accordance with instructions provided by an employee's manager or proper authority.
2. Inefficiency - including deliberate restriction of output, carelessness or unnecessary wastes of time or material, neglect of job, duties or responsibilities.
3. Unauthorized soliciting, collecting of contributions, distribution of literature, written or printed matter is strictly prohibited on SPCHS property by non-employees and by employees. This rule does not cover periods of time when employees are off their jobs, such as lunch periods and break times. However, employees properly off their jobs are prohibited from such activity with other employees who are performing their work tasks.
4. Damaging, defacing, unauthorized removal, destruction or theft of another employee's property or of VCA property.
5. Fighting or instigating a fight on VCA premises.
6. Violations of the drug and alcohol policy.
7. Using or possessing firearms, weapons or explosives of any kind on VCA premises.
8. Gambling on VCA premises.
9. Tampering with or falsifying any report or record including, but not limited to, personnel, absentee, sickness or production reports or records, specifically including applications for employment and time cards.
11. Use of profane, abusive or threatening language in conversations with other employees. Intimidating or interfering with other employees.
12. Conducting personal business during business hours
13. Excessive absenteeism or tardiness excused or unexcused.
14. Posting any notices on VCA premises without prior written approval of management, unless posting is on a VCA bulletin board designated for employee postings.
15. Conviction of a criminal act.
16. Any other conduct detrimental to other employees or SPCHS's interests or its efficient operations.

For employees who possess an employment contract which provides for other than at-will employment, the procedures and process for termination during the contract shall be specified in the contract.

Off-Duty Conduct

While the School does not seek to interfere with the off-duty and personal conduct of its employees, certain types of off-duty conduct may interfere with the School legitimate business interests. For this reason, employees are expected to conduct their personal affairs in a manner that does not adversely affect the School or its own integrity, reputation, or credibility. Illegal or immoral off-duty conduct by an employee that adversely affects the School's legitimate business interests or the employee's ability to perform his or her work will not be tolerated.

While employed by the School, employees are expected to devote their energies to their jobs with the School. For this reason, second jobs are strongly discouraged. The following types of additional employment elsewhere are strictly prohibited:

- Additional employment that conflicts with an employee's work schedule, duties, and responsibilities at our

School.

- Additional employment that creates a conflict of interest or is incompatible with the employee's position with our School.
- Additional employment that impairs or has a detrimental effect on the employee's work performance with our School.
- Additional employment that requires the employee to conduct work or related activities on the School's property during the employer's working hours or using our School's facilities and/or equipment; and
- Additional employment that directly or indirectly competes with the business or the interests of our School.

Employees who wish to engage in additional employment that may create a real or apparent conflict of interest must submit a written request to the School explaining the details of the additional employment. If the additional employment is authorized, the School assumes no responsibility for it. The School shall not provide workers' compensation coverage or any other benefit for injuries occurring from or arising out of additional employment. Authorization to engage in additional employment can be revoked at any time.

Termination of Employment

Should it become necessary for you to terminate your employment with VCA, please notify your supervisor regarding your intention as far in advance as possible. At least two weeks notice is expected whenever possible.

If you are participating in the medical and/or dental plan, you will be sent information on your rights under COBRA.

INTERNAL COMPLAINT REVIEW

The purpose of the "Internal Complaint Review Process" is to afford all employees of the School the opportunity to seek internal resolution of their work-related concerns. All employees have free access to the Chief Executive Officer or Board of Directors to express their work-related concerns.

Filing of Complaint

If complaints cannot be resolved informally, employees may file a written complaint with the Director or Board President as soon as possible after the events that give rise to the employee's work-related concerns. The written complaint should set forth in detail the basis for the employee's complaint.

Investigation

An objective and timely investigation of all complaints which cannot be resolved informally will be undertaken. This includes meeting separately with the employee and with others who either are named in the complaint or who may have knowledge of the facts set forth in the complaint.

The School will attempt to treat all internal complaints and their investigation as confidential, recognizing, however, that in the course of investigating and resolving internal complaints some dissemination of information to others may be necessary or appropriate.

Upon completion of the investigation, the Personnel Manager shall report the finding(s) to the employee in writing.

Non-Retaliation

If an employee has filed a complaint in good faith, the employee will not be disciplined or otherwise penalized for lodging the complaint. If an employee believes that he or she is being retaliated against for lodging a complaint, the employee should immediately notify the Director or Board President.

AMENDMENT TO EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

This Employee Handbook contains the employment policies and practices of VCA in effect at the time of publication. All previously issued handbooks or any inconsistent policy statements or memoranda are superceded.

VCA reserves the right to amend, delete or otherwise modify this Handbook at any time provided that such modifications are in writing.

Any written changes to the Handbook will be distributed to all employees. No oral statements can in any way change or alter the provisions of this Handbook.

APPENDIX A

HARASSMENT COMPLAINT FORM

It is the policy of VCA that all of its employees be free from harassment. This form is provided for you to report what you believe to be harassment, so that VCA may investigate and take appropriate disciplinary or other action when the facts show that there has been sexual harassment.

If you are an employee of VCA, you may file this form with the Chief Executive Officer or Board Chair.

Please review VCA's policies concerning harassment for a definition of harassment and a description of the types of conduct that are considered to be harassment.

VCA will undertake every effort to handle the investigation of your complaint in a confidential manner. In that regard, VCA will disclose the contents of your complaint only to those persons having a need to know. For example, to conduct its investigation, VCA will need to disclose portions of your factual allegations to potential witnesses, including anyone you have identified as having knowledge of the facts on which you are basing your complaint, as well as the alleged harasser.

In signing this form below, you authorize VCA to disclose to others the information you have provided herein, and information you may provide in the future. Please note that the more detailed information you provide, the more likely it is that VCA will be able to address your complaint to your satisfaction.

Charges of harassment are taken very seriously by VCA both because of the harm caused to the person harassed, and because of the potential sanctions that may be taken against the harasser. It is therefore very important that you report the facts as accurately and completely as possible and that you cooperate fully with the person or persons designated to investigate your complaint.

Your Name: _____ Date: _____

Date of Alleged Incident(s): _____

Name of Person(s) you believe harassed you or someone else: _____

List any witnesses that were present: _____

Where did the incident(s) occur? _____

Please describe the events or conduct that are the basis of your complaint by providing as much factual detail as possible (i.e. specific statements; what, if any, physical contact was involved; any verbal statements; what did you do to avoid the situation, etc.) (Attach additional pages, if needed):

I acknowledge that I have read and that I understand the above statements. I hereby authorize VCA to disclose the information I have provided as it finds necessary in pursuing its investigation.

I hereby certify that the information I have provided in this complaint is true and correct and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.

_____ Date: _____

Signature of Complainant

Print Name

Received by: _____

Date: _____

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT OF PERSONNEL HANDBOOK

PLEASE READ THE EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK AND SUBMIT A SIGNED COPY OF THIS STATEMENT TO THE PERSONNEL MANAGER.

EMPLOYEE NAME: _____

I ACKNOWLEDGE that I have received a copy of the Employee Handbook. I have read and understood the contents of the Handbook, and I agree to abide by its directions and procedures. I have been given the opportunity to ask any questions I might have about the policies in the Handbook. I understand that it is my responsibility to read and familiarize myself with the policies and procedures contained in the Handbook.

I understand that the statements contained in the Handbook are guidelines for employees concerning some of VCA policies and benefits, and are not intended to create any contractual or other legal obligations or to alter the at-will nature of my employment with VCA. In the event I do have an employment contract which expressly alters the at-will relationship, I agree to the foregoing except with reference to an at-will employment status.

I understand that except for employment at-will status, any and all policies or practices can be changed at any time by VCA.

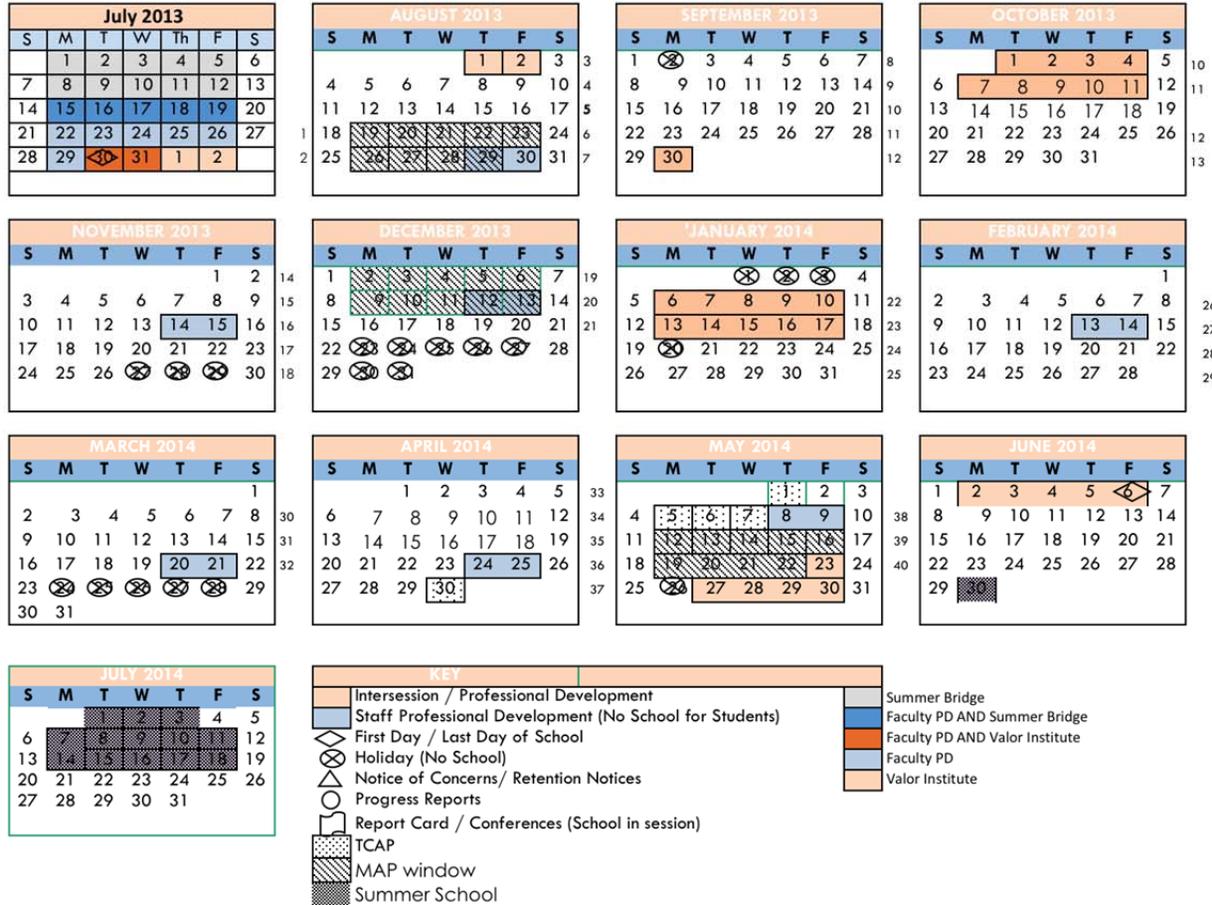
I understand that other than the Chief Executive Officer or Board of Directors of VCA, no person has authority to enter into any agreement, express or implied, for employment for any specific period of time, or to make any agreement for employment other than at-will; only the Board has the authority to make any such agreement and then only in writing signed by the Board Chair.

Employee's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Attachment 4: School Calendar

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Days of Instruction	Intercession	Academic	MNPS
July		2	0
Aug		20	21
Sept	1	19	20
Oct	9	14	13
Nov		16	17
Dec		13	15
Jan	10	9	18
Feb		18	19
Mar		14	11
Apr		20	21
May	5	14	21
June	5	0	0
Total	30	159	176

Staff Development Days	Valor	MNPS
Before Students	11	1
During School Year	44	5
After Students	0	1
TOTAL	55	7

PD days are TBD based on:
 Assessment calendar
 PD programs/ initiatives
 Changes to weekly PD calendar

ATTACHMENT 4B: School Calendar and Schedule

Annual Calendar

Describe the annual academic calendar for the school. Explain how this calendar reflects the needs of the academic program. Provide the school’s proposed calendar for the first year of operation, including the total number of days/hours of instruction.

The annual academic Calendar is shown in Attachment 4a. There will be 189 school days in the traditional year, and a 13-day Summer Bridge program in July. There will be 159 days of “academic” instruction and 30 days of Intersession instruction when students will take their in-depth elective courses. The schedule is shown for the 2013-14 school year so that we could compare it to the known MNPS schedule, but it will be updated for 2014-15 this year once the MNPS schedule is released. Students will start school August 1 and will stay in school until June 6. The number of minutes for each course for the year is shown below in Table 1:

Table 1: Average Minutes for VCA Courses in Stage 1

Course	Avg Min/Day	Days/Yr	Min/Yr	Min/Yr with Max Remediation
Math	73.4	159	11,679	28,131
English	90.2	159	14,342	29,101
Science	66.2	159	10,526	22,885
History	53	159	8,427	20,067
Learning Lab	53	159	8,427	
Fitness	20	159	3,180	
SSR	15	159	2,385	
Mentor Group	20	159	3,180	
Deep Practice (Elective)	180	30	5,400	
Extended Semester	120	6	720	
Remediation Intersession	180	30	5,400	
Summer Bridge Remediation	120	15	1,800	
Office Hours	45	32	1,440	
Saturday School Remediation	120	25	3,000	

The column titled “Minutes/Year with Maximum Remediation” shows how many minutes a scholar at VCA can have in a course if they receive the maximum number of minutes available in the schedule, which would include the following:

1. Regular class-time
2. Office hours for that class 1x week
3. Extended semester class
4. Remediation Intersession class in mornings
5. Summer Bridge program

What is innovative about this schedule is that it allows for students who are progressing adequately to have a reasonable course-load and time in academic classes. For students who need extra time to master the standards, however, they may receive up to 2x the normal class time in smaller settings to get the support they need. We believe this schedule will allow for a diverse group of students, who come with various preparation levels, the ability to all be successful and supported in the model.

School Day and Week

Provide a description of the school day and week. Include the number of instructional hours/minutes in a day for core subjects such as language arts, mathematics, science and social studies. Note the length of the school day including start and dismissal times. Explain why this schedule will be optimal for student learning. Provide the minimum number of hours/minutes per day and week the school will devote to academic instruction in each grade.

Weekly Schedule

Table 3 shows the weekly schedule for the 5th grade. The average minutes per class each week is shown below in **Table 2**.

Weekly/Daily activities for students

Core Academic courses: Students take four main academic courses (Math, English, History, Science) each day during the Academic Semester (electives are taken during the Intersession periods). In addition, they spend time in the following activities:

Breakfast: Breakfast will be served for all students each morning, with students on Free and Reduced plans having those meals provided for free or at a reduced rate.

Mentor Group: The official school day starts at 8am in mentor groups. Each faculty member and administrator has a mentor group of about 18 students. All students meet in their assigned mentor room and the mentor teacher takes role, checks homework, and delivers announcements. Mentors will also do the first Focus Fitness session of the day for 2-6 minutes with their mentor group.

All School Meeting: All students will walk quietly to the common area with the mentor group and sit in their assigned areas on the floor for the All School Meeting. The Principal of the school will run the ASM meeting each morning with a focus on inspiring students to be at their best for the day.

Table 2: VCA 5th Grade Weekly Schedule

5th Grade Section Example						
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	
7:30-8:00	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	7:30-8:00
8:00-8:15	Mentor/F1	Mentor/F1	Mentor/F1	Mentor/F1	English 83 min	8:00-9:33
8:17-8:32	ASM	ASM	ASM	ASM		
8:35-10:20	English 105 min	English 105 min	English 53 min	English 105 min	Transition	
			8:35-9:28			
			Math 53 min			
			9:30-10:23			
10:20-10:22	Transition	Transition		Transition		
10:22-11:37	Math 75 min	Math 75 min	History 53 min	Math 75 min	Math 83 min	
					Transition	11:08-11:10

			10:25-11:18		History 53 min	11:10- 12:03
			Fitness 2			
11:37- 11:50	Fitness 2	Fitness 2	Lunch	Fitness 2		
11:50- 12:30	Lunch	Lunch	Learning Lab	Lunch	Fitness 2	12:03- 12:10
12:30- 12:55	SSR	SSR	53 min	SSR	Lunch	12:10- 12:40
12:55-1:48	History 53 min	History 53 min	12:00-12:53	History 53 min	Learning Lab 53 min	12:40-1:33
			Fitness 3			
			Science 55 min			
1:50-2:43	Learning Lab 53 min	Learning Lab 53 min	1:00-1:55	Learning Lab 53 min	Fitness 3	1:33-1:40
			Dismissal 2		Science 53 min	1:40-2:33
2:43-2:50	Fitness 3	Fitness 3	Faculty PD	Fitness 3		
2:50-4:05	Science 75 min	Science 75 min	2:05-4:05 120 min	Science 75 min	Connections 92 min	2:33-4:05
					ASM	
4:05-4:15	Dismissal 1	Dismissal 1		Dismissal 1	Dismissal 1	4:05
4:15-5:00	Office Hours 45 min	Office Hours 45 min		Office Hours 45 min	Office Hours 45 min	4:15-5:00
5:00	Dismissal 2	Dismissal 2		Dismissal 2	Dismissal 2	5:00

Focus Fitness: Students will do two additional short Focus Fitness sessions with their teachers and classmates at the end of two classes.

Learning Lab: Students will spend one period (53 minutes) in Learning Lab. Learning Lab will be used to either work silently on homework, online content for their academic courses, or an additional online elective course (as decided by each student’s Personalized Learning Plan). For ELL and IEP students Learning Lab is often the time they access the Resource Room.

Lunch: Students will have lunch for 30 minutes each day.

Silent Sustained Reading (SSR): Students will go to their mentor groups right after lunch for a 25 minute SSR. SSR will be overseen by the grade level English team and will be leveled and integrated with the English curriculum at that grade level. The last 5 minutes of SSR will be a short mindfulness meditation.

Office Hours: Office Hours are 4 days a week from 4:15-5:00pm. Office Hours are generally optional for students. Each VCA teacher has Office Hours two days a week and students may come get help on class material, re-take assessments, work in study groups, or help their classmates. Some students will be assigned Office Hours if they are missing homework or due to being placed into Level 3 of the VCA RTI model.

Early Dismissal Wednesday: Students will be dismissed early on Wednesdays (1:55pm), and new homework will not be assigned on Wednesday evenings as a means of giving students a mental break in the middle of the school week.

Connections: Students will be with their mentor groups on Friday afternoons for Connections. Connections time will be spent on community building, academic literacy, health, and academic intervention. Students must have all homework complete for the week before leaving on Fridays, so part of Connections is spent completing homework. Students who do not have all homework complete for the week are assigned to Friday Office Hours to complete their missing work.

Friday All School Meeting: On Friday afternoons all students go with the mentor group to the ASM meeting. The meeting will usually focus on an evaluation of the week (academic achievement, culture, etc.). The end of the meeting will have a fun competition/song/etc to end the week on a positive note as a community.

Table 2: Average Minutes/Day for Courses/Activities

Course/Activity	Avg Min/Day
English	90.2
Math	73.4
History	53
Science	66.2
Learning Lab	53
Office Hours	36
Fitness	20
SSR	15
Mentor Group	30.6

Describe a typical school day for a teacher and a student.

Typical Student Day

Eduardo takes the bus to VCA each day. The bus picks him up at 6:55am each morning and he travels from his house to VCA, arriving at 7:25am. He goes into the common area where he finds a warm breakfast and 2 VCA teachers waiting for him. Students sit at tables in the common area and eat quietly, talking with their friends and VCA faculty. Eduardo also gets some help from his Science teacher on the last few problems of the previous nights homework.

At 7:57am Eduardo cleans his breakfast up and heads to his mentor group location. His Mentor takes role at 8am sharp in their room. Eduardo has his homework from the previous night on his laptop, and he knows that he needs to scan his math homework and upload it to his personal workspace. He uses the scanner in the room to do so. His mentor teacher Ms. Pak comes around and checks for homework completion. Eduardo did not do his History assignment to a very high quality, so Ms. Pak makes a note in Live School on her laptop so that Mr. Arambula (his History teacher) knows to check it in class. Ms. Pak then reads a few brief announcements for the day and then does a “circle check-in” with the students for 4 minutes. Each student says one person whom they are grateful for. At 8:11, Ms. Pak has all students stand, and she leads them through a 3-minute exercise routine. The routine is differentiated so that all students can perform the movements. Eduardo is a little winded at the end, but is smiling and his energy level is higher. At 8:15 Ms. Pak has all students form a single file line and they walk quietly to the common area and sit in their assigned location for All School Meeting.

Dr. Best is waiting for all students to sit quietly and begins promptly at 8:17am. The students do one of the VCA chants, and are impressively silent at the end as Dr. Best raises his hand to signal silence. Dr. Best delivers a short talk about the Core Value of Joy and shows a YouTube video of a “laugh circle” where people meet in groups to simply laugh. He then explains the science behind the benefits of laughter and then asks for student volunteers for nice clean jokes. Eduardo and many others raise their hands and Dr. Best picks two students to tell their jokes. Dr. Best then tells a really corny joke but everyone laughs anyways. Dr. Best ends the ASM with everyone stating the VCA Daily Creed “We are VCA Patriots. Today we will be kind. Today we will learn. Today we will look out for each other. Today we will grow.”

Dr. Best excuses each Section in order (5 sections named after colleges) and they walk quietly to their first class of the day with their first period teacher. Eduardo has an IEP and is in Section 5 (which in 5th grade has both a regular education teacher and a SPED teacher with a group of 20 students) and he goes to English first period. Ms. Garcia starts class exactly at 8:35am with all students in their seats. They start with a silent Do Now projected on the screen. Each student is typing on their laptop an answer to the Do Now prompt, which was also placed in their English folder on the 5th Grade VCA cloud space. A projected timer let's students know how much time they have left. Mr. Lichtblau, the SPED teacher for 5th grade, checks in on Eduardo as he types and asks a few questions to help Eduardo think through the prompt.

Ms Garcia stops everyone exactly as the timer goes off and explains the schedule for the day: students will do a rotation of direct instruction and silent reading for 53 minutes, then will work in groups on comparing and contrasting characters from various short stories for 50 minutes. Eduardo's table is assigned the rotation of Direct Instruction then silent reading. The students execute a great transition to their areas of the classroom (Ms. Garcia in front with 10 students for direct instruction and Mr. Lichtblau in the back with 10 students for silent reading). Ms. Garcia has her group walk through an example from a text and coaches them on looking for details that give clues about what the characters are like. Mr. Lichtblau helps ensure that all students are reading and understanding the two stories that they will discuss in their groups.

After 22.5 minutes, Ms. Garcia and the students execute another excellent transition and the students switch assignments. After exactly 53 minutes, students move quickly and quietly to their assigned group tables. Ms. Garcia assigns roles to each student (4 in a group) and clearly explains the group task. Each group has been assigned different short stories and they are to compare and contrast the main characters in the story using the strategies they learned today. Each group will present their results at the end of the period to the class. The groups excitedly begin, and Ms. Garcia and Mr. Lichtblau roam the room, keeping students on task as needed, re-directing questions to scholars. Eduardo is a little shy, but he has grown much more comfortable here at VCA and is able to share his ideas multiple times. Ms. Garcia has a positive feedback chart projected on the screen and publicly notes specific examples of excellent discussions and groupwork as they occur.

After exactly 26 minutes Ms. Garcia wraps up the groupwork. Each group shares in order and each of the four group members share a piece of their work. Eduardo shares two examples of how the main character of story A was emotionally different than the main character of Story B. Ms. Garcia wraps up the days learning for the 3 minutes, and then has all students write an Exit Ticket on their laptop, which they place into Ms. Garcia's First Period Folder on the VCA storage system. Students finish their Exit Tickets just as class ends. Ms. Garcia reminds them that their homework has been posted in their English folder online.

Eduardo and his classmates walk quietly to their Math class. Math is taught by Mr. McMillen and has a similar feel to English. Eduardo is greeted warmly at the door by his teacher and then knows the exact routine for the class very well. He is in his seat with his laptop open, his Math folder is open and the Do Now is ready and waiting for him. Mr. McMillen is really high energy and leads the students through a similar lesson structure: short direct instruction on a topic, time to work individually on the topic, and then a group exploration of how to apply that topic. The period is again wrapped up with a summary of the learning and an Exit Ticket.

For the last 10 minutes of Math, Eduardo and his classmates do a Focus Fitness routine with Mr. McMillen. It is a fun game between groups centered on balance and flexibility. Eduardo really likes the physical breaks during the day.

Mr. McMillen dismisses everyone exactly at 11:50am for lunch. Students walk quietly to the common area where hot lunch is waiting for them. The lunches are organic, which Eduardo was not a big fan of early in the year, but he has learned to like them a lot more now, especially after Focus Fitness – he is hungry! He and his friends sit at a table outside and enjoy the sunshine while they eat. A teacher sits with them as well – chatting about sports and Justin Bieber.

At 12:25pm the teachers monitoring lunch give everyone a 5 minute clean-up reminder. Eduardo's mentor group is assigned to make sure the common area is spotless on Mondays, so they walk the area as a group and clean up any last bits of trash. Eduardo hustles to not be late to Silent Sustained Reading at 12:30pm.

Eduardo is back with his mentor group for SSR. Eduardo is silently reading his book that he chose by 12:31pm. Ms. Pak calls Eduardo up in the middle of SSR to review his Accelerated Reader data with him. She gives him a high five for how much progress he has made. Eduardo has really been excited by being able to see his progress, and has found himself starting to read before he goes to bed at night. For the last 2 minutes of SSR Ms. Pak gives three shout-outs to students who have shown exceptional growth in Accelerated Reader this past 4 weeks. Eduardo is one of them and he grins when his classmates all give him the VCA “three snap” appreciation.

Eduardo and his classmates walk quietly to History class and follow a similar routine to English and Math – crisp, well-designed standards based lessons in a warm and demanding environment. Eduardo then transitions to the Resource Room. Eduardo goes to the Resource Room instead of Learning Lab because he has an IEP with an SLD (auditory processing). Eduardo also is an English Language learner. Mr. Lichtblau greets him at the door with a handshake and Eduardo finds his seat. There are 8 students in the class, and Mr. Lichtblau works with them one-on-one during the period. Eduardo is working on his History homework with a classmate that he was just assigned. When Mr. Lichtblau sits down with Eduardo he asks if the vocabulary that they worked on yesterday was helpful in English and History today. Eduardo says yes. Mr. Lichtblau then shows Eduardo the lesson plans for English and History tomorrow and shows him the key words and terms that will be included so that Eduardo can look them up on his laptop. Mr. Lichtblau also congratulates Eduardo on how well he performed in his group in English, and makes a suggestion for how interact with Jake when he is talking too quickly. They role play the interaction. They then look briefly at Eduardo’s status on his Rosetta Stone English course. In his Personalized Learning Plan Eduardo’s family, mentor, and Mr. Lichtblau decided to create a schedule where Eduardo works on Rosetta Stone 3 days during Office Hours (in the Resource Room), and 2 days during his Resource period. He is making good progress and is finding it helpful, although a little boring.

Eduardo and his classmates do a 7 minute Focus Fitness at the end Resource class – a fast paced circuit of squats, lunges, and push-ups. Eduardo loves the challenge of Focus Fitness, and he is thinking about trying to get a Fitness Badge by running with Mr. Dickson in the Nashville 5k in the Spring. He is attending the informational meeting at lunch tomorrow.

Eduardo walks quickly to Science class, which starts at exactly 2:50pm. Mr. Johnson and Mr. Lichtblau greet the students at the door and Eduardo quickly sits down and begins the Do Now on his laptop. The lesson follows the familiar VCA rhythm, and Mr. Johnson is clearly well prepared and excellent at maintaining a focused, clear, and fast-paced lesson. Eduardo notices that Mr. Dickson, the CEO, is in the back of the class taking notes and waves to say hi.

At 4:00pm Mr. Johnson reminds students who are assigned Office Hours where they must report, and then has students complete an Exit Ticket. Eduardo finds a few friends and hangs out with them until 4:14pm and then walks to the Resource Room, where he quietly works on homework and gets occasional help from Mr. Lichtblau and his peers.

At 5:00pm Eduardo walks to the bus. Dr. Best shakes his hand as he is leaving and tells him he is proud of how hard he is working this year. He is tired, but he is proud of himself too. It feels good to see the hard work paying off, and he is happy that he decided to go to Valor.

Typical Teacher Day: 5th Grade

5 th Grade 5 th Grade Teacher							
English 1	English 2	Math 1	Math 2	History 1	Science 1	Coach	SPED
Mentor Group Morning Support	Breakfast Mentor Group Morning Support	Mentor Group Morning Support	Breakfast Mentor Group Morning Support				
Block 1 105 minutes	Block 1 105 minutes	Block 1 75 min	Block 1 75 min	Block 1 55 min	Planning 55 min	Resource 78 min	Resource 78 min
Planning 27 minutes	Planning 80 minutes	Planning 30 minutes	Planning 30 minutes	Planning 22 min	Block 1 75 min	Learning Lab 110 min	Planning 110 min
Block 2 105 minutes		Block 2 75 min	Block 2 75 min	Block 2,3 110 min	Planning 53 min		
Fitness	Fitness	Fitness	Fitness	Fitness	Fitness	Fitness	Fitness
Planning/Lunch	Lunch	Planning/Lunch	Lunch	Planning/Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
SSR	SSR	SSR	SSR	SSR	SSR	SSR	SSR
Block 2	Planning 82 minutes	Planning 62 minutes	Learning Lab 110 min	Block 4,5 110 min	Block 2 75 min	Planning 110 min	Resource 110 min
Fitness							
Planning 22 minutes		Block 3 137 min			Planning 33 min		
Block 3 105 Minutes	Block 2 105 minutes		Fitness	Fitness	Block 3 75 min	Fitness	Fitness
			Planning 75 min	Planning 75 min		Resource 75 min	Resource 75 min

Typical Teacher Day

Mrs. Johnson arrives at school at 7:15am for school. She is rested and knows that she has an exciting day ahead of her teaching Science to the 5th grade at VCA. She reviews her lesson plans for the day, and then makes sure that she understands the Focus Fitness routines and All School Meeting responsibilities that she has for the day. She has Breakfast Duty this morning (2x week) so she is waiting at the door to the common area of the school and shaking students hands as they walk in the door at 7:30am. She oversees the groups of about 75 students with one other teacher who is on breakfast duty with her. She helps Eduardo and a few other students with a few math problems once most kids have arrived and are eating breakfast. She helps ensure that all scholars clean up their tables and then leaves at 7:57 to go to her mentor group location.

At 8:00am sharp Mrs. Johnson takes role in her mentor group. 16 of 17 students are present, and Mrs. Johnson uploads her attendance via her laptop into Illuminate (the Knowledge Management System). She also checks homework and uploads any missing assignments/poor quality assignments into Live School on her laptop. At 8:15am she takes her mentor group to the All School Meeting and makes sure they are all in

place and quiet by 8:17am. Mrs. Johnson looks across the room and is reminded how she loves the rich diversity of the student body. The mentor groups are all heterogeneous by design, so the ASM is an even mixture of kids from all different backgrounds sitting together. Her last mentee comes in late to the ASM and looks sheepishly over at Mrs. Johnson. She sits down with her mentor group, and at the end of ASM she stands and publicly apologizes to the community for being late this morning. One of Mrs. Johnson's colleagues, Ms. Barger, also publicly apologizes for being late.

At the end of the ASM Mrs. Johnson walks to the Teacher Planning Room for teachers. She has 55 minutes of planning time prior to her first class and spends it grading assessments and thinking through her lesson plans later in the week, specifically how to differentiate some of the processes and products in her plans now that she has seen the latest student achievement data from her short assessment last Friday. She checks LiveSchool to see how many students did not complete last night's homework. She is happy to see the 93% of students completed the homework, but she does adjust two groupings when she sees that those groups will not be productive with multiple students not doing the homework. She also spends about 15 minutes preparing for her reflection meeting with the Assistant Principal, Ms. Barger, who observed her yesterday. They have a coaching meeting during her afternoon prep period that is focused on whole group questioning strategies. With 10 minutes to go prior to her first class, Mrs. Johnson reviews her lesson for the day. She and her teaching partner, Mr. Jackson, practice possible answers to the questions they will pose in class today and give each other feedback on their answers. Mr. Jackson is in his 7th year of teaching and has his Masters in Education from Vanderbilt and Mrs. Johnson is thrilled to be partnered with him this year. She is a Teach for America alumni in her third year of teaching and has learned great amounts from Mr. Jackson. Mr. Jackson is going to observe her introduction and first transition today and give her feedback as well. (Mr. Jackson is equally inspired by Mrs. Johnson's work ethic and her huge appetite for growth – she is always pushing him to be on his toes with her keen questions and observations.)

Mrs. Johnson teaches her first block for 75 minutes. Mr. Jackson observes the first 10 minutes and sends her an email with suggestions on where to tighten up the first transition, as well as a thought around making sure her ELL learners can all see the Word Wall she has created from their seats. Mrs. Johnson ends the lesson with an online Exit Ticket. She dismisses students on time and high fives them as they leave her room.

Mrs. Johnson goes back to the teacher planning room and debriefs quickly with Mr. Jackson. She decides to change her seating assignments for her 3 ELL kids so that they can see the Word Wall, and then they discuss how to tighten the transition from the Do Now to her first activity. They draw out and practice how to get students to move quickly from their regular assigned seats to their lab stations in under 30 seconds. Mr. Jackson mentions that Mr. McMillen is outstanding at transitions and Mrs. Johnson should go watch him today for 10 minutes at the end of her planning period. He also shows her on his laptop where she can go on Bloomboard to look at videos of great transitions from UnCommon Schools and VCA teachers. Mrs. Johnson does not have time to see Mr. McMillen today, but sends him a quick email about watching a transition this week. Mrs. Johnson then sits down and looks through her Exit Ticket data on Mastery Connect. She sees a trend that students are missing an important concept and adjusts her lesson plan to add a second short example in her introduction so that students hear the concept in multiple ways. She also adjust her lesson plan for tomorrow and adds one additional homework problem for tonight into the online Homework file to make sure that the concept is reinforced again.

Mrs. Johnson has blocked the rest of this planning period to meet with Ms. Tovar, the VCA Coach. Ms. Tovar oversees the mentor program and checks in weekly with each teacher to discuss their mentees. Ms. Tovar and Mrs. Johnson look online at her mentees grades and identify 3 students who they are worried about. Jack is really struggling behaviorally and Mrs. Johnson talks through some strategies she can share at this week's Grade Level Team meeting with her 5th grade teaching team around how to best address them. Juan is struggling to complete homework and Mrs. Johnson makes a note that she will call home this evening to speak with his parents about this issue. Mary is incredibly shy and is still struggling to make friends, so Ms. Tovar decides to email two other teachers who have mentees that will sit with Mary at lunch for the next two weeks. Mrs. Johnson will also bring up a suggestion at her Grade Level Team meeting Wednesday that Mary be considered for the Resource Room after school instead of regular Office Hourse – the smaller setting might help her get more comfortable.

Mrs. Johnson does not have a class before lunch, but she decides to join Mr. McMillen's class for the Focused Fitness – she struggles finding time to get to the gym and actually enjoys the sessions during the day. At

lunch she sits with teachers and students outside and enjoys the sunshine and the conversation. She is on lunch duty two days/week but this is not one of them.

She meets with her mentor group for SSR after lunch. They have only been a group for about two months, but it is really rewarding to see how they are starting to bond as a group. Her students have learned to really enjoy SSR, and she has learned a lot about reading levels. The training that the faculty did in the summer around teaching literacy across the curriculum and Accelerated Reader was very helpful and she is now very adept at coaching her mentees in this area.

Mrs. Johnson teaches her second 75 min block using the adjustments she made during her planning period. She feels it goes more smoothly and she is interested to see the Exit Tickets. She has a 33 minute planning period before her last class. She uses the first 10 minutes to look at the Exit Tickets and decides that the adjustments she made were effective, although she notes that 4 students are still really struggling with this concept. She sends a quick email to Katherine’s mentor (Mr. Arambula) because she is very worried about her effort in Science. She has her coaching meeting with Ms. Barger for the last 20 minutes of the period.

Ms. Barger is the Director of C&I and coaches Mrs. Johnson on a weekly basis. They meet to discuss yesterday’s observation. Ms. Barger pulls up the notes she posted in Bloomboard that Mrs. Johnson reviewed this morning. They also view the video clip of Mrs. Johnson questioning students on the scientific method that Ms. Barger took on her Ipad and uploaded to Bloomboard. They discuss increasing the rigor of the questioning by not letting students off the hook too easily, and then role play practice. Ms. Barger also pushes Mrs. Johnson to ask extension questions that will increase the thinking ratio for students. Again, they practice by role playing. Mr. Jackson is sitting in the room and asks if he can do a few role plays as well. They practice for about 10 minutes as a group, even getting a little goofy with their example kids and scenarios. Mrs. Johnson thanks Ms. Barger for the insights. She feels very supported at VCA with her large amounts of planning time, Master co-teacher, and great instructional coach that she is able to see weekly.

She teaches her third class and finishes by dismissing students for the day. She had to assign one student to Principal Office Hours in her last period for poor behavior choices and she walks him to Dr. Best’s office and has him fill out a Reflection Sheet. She walks quickly to her Office Hour room and spend the last 45 minutes of the day (she does this 2 times per week) working with about 15 students on assessment revisions and discussing a few of the more difficult concepts from the last Unit.

She dismisses students at 5pm. She is tired but feels very proud of her kids and the growth they are able to make at VCA. She is really looking forward to having Intersession in another week! She loves the opportunity they have to take a break from the rigors of teaching and to really look at the data from the previous 8 weeks. She is excited to see the growth her kids have made, and to learn from her colleagues about how to adjust her instruction in order to ensure that all of her students are well supported and challenged. She is working on Differentiation in her Personalized Educator Plan and is looking forward to learning with Mr. Arambula who is an expert in this area of the VCA Professional Continuum. They are going to design differentiated Units together for their Intersession product.

Overall, Mrs. Johnson is really happy that she decided to join the VCA faculty this year – what an amazing place to grow as an educator!

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

Tiered Interventions: VCA will employ a wide range of interventions in our Tiered Service Model. A brief summary is shown below in Table 1

Table 1: Tiered Interventions at VCA

Scholar Experience	Average Minutes/Week	Resource
Level 1: 50% of scholars are prepared through basic mainstream program		
Daily classroom experience	Regular program	

Illuminate data School Outcomes posts and tracking	Mentor groups / regular program	
Homework completion	Regular program	
Regular Connections participation	150 min /week	
PLP development and annual meeting	120 min 2x per year	Conducted in August with family and mentor
Personalized Learning Lab time	53 minutes/day	
Level 2: 20% of scholars require level one program plus additional mainstream supports to be prepared		
✓ Office Hours	45 min/day	
✓ Mandatory After School Study Hall	45 min/day	Higher priority than Office Hours
✓ Mandatory Peer Tutoring		Conducted during Office Hours
Level 3: 15% of scholars required level one, level two supports, and level three mainstream supports to be prepared		
✓ Remediation Intersession	180 min/day x 30 days	Usually most struggling 20-25% of students in Math and ELA
✓ Extended Semester	120 min/day x 6 days	Usually about 20-25% of students in a course that need more time to master content
✓ Personal Tutor	45 min/day	Conducted during Learning Lab or Office Hours - can be peer, parent, or volunteer
✓ Saturday School	120 min/day x 25 Saturdays	Usually 20-25% of students who need behavioral and academic support
✓ Additional mentor support	90 min/week	During Connections time on Fridays
Level 4: 8% of scholars required level one, two, and three, plus level four mainstream supports to be prepared		
✓ 504/IEP plan with accommodations	Varies	Varies by IEP/504, but can include Resource Room
✓ Extensive personal mentor support	Varies/often lunch and mornings	Each mentor should have 1-3 IEP students whom they give extra attention
✓ Grade level interventions / plans	Varies	
Level 5: 7% of scholars require all mainstream supports, plus special education to be prepared		
✓ IEP with services	Varies	Varies by IEP/504, but can include Resource Room
✓ Resource support	53-181 min/day	
✓ Speech and language therapy	Varies	
✓ Occupational therapy	Varies	
✓ Hearing	Varies	
✓ County mental health	Varies	
✓ Modifications to program / curriculum	Varies	

Tiered interventions can be a small part of a scholars program (Level 1) or can be the major part of a scholar's experience (Level 5 – up to 50% of a scholar's day if needed) depending on their needs.

Enrichment

VCA provides enrichment opportunities in multiple ways.

1. **In- class** – VCA teachers will be experts in differentiated instruction, and will use technology to provide enrichment within each VCA course.
2. **Learning Lab** – VCA scholars will have the opportunity to take an additional course during Learning Lab if they desire. We envision well-prepared scholars opting to take courses such as computer programming, foreign language, and additional academic courses.
3. **Valor Badge system** – VCA scholars will have opportunities to achieve Valor Badges for enrichment activities that they choose to do outside of Valor. We envision these Badges being an inspiring part of the VCA experience and something valued and celebrated in the VCA community.
4. **Intersession** – VCA scholars will have great opportunities for a wide range of enrichment opportunities depending on how students design their Intersession courses in their PLP.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Clubs

VCA will provide extra-curricular clubs during the Office Hours times of 4:15-5:00pm. Volunteer teachers will advise clubs that are organically created by students. The organic process is structured through the Connections curriculum and the PLP process (where mentors and families help students think about clubs they might want to start or join). Summit Prep Charter had this model for clubs and it was highly successful – students regularly had 10+ active clubs, including a Running Club, Chess Club, Debate Club, Jazz Club, Anime Club, Service Club, and Leadership Club.

Sports

It will be a long-term goal that VCA has a competitive sports program. In the growth stages of the school we will have intramural sports, and in Year 3 we will apply to become part of a local sports league (most likely a small private school league with schools of similar size). Mr. Dickson started and built the successful sports program at Summit Prep and will draw on his experiences there to create a vibrant program at VCA. The proposed sports will be:

VCA Sports		
Fall	Winter	Spring
Boys Soccer	Boys Basketball	Boys Lacrosse
Girls Soccer	Girls Basketball	Girls Lacrosse

Saturday School

VCA will hold Saturday school from 10-12pm most Saturdays during the year (that do not fall over 3 day weekends or at the start of vacations. This should be approximately 25 Saturdays during the academic year. The administration will oversee Saturday School on a rotation, and teachers may volunteer to assist. Saturday School has two main purposes – **1) as part of the Graduated Discipline Plan**, and **2) as an academic support**.

We anticipate about 10 students per week at Saturday School for disciplinary reasons, and about 20-30 students there for academic reasons. We envision building a vibrant tutoring community that helps students on Saturdays, ideally getting to place where students have a consistent one-on-one tutor on Saturdays whom helps them plan for their week. For the discipline program, we envision also working to build partnerships with community organizations so that Saturday discipline sessions can have community partners that come and speak with our scholars who are struggling to consistently reach the VCA behavior expectations. For example, at Summit Prep we were able to have Stanford Football coach Jim Harbaugh and a few Stanford football players come speak to our small group of struggling students about how they made mistakes growing up and how they grew from those experiences. From this experience two of the football players volunteered to be mentors to two students and they kept in contact with them for two years until they both successfully graduated with college acceptances.

ATTACHMENT 5: Student Discipline Policy

The Expectations and Consequences for VCA 5th grade is the concise description of fifteen primary expectations and associated consequences that govern student behavior at Valor Collegiate in 5th grade. All parents/guardians and students will read the Expectations and Consequences publicly at the Family meetings in the summer prior to the start of school. The handshake agreement after reading the Family Expectations at the first Family Mentor meeting indicates that each parent/guardian and student has read, understands and agrees to abide by the Expectations and Consequences.

PHILOSOPHY – FOCUS ON POSITIVE CORE VALUES AND CHARACTER STRENGTHS

Valor Collegiate Academies' (VCA) approach to student discipline first focuses on preventing negative student behavior by strategically and thoughtfully developing a positive school culture. As this application's detailed section on School Culture articulates, our visits to the highest performing public and private schools in the country, the most common predictor of outstanding academic achievement was a focused, positive culture that had clear, high expectations for every scholar. We believe that student discipline, school culture and academic achievement are not mutually exclusive, but rather are complex and overlapping components of a world-class school.

VCA intends to have a culture that embodies our Core Values, and works to develop and celebrate our Character Strengths. We intend to clearly communicate that every community member of VCA, which includes all VCA faculty, leadership, scholars, and families, will be held to the same high standards and expectations for being positive stewards of the VCA culture.

The **Core Values of VCA** are:

- **Excellence** – We value striving for excellence everyday; day after day; we know that excellence is the result of purposely learning from many failures
- **Continuous Growth Mindset** - We get smarter and smarter through hard work and learning from failure; we value the small, persistent steps forward that it takes to be great; we know that greatness in anything is the result of continual practice over long periods of time
- **Kindness** - We deeply value everyone in our community and treat them with kindness
- **Joy** – We actively seek out joy in our experiences
- **Individual AND Community** – We value our autonomy and individuality AND we value the power of community
- **Diversity** - We value our diverse community and know that we are better prepared for inspired, passionate lives by deeply understanding the multiple perspectives and worldviews of the various backgrounds of our VCA families

In order to live these Core Values everyday, we will work on developing the following **Character Strengths** in each community member.

- **Wisdom** (Strengths that involve the acquisition and use of knowledge)
- **Courage** (Strengths that allow one to accomplish goals in the face of opposition)
- **Justice** (Strengths that build healthy community)
- **Humanity** (Strengths of tending to and befriending others)
- **Temperance** (Strengths that protect against excess)
- **Transcendence** (Strengths that forge connections to the larger universe and provide meaning)

We believe that students are capable of making good choices when given proper structure, clear feedback, and caring relationships. At Valor Collegiate, particularly in Stage 1 (5th and 6th grade) there are positive motivators for when a student chooses to follow a rule or procedure and negative consequences for when a student chooses to break a rule or procedure. Students quickly learn that when they do good things, good things happen, and when they do bad things, bad things happen; every positive contribution results in a positive motivator and conversely every negative infraction results in a negative consequence. This is the basis of our 5th grade Expectations and Consequences. Thereby, students who choose not to meet the school community's clearly defined standards for reasonable and acceptable behavior will not be permitted to disrupt the education of others. Without a firm and consistent discipline policy, none of what we envision for the school can happen.

The following beliefs inform our Expectations and Consequences:

Safety. The Expectations and Consequences are designed first and foremost to ensure that Valor Collegiate scholars are physically and mentally safe at all times.

Respect and Kindness. Respect and kindness towards self, peers, and adults anchors our character development and helps build community within the school and beyond. □

Self-discipline. Students who are organized, focused and committed, behave well in school, speak well in public, and are helpful to others will develop strong self-advocacy skills that will serve them well throughout their lives. The systems and practices contained herein owe greatly to Democracy Preparatory Charter School (NY, NY) and Denver School of Science and Technology (Denver, CO).

Making a big deal out of “little” problems. At Valor Collegiate, nothing is too small to address. There are no “little” problems; every seemingly small problem can quickly lead to more serious problems. No misbehavior goes unchecked at any time for any reason. We must acknowledge misbehavior, address it, and offer a consequence every time. Studies show that it is not the severity of the punishment that deters people from breaking rules, but quick and consistent application of consequences.

Clear consequences. The students of Valor Collegiate will know exactly what behavior is expected and what consequences will result if expectations are not met. The school will always promptly communicate with parents about any disciplinary consequence.

Staying Warm and Demanding. We must be warm and demanding in our approach to asserting authority. A warm and demanding teacher uses the school’s discipline system in conjunction with their own systems, non-verbal cues, strong teacher-student relationships, strong teacher-family communication, positive reinforcement, academic motivation, and clear, well-taught and re-taught rules and procedures.

Uninterrupted learning. A major purpose of the VCA E&C is to minimize distractions in the classroom so that students can commit 100 percent of their attention to academic learning. □

GENERAL STATEMENT □

Scholars are expected to abide by all policies and regulations that have been developed by Valor Collegiate Academy to ensure the orderly operation of the educational program. When a student breaches these policies and regulations, fellow students and stakeholders have a shared responsibility in taking necessary action to correct the student’s performance. Every reasonable effort will be made to transform a student’s insufficient performance through alternative means before implementing more severe actions, such as a suspension or expulsion. It is expected that all Valor scholars will exhibit their dedication to high ethical standards. Adherence to high ethical standards points to responsiveness and appreciation for the standards, as well as a readiness to take responsibility for his/her performance and education. □

5th Grade Expectations & Consequences (Subject to Board Review and Legal Review) □

Our expectations of proper conduct encompass the following. Students are expected to:

- Attend school on a regular basis.
- Be in class on time, prepared to learn.
- Be positive contributors in the classroom.
- Be kind to faculty and fellow scholars.

ENCOURAGING POSITIVE BEHAVIORS

In order to ensure that the school’s values are respected at all times, the student management system at Valor Collegiate is centered on maintaining the Character Strengths (Wisdom, Courage, Justice, Humanity, Temperance, Transcendence). The school believes that students should be empowered to understand that their choices in life determine if they are rewarded or punished. Students who choose to uphold the school’s Core Values and Character Strengths are rewarded, but students who choose not to uphold them are held accountable with specific consequences. This philosophy is reflected in the school’s dollar system, in which students receive Character Currency for displaying the school’s core values, but lose money for not upholding these values.

- Each student in the school has a weekly checkbook that captures his or her behavior throughout the week. Students may earn money for scholarly habits, but may lose (individually/team) money for choosing not to uphold one of the school’s values. The money that the students earn comes in the form of artificial Character Currency, which may be used for purchasing items at the school store, including school supplies, snacks, games, etc.
- Students begin every week with 50 CC (Character Currency) Dollars.
- If a student chooses to not uphold one of the grade level’s Expectations, then money is deducted □ from that

student's checkbook.

- When a student violates one of the core values, the student loses the appropriate amount of money from his or her checkbook and the violation is recorded on the checkbook.
- If a student does something exceptionally well or goes above and beyond in upholding one of the Core Values, the teacher may credit money to that student's account. For example, if a teacher "catches" a student picking up trash in the hallway or displaying the value of integrity, the student may earn \$1. For truly exceptional acts, the student may earn up to \$3.
- The amount of money a student earns over time also determines his/her eligibility for field trips and incentive activities offered by the school. Students are not penalized for spending their money at the school store; field trip eligibility is determined strictly by dollars earned and is not inclusive of dollars spent. Further, money is not deducted from students' accounts when they attend field trips.
- In most cases, a paycheck monitor is assigned for each class and he or she is responsible for carrying a notebook with the week's paychecks. Teachers may write comments and their initials in the allotted space on the paychecks during class or at a later time in the day.
- At the end of the week, all of the teachers make a copy of their students' checkbook. A copy is sent home in a Friday folder. Every student is expected to return the checkbook signed by his or her parent on Monday morning.
- The paychecks will be reviewed throughout the year and it will be determined who earns invitations to local field lessons, end-of-year trips and special events. Based on a student's paycheck and/or average paycheck amount, privileges may be taken away. □ Paychecks are used to motivate and reward students, not punish them. CC Dollars may be used for rewards and school trips. The paychecks are usually tallied at the end of the school day on Thursday and handed out on the following Friday. □
- In addition, as detailed in **Section VIII – School Culture**, there will be a tremendous amount of energy placed into ensuring that positive behavior is recognized and celebrated throughout the VCA culture. At All-School meetings, mentor group meetings, and in classrooms VCA faculty will be excellent at spotting scholars meeting the high expectations of the VCA culture.

RESPONDING TO NEGATIVE BEHAVIORS □

Valor Collegiate teachers hold students to high academic expectations, and are able to focus on effective instruction because consistent expectations are enforced by every teacher. Teachers proactively plan to avoid misbehavior. Consistency in application of consequences drives student actions away from negative behaviors. No misbehavior will go unchecked at any time for any reason. □

The Nature of Offenses □

At Valor Collegiate there are three categories of offenses which warrant a disciplinary response. The categories are **Minor Offenses**, **Moderate Offenses**, and **Serious Offenses**. Students will be held responsible for the elements of the school's Expectations and Consequences during the school day, during school-sponsored events, and while on school grounds, including school transportation. While it is clearly spelled out above that we will address infractions as they occur, we will explicitly teach and consistently reward desirable behaviors in our school. We will use school-wide and class based systems to build a culture that acknowledges, praises, and rewards students who demonstrate our Core Values and Character Strengths. □ On such occasions when students make choices counter to a climate conducive to learning, consequences will be issued. **Table 1** outlines the various levels of infractions:

Table 1: Level of Offenses and Expectations – 5 th Grade	
Minor Offenses	Expectations
Poor Posture	Sitting upright, tracking speaker
Supplies that are out of order or are not in student's possession when required	Supplies are orderly and available
Missing the trash can	Carefully put trash in closest bin

Chewing gum	No gum chewing
Violating line procedure	Respectful and kind in line
Uniform Violation	Uniform is worn properly
Eating at unapproved times	Eating at lunch and break only
Disruption	Self-aware and attentive to expectations
Failure to complete assigned work	Complete work on time
Failure to return signed school-to-parent communications	Return school forms on time
Tardy to school	Arrive at school 5 minutes early
Tardy to class	Be in seat and ready to learn at bell
Moderate Offenses	Expectations
Any pattern of minor offenses	
Possession of non-school related electronic devices	Music and phones at lunch only
Minor vandalism (writing on your desk or book)	Take great care of Valor property
Minor disrespect of any member of the school community (telling a student to shut up)	Kind at all times
Horse playing in class, school, on school-related transportation, or during a school-sponsored activity	Respectful and self-aware
Physical contact that causes a disruption, or makes other students feel uncomfortable or excluded	Kind in all interactions
Inappropriate response to teacher re-direction	Respectful and kind in all interactions
Failure to properly identify yourself to school personnel or other authorized adults	Respectful and kind in all interactions
Serious Offenses	Expectations
Any pattern of moderate offenses	
Damaging school property	Respectful of property at all times
Intimidation or harassment (including teasing)	Respectful and kind in all interactions
Profanity ☐	Respectful and kind in all interactions
Direct disobedience	Respectful and kind in all interactions
Possession of a toy or look- alike weapon	Be safe and kind in all interactions
Possession of obscene or offensive materials	Respectful and kind in all interactions
Cheating and/or plagiarism	Have courage and integrity at all times
Issuing any implied or explicit threat	Respectful and kind in all interactions
Attempt to assault anyone within the school community	Respectful and kind in all interactions

Consequences - Minor Offenses

If a student commits any of the infractions listed as a minor offense, the student will lose money in their paycheck. At teacher discretion, student may also publicly apologize for the infraction. Teacher uses these opportunities to have “teachable moments” with scholars by quickly correcting minor offense, clearly giving paycheck reduction consequence, and deciding if student and environment are best served by apology.

Consequences - Moderate Offenses

Students who commit a moderate offense (which includes a second minor offense) will automatically be given a Reflection Sheet and will be assigned to Principal Office Hours that day after school. They will also have a second reduction of paycheck dollars. The student will stay in class if at all possible, but may be asked to report directly to Principal’s Office with Reflection Sheet if deemed too disruptive to other student’s learning. The student will then meet

with the Principal from 4:15-5:00pm that day. The Principal, after reviewing the scholar's Reflection Sheet and having a coaching conversation, may determine to add additional consequences

Examples of possible additional consequences would include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Eating lunch in the office and/or in lunch detention
- Remaining in school for the entire afternoon during shortened days
- Serving Saturday detention
- Apologizing to their peers in small groups or at a school assembly
- Performing extra service for the school

Additional days of Principal's Office Hours may be added based on the severity of the behavior. Multiple moderate infractions may result in a major infraction.

Serious Offenses

Consequences for a major infraction are an immediate suspension. Students are sent directly to the Principal's office and fill out a Reflection Sheet. They remain in the Principal's Office until someone from VCA leadership can meet with them, and they have completely filled out their Reflection Sheet. Depending on the severity of the incident, the suspension may be in-school or out of school. The number of days the student shall be suspended will be determined by the Principal of Valor Collegiate. In most cases the number shall not exceed ten (10) days. Additional targeted and corrective consequences may be imposed as appropriate for offenses such as cheating and plagiarism.

Principal Office Hours / Reflection Sheets

A student assigned to Principal's Office Hours (POH) will be required to complete a Reflection Sheet and attend POH from 4:15-5:00 each day (except Wednesdays – Wed consequences will be served on Thursday), essentially an essay reflecting on the nature of the offense, the impact the offense has on the school community, and the alternative acceptable choices that the student could have made. Students who do not make adequate progress towards completing the assignment will be assigned additional days of Principal's Office Hours. Principal Office Hours will be monitored at all times by Valor Collegiate leadership, with some Master Teachers.

Suspension and Expulsion Policy

This Pupil Suspension and Expulsion Policy is established in order to promote learning and protect the safety and well-being of all students. When the Policy is violated, it may be necessary to suspend or expel a student from regular classroom instruction. This policy shall serve as the School's policy and procedures for student suspension and expulsion and it may be amended from time to time without the need to amend the charter so long as the amendments comport with applicable law.

Staff shall enforce disciplinary rules and procedures fairly and consistently amongst all students. This Policy and its Procedures will be printed and distributed as part of the Student Handbook and will clearly describe discipline expectations.

Discipline includes but is not limited to advising and counseling students, conferring with parents/guardians, detention during and after school hours, use of alternative educational environments, suspension and expulsion.

Corporal punishment shall not be used as a disciplinary measure against any student. Corporal punishment includes the willful infliction of, or willfully causing the infliction of, or willfully causing the infliction of, physical pain on a student. For purposes of the policy, corporal punishment does not include an employee's use of force that is reasonable and necessary to protect the employee, students, staff or other persons or to prevent damage to school property. Suspended or expelled students shall be excluded from all school and school-related activities unless otherwise agreed during the period of suspension or expulsion.

The School administration shall ensure that students and their parents/guardians are notified in writing upon enrollment of all discipline policies and procedures. The notice shall state that these Policy and Administrative Procedures are available on request at the Chief Executive Officer's office. Suspended or expelled students shall be excluded from all school and school related activities unless otherwise agreed during the period of suspension or expulsion.

A student identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom the School has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act ("IDEIA") or who is qualified for services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504") is subject to the same grounds for suspension and expulsion and is accorded the same due process procedures applicable to regular education students except when federal and state law mandates additional or different procedures. The School will follow Section 504, of the

IDEIA, and all federal and state laws, when imposing any form of discipline on a student identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom the School has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability or who is otherwise qualified for such services or protections in according due process to such students.

Administrative Procedures For Pupil Suspension And Expulsion

A. Definitions (as used in this policy)

1. "Board" means The Valor Collegiate Academies Board of Directors.
2. "Expulsion" means disenrollment from the School.
3. "School day" means a day upon which the School is in session or weekdays during the summer recess.
4. "Suspension" means removal of a pupil from ongoing instruction for adjustment purposes. However, "suspension" does not mean the following:
 - a. Reassignment to another education program or class at the School where the pupil will receive continuing instruction for the length of day prescribed by the School's Board for pupils of the same grade level.
 - b. Referral to a certificated employee designated by the Principal to advise pupils.
 - c. Removal from the class but without reassignment to another class for the remainder of the class period without sending the pupil to the Principal or designee.
5. "Pupil" includes a pupil's parent or guardian or legal counsel or other representative.
6. "School" means Valor Collegiate Academies.

B. Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion of Students

A student may be suspended or expelled for prohibited misconduct if the act is related to school activity or school attendance occurring at anytime including but not limited to: a) while on school grounds; b) while going to or coming from school; c) during the lunch period, whether on or off the school campus; d) during, going to, or coming from a school-sponsored activity.

C. Enumerated Offenses

Students may be suspended or expelled for any of the following acts when it is determined the pupil:

1. Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person or willfully used force or violence upon the person of another, except in self-defense.
2. Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the student had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with the Director/Administrator or designee's concurrence.
3. Unlawfully possessed, used, sold or otherwise furnished, or was under the influence of, any controlled substance, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind.
4. Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any controlled substance, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant of any kind, and then sold, delivered or otherwise furnished to any person another liquid substance or material and represented same as controlled substance, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant.
5. Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion.
6. Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property.
7. Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property.
8. Possessed or used tobacco or any products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including but not limited to cigars, cigarettes, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets and betel.
9. Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
10. Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia.

11. Disrupted school activities or otherwise willfully defied the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, administrators, other school officials, or other school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties.
12. Knowingly received stolen school property or private property.
13. Possessed an imitation firearm, i.e., a replica of a firearm that is so substantially similar in physical properties to an existing firearm as to lead a reasonable person to conclude that the replica is a firearm.
14. Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault or sexual battery.
15. Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a student who is a complaining witness or witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for the purpose of preventing that student from being a witness and/or retaliating against that student for being a witness.
16. Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell, or sold the prescription drug Soma.
17. Engaged in or attempted to engage in hazing of another.
18. Aiding or abetting the infliction or attempted infliction of physical injury to another person.
19. Made terrorist threats against school officials and/or school property.
20. Committed sexual harassment.
21. Caused, attempted to cause, threatened to cause, or participated in an act of hate violence.
22. Intentionally harassed, threatened or intimidated a student or group of students to the extent of having the actual and reasonably expected effect of materially disrupting class work, creating substantial disorder, and invading student rights by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment.
23. Consistently fails to meet VCA behavior Expectations, defined as 3 or more Reflection Sheets in an 8 week period for consideration for suspension, and 5 or more Reflection Sheets in two successive 8 week periods for consideration for expulsion.

D. Suspension Procedure

Suspensions shall be initiated according to the following procedures.

1) Conference - Suspension shall be preceded, if possible, by a conference conducted by the Principal or the Principal's designee with the student and his or her parent and, whenever practicable, the teacher, supervisor or school employee who referred the student to the Director. The conference may be omitted if the Principal or designee determines that an emergency situation exists. An "emergency situation" involves a clear and present danger to the lives, safety or health of students or school personnel. If a student is suspended without this conference, both the parent/guardian and student shall be notified of the student's right to return to school for the purpose of a conference.

At the conference, the pupil shall be informed of the reason for the disciplinary action and the evidence against him or her and shall be given the opportunity to present his or her version and evidence in his or her defense. This conference shall be held within two school days, unless the pupil waives this right or is physically unable to attend for any reason, including, but not limited to incarceration or hospitalization. No penalties may be imposed on a pupil for failure of the pupil's parent or guardian to attend a conference with school officials. Reinstatement of the suspended pupil shall not be contingent upon attendance by the pupil's parent or guardian at the conference.

2) Notice to Parents/Guardians - At the time of the suspension, a School employee shall make a reasonable effort to contact the parent/guardian by telephone or in person. Whenever a student is suspended, the parent/guardian shall be notified in writing of the suspension. This notice shall state the specific offense committed by the student. In addition, the notice may also state the date and time when the student may return to school. If school officials wish to ask the parent/guardian to confer regarding matters pertinent to the suspension, the notice may request that the parent/guardian respond to such requests without delay.

3) Suspension Time Limits/Recommendation for Expulsion - Suspensions, when not including a recommendation for expulsion shall not exceed five (5) consecutive school days per suspension. Upon a recommendation of expulsion by the Principal, the pupil and the pupil's guardian or representative will be invited to a conference to determine if the suspension for the pupil should be extended pending an expulsion

hearing. This determination will be made by the Principal upon either of the following determinations: a) the pupil's presence will be disruptive to the education process; or b) the pupil poses a threat or danger to others. Upon either determination, the pupil's suspension will be extended pending the results of an expulsion hearing.

E. Authority to Expel

A student may be expelled either by the Board following a hearing before it or by the Board upon the recommendation of an Administrative Panel to be assigned by the Board as needed. The Administrative Panel may recommend expulsion of any student found to have committed an expellable offense.

F. Expulsion Procedures

Students recommended for expulsion are entitled to a hearing to determine whether the student should be expelled. Unless postponed for good cause, the hearing shall be held within thirty (30) school days after the Principal or designee determines that the Pupil has committed an expellable offense. The expulsion hearing will be presided over by the Board Chair or the Chair of the Administrative Panel. In the event a Panel hears the case, it will make a recommendation to the Board for a final decision whether to expel. The hearing shall be held in closed session unless the pupil makes a written request for a public hearing three (3) days prior to the hearing. Written notice of the hearing shall be forwarded to the student and the student's parent/guardian at least ten (10) calendar days before the date of the hearing. Upon mailing the notice, it shall be deemed served upon the pupil. The notice shall include:

- 1) The date and place of the expulsion hearing;
- 2) A statement of the specific facts, charges and offenses upon which the proposed expulsion is based;
- 3) A copy of the School's disciplinary rules which relate to the alleged violation;
- 4) Notification of the student's or parent/guardian's obligation to provide information about the student's status at the school to any other school district or school to which the student seeks enrollment;
- 5) The opportunity for the student or the student's parent/guardian to appear in person or to employ and be represented by counsel or a non-attorney advisor;
- 6) The right to inspect and obtain copies of all documents to be used at the hearing;
- 7) The opportunity to confront and question all witnesses who testify at the hearing;
- 8) The opportunity to question all evidence presented and to present oral and documentary evidence on the student's behalf including witnesses.

G. Special Procedures for Expulsion Hearings Involving Sexual Assault or Battery Offenses

The School may, upon a finding of good cause, determine that the disclosure of either the identity of the witness or the testimony of that witness at the hearing, or both, would subject the witness to an unreasonable risk of psychological or physical harm. Upon this determination, the testimony of the witness may be presented at the hearing in the form of sworn declarations which shall be examined only by the School or the hearing officer. Copies of these sworn declarations, edited to delete the name and identity of the witness, shall be made available to the pupil.

- 1) The complaining witness in any sexual assault or battery case must be provided with a copy of the applicable disciplinary rules and advised of his/her right to:
 - (a) receive a five day notice of his/her scheduled testimony;
 - (b) have up to two (2) adult support persons of his/her choosing present in the hearing at the time he/she testifies, which may include a parent, guardian, or legal counsel; and;
 - (c) elect to have the hearing closed while testifying.
- 2) The School must also provide the victim a room separate from the hearing room for the complaining witness' use prior to and during breaks in testimony.

- 3) At the discretion of the person or panel conducting the hearing, the complaining witness shall be allowed periods of relief from examination and cross-examination during which he or she may leave the hearing room.
- 4) The person conducting the expulsion hearing may also arrange the seating within the hearing room to facilitate a less intimidating environment for the complaining witness.
- 5) The person conducting the expulsion hearing may also limit time for taking the testimony of the complaining witness to the hours he/she is normally in school, if there is no good cause to take the testimony during other hours.
- 6) Prior to a complaining witness testifying, the support persons must be admonished that the hearing is confidential. Nothing in the law precludes the person presiding over the hearing from removing a support person whom the presiding person finds is disrupting the hearing. The person conducting the hearing may permit any one of the support persons for the complaining witness to accompany him or her to the witness stand.
- 7) If one or both of the support persons is also a witness, the School must present evidence that the witness' presence is both desired by the witness and will be helpful to the School. The person presiding over the hearing shall permit the witness to stay unless it is established that there is a substantial risk that the testimony of the complaining witness would be influenced by the support person, in which case the presiding official shall admonish the support person or persons not to prompt, sway, or influence the witness in any way. Nothing shall preclude the presiding officer from exercising his or her discretion to remove a person from the hearing whom he or she believes is prompting, swaying, or influencing the witness.
- 8) The testimony of the support person shall be presented before the testimony of the complaining witness and the complaining witness shall be excluded from the courtroom during that testimony.
- 9) Especially for charges involving sexual assault or battery, if the hearing is to be conducted in the public at the request of the pupil being expelled, the complaining witness shall have the right to have his/her testimony heard in a closed session when testifying at a public meeting would threaten serious psychological harm to the complaining witness and there are no alternative procedures to avoid the threatened harm. The alternative procedures may include videotaped depositions or contemporaneous examination in another place communicated to the hearing room by means of closed-circuit television.
- 10) Evidence of specific instances of a complaining witness' prior sexual conduct is presumed inadmissible and shall not be heard absent a determination by the person conducting the hearing that extraordinary circumstances exist requiring the evidence be heard. Before such a determination regarding extraordinary circumstance can be made, the witness shall be provided notice and an opportunity to present opposition to the introduction of the evidence. In the hearing on the admissibility of the evidence, the complaining witness shall be entitled to be represented by a parent, legal counsel, or other support person. Reputation or opinion evidence regarding the sexual behavior of the complaining witness is not admissible for any purpose.

H. Record of Hearing

A record of the hearing shall be made and may be maintained by any means, including electronic recording, as long as a reasonably accurate and complete written transcription of the proceedings can be made.

I. Presentation of Evidence

While technical rules of evidence do not apply to expulsion hearings, evidence may be admitted and used as proof only if it is the kind of evidence on which reasonable persons can rely in the conduct of serious affairs. A recommendation by the Administrative Panel to expel must be supported by substantial evidence that the student committed an expellable offense. Findings of fact shall be based solely on the evidence at the hearing. While hearsay evidence is admissible, no decision to expel shall be based solely on hearsay, and sworn declarations may be admitted as testimony from witnesses of whom the Board, Panel or designee determines that disclosure of their identity or testimony at the hearing may subject them to an unreasonable risk of physical or psychological harm. If, due to a written request by the expelled pupil, the hearing is held at a public meeting, and the charge is committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault or committing a sexual battery, a complaining witness shall have the right to have his or her testimony heard in a session closed to the public. The decision of the Administrative Panel shall be in the form of a written recommendation to the Board who will make a final determination regarding the expulsion. The final decision by the Board shall be made within ten (10) school days following the conclusion of the hearing. The Decision of the Board is final. If the

expulsion hearing panel decides not to recommend expulsion, the student shall immediately be returned to his/her educational program.

J. Written Notice to Expel

The Director or designee following a decision of the Board to expel shall send written notice of the decision to expel, including the Board's findings of fact, to the student or parent/guardian. This notice shall include the following:

- 1) Notice of the specific offense committed by the student.
- 2) Notice of the student's or parent/guardian's obligation to inform any new district in which the student seeks to enroll of the student's status with the School.

K. Disciplinary Records

The School shall maintain records of all student suspensions and expulsions at the School. Such records shall be made available for the Charter Authorizer review upon request.

L. No Right to Appeal

The pupil shall have no right of appeal beyond the appeal at Valor Collegiate Academies Board of Directors level from expulsion from the School as the Board's decision to expel shall be final.

M. Expelled Pupils/Alternative Education

Pupils who are expelled shall be responsible for seeking alternative education programs.

N. Rehabilitation Plans

Students who are expelled from the School shall be given a rehabilitation plan upon expulsion as developed by the Board at the time of the expulsion order, which may include, but is not limited to, periodic review as well as assessment at the time of review for readmission. The rehabilitation plan should include a date not later than one year from the date of expulsion when the pupil may reapply to the School for readmission.

O. Readmission

The decision to readmit a pupil or to admit a previously expelled pupil from another school district or charter school shall be in the sole discretion of the Board following a meeting with the Chief Executive Officer and the pupil and guardian or representative, to determine whether the pupil has successfully completed the rehabilitation plan and to determine whether the pupil poses a threat to others or will be disruptive to the school environment. The Chief Executive Officer shall make a recommendation to the Board following the meeting regarding his or her determination. The pupil's readmission is also contingent upon the School's capacity at the time the student seeks readmission or admission.

P. Special Procedures for the Consideration of Suspension and Expulsion of Students with Disabilities

1) Notification of District

The School shall immediately notify the District and coordinate the procedures in this policy with the District the discipline of any student with a disability or student who the School or District would be deemed to have knowledge that the student had a disability

2) Services During Suspension

Students suspended for more than ten (10) school days in a school year shall continue to receive services so as to enable the student to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP; and receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment or functional analysis, and behavioral intervention services and modifications, that are designed to address the behavior violation so that it does not recur. These services may be provided in an interim alternative educational setting.

3) Procedural Safeguards/Manifestation Determination

Within ten (10) school days of a recommendation for expulsion or any decision to change the placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct, the School, the parent, and

relevant members of the IEP Team shall review all relevant information in the student's file, including the child's IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parents to determine:

- a) If the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the child's disability; or
- b) If the conduct in question was the direct result of the local educational agency's failure to implement the IEP.

If the School, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team determine that either of the above is applicable for the child, the conduct shall be determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability. If the School, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team make the determination that the conduct was a manifestation of the child's disability, the IEP Team shall:

- a) Conduct a functional behavioral assessment or a functional analysis assessment, and implement a behavioral intervention plan for such child, provided that the School had not conducted such assessment prior to such determination before the behavior that resulted in a change in placement;
- b) If a behavioral intervention plan has been developed, review the behavioral intervention plan if the child already has such a behavioral intervention plan, and modify it, as necessary, to address the behavior; and
- c) c) Return the child to the placement from which the child was removed, unless the parent and the School agree to a change of placement as part of the modification of the behavioral intervention plan.

If the School, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP team determine that the behavior was not a manifestation of the student's disability and that the conduct in question was not a result of the failure to implement the IEP, then the School may apply the relevant disciplinary procedures to children with disabilities in the same manner and for the same duration as the procedures would be applied to students without disabilities.

4) Due Process Appeals

The parent of a child with a disability who disagrees with any decision regarding placement, or the manifestation determination, or the School believes that maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others, may request an expedited administrative hearing through the Special Education Unit of the Office of Administrative Hearings.

When an appeal relating to the placement of the student or the manifestation determination has been requested by either the parent or the School, the student shall remain in the interim alternative educational setting pending the decision of the hearing officer or until the expiration of the forty-five (45) day time period provided for in an interim alternative educational setting, whichever occurs first, unless the parent and the School agree otherwise.

5) Special Circumstances

School personnel may consider any unique circumstances on a case-by-case basis when determining whether to order a change in placement for a child with a disability who violates a code of student conduct. The Chief Executive Officer or designee may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than forty-five (45) days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability in cases where a student:

- a) Carries or possesses a weapon, as defined in 18 USC 930, to or at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function;
- b) Knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function; or
- c) Has inflicted serious bodily injury, as defined by 20 USC 1415(k)(7)(D), upon a person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function.

6) Interim Alternative Educational Setting

The student's interim alternative educational setting shall be determined by the student's IEP team.

7) Procedures for Students Not Yet Eligible for Special Education Services

A student who has not been identified as an individual with disabilities pursuant to IDEIA and who has violated the district's disciplinary procedures may assert the procedural safeguards granted under this administrative regulation only if the School had knowledge that the student was disabled before the behavior occurred.

The School shall be deemed to have knowledge that the student had a disability if one of the following conditions exists:

- a) The parent/guardian has expressed concern in writing, or orally if the parent/guardian does not know how to write or has a disability that prevents a written statement, to School supervisory or administrative personnel, or to one of the child's teachers, that the student is in need of special education or related services.
 - b) The parent has requested an evaluation of the child.
 - c) The child's teacher, or other School personnel, has expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the child, directly to the director of special education or to other School supervisory personnel.
- 8) If the School knew or should have known the student had a disability under any of the three (3) circumstances described above, the student may assert any of the protections available to IDEIA-eligible children with disabilities, including the right to stay-put.

If the School had no basis for knowledge of the student's disability, it shall proceed with the proposed discipline.

The School shall conduct an expedited evaluation if requested by the parents; however the student shall remain in the education placement determined by the School pending the results of the evaluation.

The School shall not be deemed to have knowledge of that the student had a disability if the parent has not allowed an evaluation, refused services, or if the student has been evaluated and determined to not be eligible.

ATTACHMENT 6 - FACILITIES PLAN

The Valor Collegiate Academies (VCA) founding team understands that finding a suitable facility is often one of the greatest challenges facing charter school operators. Finding buildings that are in ideal locations, that have the characteristics of a school, and that can be utilized on the needed timeline can be very challenging. While VCA has not yet secured its facility, it will employ the following primary strategies in order to minimize the risk associated with finding a great facility:

Financing: VCA will work with the Tennessee Charter School Incubator, Pacific Charter School Development, the Charter School Development Corporation, the Charter School Growth Fund, and/or Canyon-Agassi to secure facilities financing. All of the aforementioned parties are very experienced in facilities financing and we are confident that they will provide excellent support in securing financing that fits within the budget constraints detailed in Attachment 9 – Public Charter School Budget Template.

Location and partnership with District: It is VCA’s first preference to work with Metropolitan Nashville Public School System to locate a District facility. VCA will be open to opportunities that the District believes may help with their strategic Facilities plan.

Based on our facility analysis, VCA approximates a need for 70 square feet per student each year as we grow to capacity. In the first year, we will therefore need a minimum of 10,150 square feet. In the fourth year we will need approximately 35,000 square feet. Once the high school program is added and in the fifth year of operation (about 46,000 total square feet), VCA will plan to lease two facilities, reaching about 81,000 square feet in its final year for both a middle and high school.

In terms of facility and space usage, the school will be comprised of 6 classrooms in Year 1, one Special Education Resource Room, 1 Teacher Planning Room, a Main Office and a Large Common Area. Our facility usage strategy is consistent with our core values and school design, including vital opportunities for rich staff collaboration and the development of an ideal school culture by utilizing space conducive to developing a community of learners.

VCA has carefully considered facility options within its overall growth strategy and has developed two facility scenarios, either lease or purchase options. Overall, we have identified 5 viable facilities. If VCA is unable to secure external philanthropic funding, we will move forward with the lease option. We have presented three options below that we are investigating as possible locations:

Lease Option 1: Food Lion at 4529 Nolensville Pike

This location is ideal for VCA. It has an affordable Total Annual/SF and the landlord is amenable to negotiating a “build out” lease with VCA that would allow for the school to pay for only the square footage it uses in the first year (around 11,000 square feet), and then build out and pay for the remaining square footage in year 2. The total square footage of the building would require portables to be used to accommodate students in 8th grade, but the site has enough space for this to happen, and the cost would make it a very affordable option for VCA.

Leasing of Space from Traditional Third-Party Landlord			
Development Cost		Total Expense	
Location:	Food Lion Lease	Rent	\$285,858.00
Space Size (SF):	31,762	Build-out	\$1,064,324.50
Parcel size (ac):	N/A	Total	\$1,350,182.50
Rent	\$285,858.00	Total/SF	\$42.51
Lease/Rate/SF	\$9.00		
Improvements	\$952,860.00	Opex/SF	\$4.50
Improvements/SF	\$30.00	Opex/Total	\$142,929.00
Site Improvements (total)	\$0.00		
Total Hard:	\$952,860.00	Assumed Enrollment	485
		Total Annual	\$428,787.00
Arch/Eng (% of hard cost):	4.00%	Total Annual/SF	\$13.50
Arch/Eng total:	\$38,114.40	Total Annual/Student	\$884.10
		Build Out Lease	

Civil:	\$15,000.00
Legal:	\$25,000.00
C/M (% of hard cost):	3.50%
C/M:	\$33,350.10
Total Soft:	\$111,464.50
Total Construction	\$1,064,324.50
Total Construction/SF	\$33.51
Total Development	\$1,350,182.50
Total Development/SF	\$42.51

Total Annual Year 1	\$128,636.10
Total Annual Year 2	\$285,572.14
Total Annual Year 3	\$428,787.00

Budget Amount Year 1	\$218,000.00
Budget Amount Year 2	\$398,899.00
Budget Amount Year 3	\$575,291.00

Lease Option 2: 619/621 Norris Avenue

The Norris Avenue site is a good option for VCA as well. The landlord is agreeable to a “build-out” lease, essentially allowing for the school to pay as we grow, and the site could accommodate the middle school with the addition of portables in 8th grade. The location is not as ideal for our target area, but the cost is well within our budget numbers.

Leasing of Space from Traditional Third-Party Landlord			
Development Cost		Total Expense	
Location:	Norris Avenue Conversion	Rent	\$110,814.50
Space Size (SF):	26,074	Build-out	\$1,581,625.25
Parcel size (ac):	N/A	Total	\$1,692,439.75
Rent	\$110,814.50	Total/SF	\$64.91
Lease/Rate/SF	\$4.25		
Improvements	\$1,434,070.00	Opex/SF	\$4.50
Improvements/SF	\$55.00	Opex/Total	\$117,333.00
Site Improvements (total)	\$0.00	Assumed Enrollment	485
Total Hard:	\$1,434,070.00	Total Annual	\$228,147.50
Arch/Eng (% of hard cost):	4.00%	Total Annual/SF	\$8.75
Arch/Eng total:	\$57,362.80	Total Annual/Student	\$470.41
Civil:	\$15,000.00	Build Out Lease	
Legal:	\$25,000.00	Total Annual Year 1	\$68,444.25
C/M (% of hard cost):	3.50%	Total Annual Year 2	\$151,946.24
C/M:	\$50,192.45	Total Annual Year 3	\$228,147.50
Total Soft:	\$147,555.25	Budget Amount Year 1	\$218,000.00
Total Construction	\$1,581,625.25	Budget Amount Year 2	\$398,899.00
Total Construction/SF	\$60.66	Budget Amount Year 3	\$575,291.00
Total Development	\$1,692,439.75		
Total Development/SF	\$64.91		

Lease Option 3: 2990 Sidco Drive

The Sidco site is a third solid option for VCA. The landlord is agreeable to a “build-out” lease, essentially allowing for the school to pay as we grow, and the site could accommodate the middle school with the addition of portables in 8th grade. The location is not as ideal for our target area, but the cost is well within our budget numbers.

Leasing of Space from Traditional Third-Party Landlord			
Development Cost		Total Expense	
Location:	Sidco Drive Flex	Rent	\$300,000.00
Space Size (SF):	30,000	Build-out	\$523,750.00
Parcel size (ac):	N/A	Total	\$823,750.00
Rent	\$300,000.00	Total/SF	\$27.46
Lease/Rate/SF	\$10.00		
		Opex/SF	\$4.50
Improvements	\$450,000.00	Opex/Total	\$135,000.00
Improvements/SF	\$15.00		
Site Improvements (total)	\$0.00	Assumed Enrollment	485
Total Hard:	\$450,000.00	Total Annual	\$435,000.00
		Total Annual/SF	\$14.50
Arch/Eng (% of hard cost):	4.00%	Total Annual/Student	\$896.91
Arch/Eng total:	\$18,000.00		
Civil:	\$15,000.00		
Legal:	\$25,000.00		
C/M (% of hard cost):	3.50%		
C/M:	\$15,750.00		
Total Soft:	\$73,750.00		
Total Construction	\$523,750.00		
Total Construction/SF	\$17.46		
Total Development	\$823,750.00		
Total Development/SF	\$27.46		

Build Out Lease	
Total Annual Year 1	\$130,500.00
Total Annual Year 2	\$289,710.00
Total Annual Year 3	\$435,000.00

Budget Amount Year 1	\$218,000.00
Budget Amount Year 2	\$398,899.00
Budget Amount Year 3	\$575,291.00

Purchase Options

In the event that the school can secure additional funding, a more aggressive facilities strategy will be used to purchase and build out a facility, two of which have been identified. We especially like the old Social Security building located near Nolensville Road and Harding. The specific costs estimates of the Nolensville Road Property for Year 1 using various purchasing options are provided in the table below.

Purchase Option 1: Social Security Building at 4527 Nolensville Pike

VCA is very interested in this building. It is in a great location (near Harding on Nolensville) and is a great size for the first two years for the school. There is also additional space for portable buildings for 7th and 8th grade on the site. We are confident that we will be able to secure the philanthropy needed to secure a building such as this (approximately \$169,000) and will aggressively pursue this option if our charter is approved.

Even without obtaining philanthropy upfront for these purchases VCA will pursue financing that would allow for some of the upfront costs to be paid later in the terms of agreement. The strong financial position of the school in later years would allow for this type of opportunity to be explored as well.

Purchase/Redevelopment of Nolensville Road Property			
Development Cost		Financing: 100%	
Location:	SSN Reuse	Rate	5.25%
Bldg Size (SF):	18,828	Term	20
Parcel size (ac):	3.74	Payments	12
Purchase Price	\$1,826,316.00	LTC	100.00%
Purchase Price/SF:	\$97.00	Loan	\$3,094,620.50
		Cap Required	\$0.00

Improvements	\$847,260.00
Improvements/SF	\$45.00
Site Improvements (total)	\$300,000.00
Total Hard:	\$1,147,260.00
Arch/Eng (% of hard cost):	4.00%
Arch/Eng total:	\$45,890.40
Civil:	\$10,000.00
Legal:	\$25,000.00
C/M (% of hard cost):	3.50%
C/M:	\$40,154.10
Total Soft:	\$121,044.50
Total Construction	\$1,268,304.50
Total Construction/SF	\$67.36
Total Development	\$3,094,620.50
Total Development/SF	\$164.36

Annual Debt Payment	\$250,235.04
Annual/SF	\$13.29
Enrollment (Year 2)	265
Annual/Student	\$944.28
Opex/SF	\$4.50
Opex/Total	\$84,726.00
Property Taxes (if required)	\$57,683.73
Property Taxes/SF	\$3.06
Total Opex/Taxes	\$142,409.73
Total Opex/Taxes/SF	\$7.56
Total Annual	\$392,644.76
Total Annual/SF ("Rent")	\$20.85
Total Annual/Student	\$1,481.68
Build Out Rate (Year 1)	196,322.38
Build Out Rate (Year 2)	392,644.76
Budget Amount Year 1	\$218,000.00
Budget Amount Year 2	\$398,899.00
Philanthropy Need	\$168,390.53

Purchase Option 2: 5714 Edmondson Pike

The second facility under consideration using the purchase option is located on Edmondson Pike and Old Hickory. This site is in a good location, but pushed the edge of where we would like to locate. However, this particular site is interesting because VCA could purchase the entire site in Year 1 and rent parts of the building out to current renters, making it essentially like a “build-out” cost that fits well with the growing charter budget. Even if we were not able to secure good leases with the current tenants in the areas we did not need, the total philanthropy need (\$236k) is within what we believe is possible for our site.

Purchase/Renovation of Edmondson Pike Property			
Development Cost		Financing: 100%	
Location:	Edmonson Pike Reuse	Rate	5.25%
Bldg Size (SF):	28,805	Term	20
Parcel size (ac):	4.47	Payments	12
Purchase Price	\$1,728,300.00	LTC	100.00%
Purchase Price/SF:	\$60.00	Loan	\$3,484,241.88
		Cap Required	\$0.00
Improvements	\$1,296,225.00		
Improvements/SF	\$45.00		
Site Improvements (total)	\$300,000.00	Annual Debt Payment	\$281,740.33
Total Hard:	\$1,596,225.00	Annual/SF	\$9.78
		Assumed Enrollment	335
Arch/Eng (% of hard cost):	4.00%	Annual/Student	\$841.02

Arch/Eng total:	\$63,849.00
Civil:	\$15,000.00
Legal:	\$25,000.00
C/M (% of hard cost):	3.50%
C/M:	\$55,867.88
Total Soft:	\$159,716.88
Total Construction	\$1,755,941.88
Total Construction/SF	\$60.96
Total Development	\$3,484,241.88
Total Development/SF	\$120.96

Opex/SF	\$4.50
Opex/Total	\$129,622.50
Property Taxes (if required)	\$64,946.27
Property Taxes/SF	\$2.25
Total Opex/Taxes	\$194,568.77
Total Opex/Taxes/SF	\$6.75
Total Annual	\$476,309.10
Total Annual/SF ("Rent")	\$16.54
Total Annual/Student	\$1,421.82
Budget Amount Year 1	\$218,000.00
Budget Amount Year 2	\$398,899.00
Budget Amount Year 3	\$575,291.00
Philanthropy Need	\$236,737.29

In summary, VCA is confident that we will find a quality facility in our target area. If we are unable to secure additional funding we will pursue a build-out lease option similar to many current charter operators. If we are able to secure philanthropy we will pursue a purchase option.

VCA anticipates securing its facility with a Letter of Intent in place, pending the approval of the charter application and notice of external funding, by August of 2013. This will provide a full calendar year in order to customize the space to meet the needs of the school and allow it to begin its journey toward meeting its mission.

Finally, VCA will ensure that any facility it occupies will fully comply with T.C.A. § 49-13-105, the Americans with Disabilities Act and any applicable city planning review procedures.

ATTACHMENT 7: TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Valor Collegiate Academies (VCA) believes that transportation can be a barrier for some students to succeed at high levels. As a result, we have decided to provide an effective and efficient transportation service for our scholars.

VCA will contract with a private transportation service. The contract and relationship with the contracted service provider will be overseen and managed by the Director of Operations, ensuring that the focus of the Principal will remain on increasing academic achievement and student learning.

Based on our market analysis²⁷, we anticipate providing transportation services to approximately 50% of our scholars each year (90 scholars in Year 1, 135 scholars in Year 2, 193 scholars in Year 3, 245 scholars in Year 4 and 345 scholars in Year 5. At approximately 50 scholars per bus, 2 buses will be required in Year 1, increasing to 7 buses in Year 5). Assuming a cost of \$175 per bus each day, the anticipated VCA investment with respect to its transportation costs will be \$100,000 in year 1 and \$345,000 in Year 5. VCA will ensure that it selects a transportation contractor that has the capability to provide services to students with disabilities as required by applicable law and have assumed the cost of these services within the overall assumptions presented above. As stated in our contingency planning in Attachment 10– Budget Narrative, if we find that more students will need transportation services than our market analysis predicted we will ensure that all scholars that need transportation to school are serviced.

VCA also understands that it must abide by state and federal regulations regarding its transportation service, particularly including the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. As a result, we will work with our transportation contractor, both during the initial negotiations and contract development and after implementation, and use additional resources (such as public transportation options) to ensure that any scholar that meets the qualification for being homeless or temporarily displaced will be able to remain in the school even if temporarily living outside of the general boundaries that transportation services are provided. In this way, VCA endeavors to minimize the impact of homelessness, as it is defined in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, as a barrier to a sustained high-quality education.

²⁷ VCA researched five charter schools operating in MNPS currently (Nashville Prep, Liberty Collegiate, STEM Prep, LEAD, and KIPP Nashville) and found that a 50% estimate for students utilizing school transportation was a safe assumption. In addition, at the VCA Family Room Events that were conducted over the past 9 months, a survey was given to parents regarding transportation – while the results were difficult to draw strong conclusions because parents really needed to know where the school would be located, we did find that about 25-50% of parents said they would utilize VCA transportation. An additional strong cultural aspect of Summit Prep Charter School was organizing car pools. VCA will coordinate this in the summer each year for parents, and we found it to significantly drop the number of students who wanted or needed VCA transportation.

ATTACHMENT 8 - FOOD SERVICE PLAN

Valor Collegiate Academies will provide a food service program in accordance and compliance with the nutrition regulations outlined in T.C.A. §§ 49-6-2301--2307. The school will offer all students the opportunity to participate in the school breakfast and lunch program. The school will provide its food service program on a contracted basis with the Chief Operating Officer overseeing and managing the appropriate vendor. VCA will seek bids from local food service providers, all of which will include a price per meal, including the following: a reimbursable meal including milk, condiments applicable to the menu, serving utensils if applicable, packaging and containers needed to transport food in a sanitary manner, and transportation to and from the school. Any vendor must submit milk in a variety of fat contents as defined by current regulations of the National School Lunch Program.

Sample contract provisions and expectations include:

- Maintaining Tennessee Health Department Bi-Annual Inspection with a Passing Score
- Having a HACCP program in place and be able to provide proof of such
- Maintaining Daily Individual Meal Food Production Records
- Maintaining Daily Individual Meal Component Documentation
- Maintaining a “Buy American” Provision
- Maintaining 21-day Monthly Cycle Menus
- Making accommodations for Food Allergies
- Insuring hot meals maintained at 140 degrees or above and cold meals at 40 degrees or below prior to and during transport and delivery
- Providing meals that are individually packaged and sealed.
- All meals will be priced as a unit, which meet USDA requirements
- Any provider shall implement the “Traditional Menu Planning Approach”
- All meals and menus will be appropriate to the age of Purpose Prep scholars
- The provider substitute food components for a student with disabilities (7 C.F.R. Section 15b) if their disability restricts their diet.

In addition, the Chief Operating Officer will be responsible for working in concert with the Office Manager and Student Support Coordinator to ensure that all parents and guardians complete the federal Free-and-Reduced Price Lunch Program to determine eligibility. The school will employ various strategies to ensure completion of appropriate forms by including them in initial student documentation, orientation, other school events and through individual communication with parents.

ATTACHMENT 11 – INSURANCE

MARTIN & ZERFOSS

INSURANCE & BONDS SINCE 1978

March 21, 2013

Director of Charter Schools
2601 Bransford Ave.
Nashville, TN 37204

RE: Valor Collegiate Academy Intent of Insurance Coverage

Dear Mr. Coverstone:

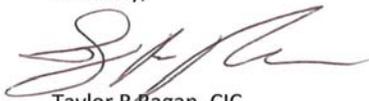
Valor Collegiate Academy has begun the process of fulfilling the insurance requirements that Metro Nashville Public Schools requires be maintained for their Charter Agreement. As stated by MNPS guidelines General Liability/Automobile Liability Policy: must be equal to or greater than \$5,000,000. This insurance will be primary insurance and the first \$1,000,000 dollars will be with a company licensed in Tennessee with an AM Best rating of at least A. The following \$4,000,000 layer will be covered under an excess liability policy or an umbrella policy. This policy will name MNPS as an additional insured and will include contractual liability. The automobile coverage will cover all owned, hired and non-owned vehicles in the amount of \$1,000,000 with the additional \$4,000,000 excess layer.

The Professional Liability policy for the Directors and Officers for Valor Collegiate Academy will be equal to or greater than \$5,000,000 and the Teacher Professional Liability cover will be equal or greater than \$1,000,000. Workers Compensation and Employers Liability policy will be equal to or greater than \$500,000 each accident, \$500,000 each employee and \$500,000 policy limit. Property and Boiler insurance policy will be provided if the Charter school purchase or leases the property being occupied. Insurance shall be for the full replacement cost of the property and contents with no coinsurance penalty provision.

Certificates of Insurance in a form satisfactory to the Chartering Authority shall be provided to the Chartering Authority prior to the commencement of performance of this Charter Agreement. Throughout the term of this Charter Agreement the sponsor will provide updated Certificates of Insurance forms upon expiration of the current certificates.

Should you have any questions regarding coverage requirements, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



Taylor R Ragan, CIC
Martin & Zerfoss, Inc.

1909 21ST AVENUE SOUTH
PO BOX 121587
NASHVILLE, TN 37212

TEL 615 297-8500
FAX 615 269-7390
TF 888 297-8557



WWW.MARTINZERFOSS.COM

ATTACHMENT 12 – WAIVERS

Valor Collegiate Academy (“VCA”) shall operate in accordance with all Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools policies and regulations and all applicable and local laws, rules and regulations, unless specifically waived. In order for VCA to ensure its students meet or exceed local state and national academic standards, it must have flexibility to give its students a greater amount of time on task. VCA’s governance and leadership needs flexibility in its initial structure to overcome potential barriers in fulfilling its mission and goals. We formally request a waiver from the laws, rules and regulations listed below. This request includes all laws, rules, and regulations covering the same subject matter as those listed below and a waiver of all rules and regulations that come into force following the date of submission of this charter proposal.

PERSONNEL WAIVERS

1. COMPENSATION – LICENSED PERSONNEL SALARIES

TN Education Statute: §49-3-306(a)

State Board Rule: 0520-1-2-02

Rationale for Waiver: While we ensure that public monies will be used properly and all personnel will be paid adequately and timely, it is critical to our program that the VCA payroll system reflects our individual school’s purpose and philosophy. At VCA we believe academic results should be a factor in determining total compensation.

2. COMPENSATION – LONGEVITY PAY

TN Education Statute: §8-23-206(a)

State Board Rule:

Rationale for Waiver: While we ensure that public monies will be used properly and all personnel will be paid adequately, it is critical to our program that VCA’s payroll system reflects our individual school’s purpose and philosophy. Upon approval by the Board of Directors, VCA will offer incentive pay that compensates them for years of consistent student performance and professional development growth, not just years of service.

3. HOURS AND BENEFITS – TEACHER ASSIGNMENT

TN Education Statute: §49-5-401

State Board Rule:

Rationale for Waiver: VCA utilizes an extended schedule, including increased instructional and professional development hours. Teachers receive compensation commensurate with the increased work hours.

4. HOURS AND BENEFITS – SCHOOL TERM VACATIONS AND OTHER NON- INSTRUCTIONAL DAYS

TN Education Statute: §49-6-304A (2)-D

State Board Rule: 0502-1-3-.03(4)

Rationale for Waiver: VCA operates with an extended school year of 187 days and an extended school day from 8:00 am – 5:00 pm.

5. PROMOTION AND EVALUATION – CAREER LADDER

TN Education Statute: 49-5-5002-5010, 49-5-5206-5209, 49-5-5301, 49-5-5304, 49-5-5401, 49-5-5405, 49- 5-5406, 49-5-5501, 49-5-5504-5506

State Board Rule: 0520-2-2

Rationale for Waiver: No need or funding is currently available for career ladder initiatives

6. PROMOTION AND EVALUATION – GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR EVALUATION

6. TN Education Statute: 49-5-5205

7. State Board Rule: 0520-1-1-.01

8. Rationale for Waiver: The key to our success is being able to attract and retain a staff that is committed to our vision and to provide them with the motivation necessary to get the job done. It is essential that we are able to design hiring, pay, benefits, promotion and evaluation systems that are aligned with our mission and goals. The guidelines and performance expectations are outlined specifically in yearly contracts that are developed for VCA personnel.

7. PROMOTION AND EVALUATION – THIRD-YEAR APPRENTICE EDUCATORS

TN Education Statute: 49-5-5205

State Board Rule: 0520-2-1-.03

Rationale for Waiver: The key to our success is being able to attract and retain a staff that is committed to our vision and to provide them with the motivation necessary to get the job done. It is essential that we are able to design hiring, pay, benefits, promotion and evaluation systems that are aligned with our mission and goals. The guidelines and performance expectations are outlined specifically in yearly contracts that are developed for VCA personnel.

8. TENURE – EVALUATION CONTRACTS AND EMPLOYMENT TERMINATION

a. TN Education Statute: 49-5-408-409

b. State Board Rule: 0520-2-2(2)

c. Rationale for Waiver: The key to our success is being able to attract and retain a staff that is committed to our vision and to provide them with the motivation necessary to get the job done. It is essential that we are able to design hiring, pay, benefits, promotion and evaluation systems that are aligned with our mission and goals. Every teacher will be assessed based on their performance. Teachers, who attain the required levels of performance, as outlined in their contracts, will be offered another contract.

9. TENURE - TENURE

a. TN Education Statute: 49-5-501-513

b. State Board Rule:

c. Rationale for Waiver: As a charter school, VCA will be results-driven. Accordingly, VCA employees will be “at-will.”

10. STAFFING REQUIREMENTS – LICENSED PRINCIPALS

TN Education Statute: 49-5-101(a)

State Board Rule: 0520-1-2-.03(6)

Rationale for Waiver: VCA would like to be able to recruit the most qualified candidates around the country to fulfill its mission.

11. STAFFING REQUIREMENTS – LIBRARY INFORMATION CENTER PERSONNEL

a. State Board Rule: 0520-1-3-.07(2)

b. Rationale for Waiver: A substantial library is available to students at the nearest public library, Nashville Public Library Southeast Branch, which is currently located at 2325 Hickory Highlands Drive. VCA students will have continuous access to a substantial classroom library.

B. SCHOOL MANAGEMENT/OPERATIONAL WAIVERS

1. SCHOOL MANAGEMENT/OPERATIONAL WAIVERS – SCHOOL YEAR COMMENCEMENT

- a. TN Education Statute: 49-6-3004
- b. State Board Rule:
- c. Rationale for Waiver: VCA utilizes an expanded school year calendar. For this reason, the school will start before Labor Day. □

2. SCHOOL MANAGEMENT/OPERATIONAL WAIVERS – LOCAL FISCAL ACCOUNTING

- a. TN Education Statute: 49-3-316
- b. State Board Rule:
- c. Rationale for Waiver: While we ensure that public monies will be used properly, that all regulations will be met and that all of our operations will stand up to a financial audit, it is critical to our program that our management systems reflect our individual school's purpose and philosophy. □

3. SCHOOL MANAGEMENT/OPERATIONAL WAIVERS – FORMULATION AND ADMINISTRATION OF BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE CODES

- a. TN Education Statute: 49-6-4012(b)
- b. State Board Rule:
- c. Rationale for Waiver: While parents and students will undergo due process, it is important that the discipline practices of VCA provide a safe and effective learning for students. □

C. EDUCATION WAIVERS □ 1. CURRICULUM – HEALTH, PHYSICAL AND WELLNESS EDUCATION

- a. TN Education Statute:
- b. State Board Rule: 0520-1-3-.05
- c. Rationale for Waiver: Students will be involved in physical education activities each week as part of Focused Fitness each day. The Principal will oversee these classes and work to ensure that the PE curriculum meets state content standards, despite the use of non-certified instructional personnel.

2. CURRICULUM - FINE ARTS

- a. TN Education Statute:
- b. State Board Rule: 0520-1-3-.05
- c. Rationale for Waiver: Students will be involved in fine arts activities during Intersession. Fine arts classes may be taught by volunteers. The Principal will oversee these classes and work to ensure that the fine arts curriculum meets state content standards, despite the use of non-certified instructional personnel.

3. CURRICULUM – USE OF UNAPPROVED TEXTBOOKS

- a. TN Education Statute: 49-6-2206
- b. State Board Rule:

- c. Rationale for Waiver: To meet the potential of our school, it is essential that we tie our curriculum and instructional approaches to our individual school's mission and goals. VCA will use both state-approved textbooks and other unapproved instructional materials.

D. CAPITAL OUTLAY WAIVERS

1. CAPITAL OUTLAY

- a. TN Education Statute: 49-3-311

- b. State Board Rule:

c. Rationale for Waiver: Preparing a charter school facility will be one of our greater challenges. Because we finance our own buildings and do not have the power to raise taxes to fund capital outlay, it is critical that we gain freedom from non-health and safety standards for the school site and have control of the facility vested in our board, rather than the city board of education. Having this freedom will allow us to use our school site resources most effectively and efficiently and align our building choices with our mission and goals.

In addition to the specific waiver requests listed above, we request waivers of any additional rules and regulations that are waived for existing or future charter schools authorized by Metro Nashville Public Schools. We reserve the right to supplement this request or make additional waiver requests in the future. To request waivers of MNPS District Standard Operating Procedures (DSOP), Valor Collegiate Academy understands the process outlined in the Standard Operating Procedure Outline (Policy Reference No. SBO 1.106) required when requesting a waiver of a policy within MNPS and will do the following:

- Submit all waiver requests in writing to the Chartering Authority no later than sixty (60) days prior to the school's intention to implement the waiver, if granted.
- Provide a waiver request that explicitly lists the specific DSOP requested to be waived.
- Provide a waiver request that includes detailed documentation of the grounds for requesting the waiver and specific evidence showing how the DSOP currently inhibits or hinders the proposed charter school's ability to reach its goal or comply with its mission statement.
- Ensure that all waiver requests filed with the Chartering Authority contain information on other waiver requests filed with the TN Commission of Education and including the status of those waiver requests.

ATTACHMENT 13 – Summit Prep Intersession Course Offerings



INTERSESSION INFORMATION AND COURSE CATALOG 2012 - 13

Intersession is one of the most exciting and innovative aspects of Summit Public School’s program. For those who have not yet experienced it, Intersession is comprised of two four-week sessions during the school year when students engage in a full-time course or experience. Students from both Summit Prep and Everest will be in class together, so students will have the opportunity to meet their peers from our larger Summit Public Schools (SPS) Redwood City community.

With over 800 students, the process for scheduling and coordinating the Intersession can be complicated. Please help us to ensure that everything runs smoothly by thoroughly reading the following documents and adhering to all of the requests and deadlines.

Many thanks for your cooperation. We look forward to another successful and exciting Intersession
Course Catalog, 2012-13

Courses Offered This Year:

A complete description and important information for each course are included in this catalog (courses are featured in alphabetical order).

<p><u>Full Day Courses</u> Architecture & Design College Readiness/Volunteer Service Computer Science & Information Technology Culinary Arts Fashion Design Forest to Farm to Food Independent Study Internship Invention and Digital Fabrication for Sustainability Leadership, Life Skills & Beyond Wilderness / Nature Studies</p> <p style="color: red;">Courses meeting VPA requirement: Dance I Drama I Digital Media Design & Production (Ezine) Ensemble Music Production Musical Theater I & II Photography I Spoken Word Musical Theater (Hip Hop) Video Production @ Riekes Video Production @ Fresh Takes Visual Art I & II</p>	<p><u>Half Day Courses</u> Aikido Art Studio: Collage Becoming a Change Maker Boxing & Fitness English Connections Guitar Instruction Indoor Soccer / Basketball Math Connections I Math Connections II Mindfulness Yoga Online Courses Photo / Video Studio Project Give Psychology The Holocaust: An in-depth study</p>
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Attachment 15 – Student Schedules by Stage

Grade 7: Sample Schedule

	Grade 7				
	Section A	Section A	Section B	Section B	
Students	28	27	27	28	110
Level	H	H	H	H	
7:30-8:00	Breakfast				
8:00-8:15	Advisory	Fitness 1			
8:17-8:32	Morning M				
8:35-10:20	English		Math		SPED/ELL
	E1		M1		Coach
	E2		M2		
			History	Learning	
10:20-10:22			H1	Lab	
10:22-11:40	Math			Coach	
	M1			History	
	M2		Learning	H1	
			Lab		
			Coach		
11:40-11:50	Fitness 2				
11:50-12:30	Lunch				
12:30-12:55	SSR				SPED/ELL
12:55-1:48	History	Learning	Science		
	H1	Lab	S1		
		Coach	M1		
		History			
1:50-2:43	Learning	H1			
	Lab		Fitness 3		
	Coach		English		SPED/ELL
2:43-2:50	Fitness 3		E1		Coach
2:50-4:05	Science		E2		
	S1				
	M2				
4:05-4:15	Dismissal 1				
4:15-5:00	Office	Office	Office	Office	
	Hours	Hours	Hours	Hours	
5:00	Dismissal 2				

Grade 9: Sample Schedule

	Grade 9				
	Section A	Section A	Section B	Section B	
Students	45	45	45	45	180
Level	H	H	H	H	
7:30-8:00	Breakfast				
8:00-8:15	Advisory	Fitness 1			
8:17-8:32	Morning M				
8:35-10:20	English		Math		SPED2/ELL
	E1		M1		
	E2		M2		
	SPED1		M3		
			History	Learning	
10:20-10:22			H1	Lab	
10:22-11:40	Math		SPED2	SPED1	
	M1			History	
	M2		Learning	H1	
	M3		Lab	SPED2	
			SPED1		
11:40-11:50	Fitness 2				
11:50-12:30	Lunch				
12:30-12:55	SSR				SPED1/ELL
12:55-1:48	History	Learning	Science		
	H1	Lab	S1		
	SPED2	M2	S2		
		History	M1		
1:50-2:43	Learning	H1			
	Lab	SPED2	Fitness 3		
	M3		English		
2:43-2:50	Fitness 3		E1		
2:50-4:05	Science		E2		
	S1		SPED2		
	S2				
	SPED1				
4:05-4:15	Dismissal 1				
4:15-5:00	Office	Office	Office	Office	
	Hours	Hours	Hours	Hours	
5:00	Dismissal 2				

Grade 11 and 12 – Sample Schedule

Grade 11, 12 Students		130	
Advisory			
Morning Meeting			
Learning Lab SPED2 Coach2		Learning Lab SPED1 Coach1	
AP Eng E1	AP Gov H1	Learning Lab SPED1 Coach1	M1 S1
AP Calc M1	APES S1	Learning Lab SPED1 Coach1	E1 H1
Fitness			
Lunch			
Learning Lab SPED1 Coach1		Learning Lab SPED2 Coach2	
AP Hist H1	H Eng E1	Learning Lab SPED2 Coach2	S1 M1
AP Physics S1	AP Stats M1	Learning Lab SPED2 Coach2	E1 H1
		RTI SPED2	
		RTI SPED2	
		RTI SPED1	
		RTI SPED1	

11/12 Sample Students:

S1	S2	S3	S4	S4
Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory
Morning Meeting	Morning Meeting	Morning Meeting	Morning Meeting	Morning Meeting
Learning Lab Spanish	Learning Lab Study Hall	Learning Lab Spanish	RTI IEP Support	Learning Lab Leadership Stage 3
AP Eng	H Eng	Learning Lab Study Hall CC Night English Course	H Eng	H Eng
AP Calc	Learning Lab Online Science	AP Calc	Learning Lab Online Science	Learning Lab Online Science
Fitness	Fitness	Fitness	Fitness	Fitness
Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
Learning Lab Computer Programming	RTI IEP Support	Learning Lab Study Hall	RTI IEP Support	Learning Lab Study Hall
AP Hist	AP Hist	Learning Lab Online History of Science	AP Hist	AP Hist
AP Physics	Learning Lab Online Math College Algebra	AP Physics	RTI Online Math College Algebra	AP Stats

ATTACHMENT 16 – DRAFT Connections Curriculum

Grades 9: Connections Curriculum Standards

ACADEMIC LITERACY

Grade 9

9.1 Time Management

- 9.1A All 9th grade students are able to identify the various segments of their lives that they must dedicate time to (eg. school, family, sports)
- 9.1B All 9th grade students are able to complete a daily schedule template for themselves
- 9.1C All 9th grade students are introduced to various time-management strategies
- 9.1D All 9th grade students are able to identify how their time was used for short periods of time (eg. a weekend)
- 9.1E All 9th graders are able to identify factors that contribute to a conducive working environment

9.2 Organization

- 9.2A All 9th grade students have a binder with dividers for each class or multiple binders
- 9.2B All 9th grade students have an academic planner of some type
- 9.2C All 9th grade students write down all assignments in their academic planner
- 9.2D All 9th grade students are introduced to various options for organizational systems

9.3 Self-Advocacy

- 9.3A All 9th grade students understand that all people have strengths and weaknesses
- 9.3B All 9th grade students begin to identify their areas of strength and areas of weakness
- 9.3C All 9th grade students are introduced to the importance of self-advocacy in relation to academic situations

9.4 In-class Strategies

- 9.4A All 9th grade students are introduced to the Summit Participation Rubric
- 9.4B All 9th grade students are exposed to at least two different note-taking strategies
- 9.4C All 9th grade students are introduced to common types of questioning strategies

9.5 Test Taking and Study Strategies

- 9.5A All 9th grade students are introduced to the Summit Test Taking Preparation Guide
- 9.5B All 9th graders are introduced to specific multiple choice test strategies
- 9.5C All 9th graders are introduced to various study strategies

9.6 Producing Quality Work

- 9.6A All 9th grade students can identify the difference between quality work and non-quality work

9.7 Communication

- 9.7A All 9th grade students are able to identify various forms of written and verbal communication
- 9.7B All 9th grade students are able to recognize their own functional, social/emotional, and academic needs

9.8 Understanding Consequences of Daily Actions/Choices

- 9.8A All 9th grade students are introduced to short-term consequences of their daily actions and choices, specifically MASH and MARS)

ATTACHMENT 17 – Intersession Community Partners

DRAFT Valor Collegiate Academies Middle School Intersession Planning Document

Focus	Institution/Company	Course Description
Athletics	Predators	Internship with Front Office
Athletics	TN Titans	Fitness demonstration
Business	Entrepreneur Center	New Product presentation
Business	Owen School @ VU	Owens on entrepreneurship
Health Care	Vanderbilt University	Children's Hospital demonstration
Journalism	Tennessean	Reporter explains the job
Law & Government	Law School (VU, Belmont)	Charter and Public education law
Legal Profession	Bass Berry	Law Case Studies (famous TN law)
Manufacturing	Nissan or Saturn	Design Thinking and prototyping
Music Business	Belmont School of Business	Produce your first CD!
Non-Profit	Habitat for Humanity	Explain process from fundraising to houseraising
Printing Business	Hatch Show Print	Demonstration
Public & Media Relations	McNeilly, Pigott & Fox	Present issue relevant to age group
Restaurant Business	Coffee Shop (Starbucks)	Day in the Life of a Barista
Teaching & Education	Lipscomb School of Education	presentation & discussion
Technology	Dell	Build a Laptop - design theory
Math	Vanderbilt University	Study game theory in math
Law & Government	DA's Office	Case studies on famous TN law decisions
Law & Government	Governor's Office	Case studies on famous TN law decisions
Law & Government	Mayor's Office	Public Transit in Nashville or health
Life Skills	YMCA	Swimming safety
Literacy	Nashville Public Library	Research tool demonstration
Science & Medicine	Adventure Science Center	Design & build machines & animals w/motors and sensors
Science & Medicine	Nashville Zoo	Animal visit
Support	Oasis Center	services expose
Sustainability	Warner Parks	Land preservation & renewal
Arts	Cheekwood	sculpting class/gardening
Arts	Frist Center for Visual Arts	art presentation
Arts	Nashville Ballet	dance demonstration
Arts	Nashville Symphony	music seminar & demonstration
Design	O'More School	design seminar
Music	Blair School of Music	music seminar
Music	Country Music Hall of Fame	Music City's Music History
Music	WO Smith Center	music seminar
Theatre	TN Repertory Theatre	acting seminar
Theatre	TPAC	Stage management
Culinary Skills	Hermitage Hotel	garden @ Glen Eden
Life Skills	Martial Arts	skills and mindsets of great martial artists
Life Skills	Planned Parenthood/Sex Education	Health Education
Life Skills	Red Cross	Babysitting Course
Life Skills	Safe Sex/Personal Hygiene	Local OB/GYN explains
Life Skills	Yoga/Meditation	Conduct class
Science & Medicine	Red Cross	Blood Donation process & need
Sustainability	Hermitage Hotel	Sustainable Gard'g & Cook'g
Sustainability	The Land Trust	Land preservation & renewal

Attachment 18 – Personalized Learning Plan

Sample Personalized Learning Plan Valor Collegiate Academy

_____ 's Personalized Learning Plan for 2014-15
Grade 5

Immediate influences

What is one thing from last year that you are committed to changing or to keeping the same? Why?

Long-term Goals

College

Career

Personal Development

Community Contribution

Finance

Short-term Goals

1. Earn a _____ grade point average in my five academic courses, thereby improving (may be appropriate to maintain) my grade point average by _____ points.
 - a. Earn a(n) _____ in English. Last year I earned a(n) _____.
 - b. Earn a(n) _____ in math. Last year I earned a(n) _____.
 - c. Earn a(n) _____ in science. Last year I earned a(n) _____.
 - d. Earn a(n) _____ in Social Studies. Last year I earned a(n) _____.
2. Deep Practice Ideas: What are you going to try this year to find something that you are passionate about?
3. Intersession courses: What are you interested in taking for Intersession this year?
 - a. Choice 1:
 - b. Choice 2:
 - c. Choice 3:
4. Complete at least 100 hours of physical activity by participating in the following activities:
 - a. Fall

- b. Winter
- c. Spring

Items to be completed this year

_____ Community Service Goal: What are you going to do to give back to your community this year?

_____ Visit the following colleges

- 1. .
- 2. .
- 3. .

_____ Spend the summer semester

- Workshop
- Course
- Camp
- Internship

_____ Extracurricular activities

- Club
- School / community service
- Leadership

Weekly Strategies / Timeframes

- 1. Raising GPA
- 2. Finding a “good fit” college

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Before 8:00am							
8-noon	Class	Class	Class	Class	Class		
Lunch							
12:45-2:45	Class	Class	Class	Class	Class		
3-4							
4-5							
5-6							
6-7							
7-8							
8-9							
9-10							

Attachment 19 – Example Curriculum Alignment Template (DRAFT)

VCA Standard	Learning Activity	Assessment	Spiraled	Power	I1	I2	I3	I4
Operations and Algebraic Thinking								
5.1 Write and interpret numerical expressions. Use parentheses, brackets, or braces in numerical expressions, and evaluate expressions with these symbols.		IA1: Example Internal Test Question Here	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8	X	X	x	x	x
		MAP1: Sample MAP test question here						
		Common Core Summative: Example CC Test Question Here						

ATTACHMENT 20 – INTERVENTION TEMPLATE

Last Name:	First Name:	Grade:
Parent(s) Name:	Phone:	Date:

1) Reason for Intervention:

2) Student input:

3) Teacher input:

4) Parent input:

Student will do	School will provide

Date of Review	Teacher Initiating Review:
-----------------------	-----------------------------------

Signatures:

Parent _____	Date _____	Parent _____	Date _____
Student _____	Date _____	Teacher _____	Date _____
Teacher _____	Date _____	Teacher _____	Date _____
Teacher _____	Date _____	Other _____	Date _____

Last Name:	First Name:	Initial Date:	Evaluation Date:
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1) Success of the plan:	<input type="radio"/> Successful	<input type="radio"/> Partially Successful	<input type="radio"/> Unsuccessful
--------------------------------	---	---	---

2) Rationale for decision (describe the evidence used to make decision):

3) Determination of next step:

Person contacting Parent:	Conversation Log:
----------------------------------	--------------------------

Signatures:

Teacher _____ Date _____ Teacher _____ Date _____
 Teacher _____ Date _____ Teacher _____ Date _____
 Teacher _____ Date _____ Other _____ Date _____

ATTACHMENT 21 - PEP TEMPLATE

Valor Collegiate Personalized Educator Plan

Fall Plan: 2014-15

Part I: Performance Based School Goals

- 3-5 School Goals agreed upon by Faculty (25% of Performance Bonus determined from these goals)

SMART Goal	Tiered Metric	% of Bonus

Part II: Performance Based GLT Goals

- 3-5 GLT Goals agreed upon by Faculty (25% of Performance Bonus determined from these goals)

SMART Goal	Tiered Metric	% of Bonus

Part III: Performance Based Individual Goals

- 3-5 GLT Goals agreed upon by Faculty (50% of Performance Bonus determined from these goals)

SMART Goal	Tiered Metric	% of Bonus

Part IV: Individual Continuum Goals

- 2-3 position moves on attached Continuum Rubric

Continuum Reference	SMART Goal	Metric	% of Bonus

Part V: Support Needed to Reach Goals

Support / Development Needed	Action Steps
	Education/Experience/Exposure:
	Education/Experience/Exposure:

Part VI: Resiliency Goals

- Please set 1-2 goals for how you will keep yourself resilient throughout the year (NOT tied to Performance Bonus)

Goal

Part VII: Core Characteristic Goals

- Please set goals around development of 1-2 Core Characteristics for the year (NOT tied to Performance Bonus)

Goal

Attachment 22 – Enrollment Policy

As required by state law, participation in the lottery for Valor Collegiate will be based on parental choice and will be open to all MNPS students who qualify for charter school admission under Tennessee Code Annotated (T.C.A.) §49-13-106(a)(1), which states

(1) Public charter schools authorized by an LEA may be formed to provide quality educational options for all students residing within the jurisdiction of the chartering authority; provided, however, an LEA may authorize charters to enroll students residing outside the LEA in which the public charter school is located pursuant to the LEA out-of-district enrollment policy and in compliance with § 49-6-3003 and § 49-6-403(f).

Valor Collegiate’s recruitment plan and admissions policies support our mission and goals of ensuring that all of our students enter and excel in college and in life. We will work actively recruit the students who are most at need and ensure that all students that are eligible (either at a failing school or failing themselves) can apply and be enrolled in Valor Collegiate in a fair and equitable manner.

Application Period – VCA will begin to accept applications starting October 1, 2013 and will end at 5pm on March 15, 2014.

Enrollment Deadlines – All applications must be received in hand by 5:00pm on March 15, 2014. Any applications received after this time and date will be placed at the end of the waitlist.

Receipt and processing of applications – All applications must be delivered in person to guarantee a placement into the lottery. Parents are welcome to mail their application to (address to be determined). An acknowledgement will be emailed upon receipt of the email application, but if a family does not receive or keep this receipt VCA is not responsible for claims that an application was sent by mail by not received by the deadline (we will track all receipts as well and it is highly unlikely we will lose the record, but we cannot take responsibility if the family does not keep their record in the rare case that an application cannot be located). All applications received in person will receive a receipt.

Lottery - If there are more applications than seats available in a grade level, then the school will have a public lottery. The lottery will have the following preferences:

- 1) Scholars of employees or Board members of VCA (not to exceed 25 students or 10% of enrolled students, whichever is less)
- 2) Siblings of scholars currently enrolled or graduated from VCA
- 3) If a student is chosen in the lottery and there is a sibling or siblings on the waitlist for that grade or another grade, they will immediately move into the sibling lottery and will be given preference so the family may all attend the same school.

Parents will be mailed the official results on the Monday following the Saturday lottery (late March).

Parents will have fourteen days beyond the lottery notification date to submit a letter of intent. After this date, VCA will attempt to verify personally with each parent by phone or at home that they are indeed forfeiting their seat at VCA. If we are unsuccessful in contacting the family for verification we will then give up their seat and place them on the waitlist. After all seats have been assigned, a waiting list will be established for the remaining students who have registered in the event that a seat should open up. If there are still seats available after the lottery, we will accept applications on an ongoing basis, and students will be admitted to the school on a first come-first served basis until all seats are filled. In all cases, Valor Collegiate will adhere to any and all schedules and requirements of Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools concerning the recruitment and enrollment of students.

Waitlist, withdrawals, re-enrollment, transfer policies – Below are the policies on these important issues.

- **Waitlist** will start one week after Acceptance Day (day noted in letters from Lottery that families must officially accept their seat) and last until end of second week of school.
- **Waitlist** then expires and anyone who wishes to transfer must re-apply. Applications after the expiration date are taken in order and a new waitlist is built.
- **Transfer lotteries** held at discretion of CEO during semester, and at end of 1st and 2nd semester if spaces available. Transfer lotteries will be advertised on the website and at school.
- **Dis-enroll** - If a scholar dis-enrolls during a semester but then decides to return they must re-apply like anyone else. Exceptions to this can be clarified in an expulsion agreement (i.e., an expelled student may be enrolled at the end of a school year if they meet the requirements of the expulsion rehabilitation plan).



VALOR COLLEGIATE *Academies*

Student and Family Handbook

DRAFT

VCA prepares a diverse student population for success in college and to live inspired and purposeful lives. Our scholar's will graduate with academic skills, social-emotional skills, and positive character strengths that rival the outcomes of the best schools in the world.

[MM, DD, YYYY]

Dear Families,

Welcome to the Valor Collegiate Academy community! We are excited that you and your student have chosen Valor.

Valor Collegiate is founded upon the belief that families are our partners in the work of meeting our mission and we look forward to the successes of the inaugural class of Valor Collegiate students, the Class of 2026 – so called because that is the year when our first class of Valor Collegiate alumni graduates from college. Within a seamless middle to high school, our students receive a high quality college preparatory education that equips them to excel in selective colleges, earn professional opportunities, and demonstrate positive leadership. In the Valor Collegiate middle school (5-8), students learn the foundational skills needed to master rigorous high school curriculum. In Valor Collegiate high school (9-12), college preparatory coursework continues with more rigor and challenging courses – Advanced Placement courses in core subjects, foreign language instruction, and four years of extensive work on elective courses that your student is passionate about. Our BIG GOAL is that Valor Collegiate alumni graduate from college, armed with the academic knowledge and financial literacy, entrepreneurship and leadership skills needed to make smart choices in the future and have positive impact in their community.

We have assembled this handbook to provide you with as much information as we can about the coming school year. The following pages contain information about our program, academic supports, and the discipline and uniform policies. They also include important information about other policies and procedures, so please read them carefully. Although we have tried to be as complete as we can be, we know that we may have not addressed all of the questions that you have. We encourage you to contact any one of us if you have concerns or need further information.

We want to highlight the section of this handbook that discusses your role in your student's experience at Valor Collegiate. Our mission states: "Valor Collegiate VCA prepares a diverse student population for success in college and to live inspired and purposeful lives. Our scholar's will graduate with academic skills, social-emotional skills, and positive character strengths that rival the outcomes of the best schools in the world." In order for us to realize our mission, we need your help. We believe that parents and guardians are critical partners to ensure their student's success. Whether through formal or informal discussions, school events or volunteer activities, we hope that we see and hear from you throughout the year. We look forward to working closely with you.

Sincerely,

The Staff of Valor Collegiate Academy

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

I. FAMILY PARTNERS IN EDUCATION

We welcome every opportunity to work with parents. Valor Collegiate will host a **Family Partners in Education (FPE) Committee** that will be comprised of volunteers who are adult family members of our students. The FPE will **meet monthly** with school leaders to discuss issues that arise as they relate to families. Through these meetings, the FPE will be able to assume an important role in helping to relay information from the school to students' families and vice-versa. The FPE will also be intimately involved in the development of **family workshops, family fundraisers**, and will help to coordinate **family volunteer opportunities** at the school.

Within the first six months of the school year, Valor Collegiate will invite one parent of a Valor Collegiate scholar to the Board of Directors. Specific information about the selection process will be distributed to families in students' homework folders in September, 2014.

II. COMMUNICATION

We believe that it is incredibly important that families become part of our school's effort to promote their children's academic success, and the possible academic success of all students. As an Valor Collegiate family, you can expect the following from Valor Collegiate staff:

FAMILY COMMUNICATION CYCLE	
Homework: HW is assigned to students five times per week (everyday except Wednesday evenings) Parents of middle schoolers sign off on homework assignments DAILY , checking for completion only.	Family Literacy Night: TRIMESTERLY , ELA team hosts Family Literacy Nights at the grade level three times per year - families learn best strategies for holding their children accountable for and supporting them in their independent reading.
Phone Calls: We communicate with families DAILY about mandatory Homework Center assignments, morning Tutoring sessions, Detention, and other time-sensitive scheduling matters. All families have the professional phone and email contacts for all staff to	Morning Coffee with Principal: MONTHLY , we host morning coffee hour - a forum for families to communicate concerns, ask questions, get to know one another, and receive pertinent information from the school.
Syllabi: Every Monday, students receive WEEKLY syllabi, outlining all assignments for the week. All parents sign weekly syllabi and return to school as part of HW requirement.	Parent University: New families are introduced ANNUALLY to the school through three 90-minute summer sessions, where parents learn about the systems, culture, and expectations. All families receive copy of the Student and Family Handbook .
Character Currency Statements: Every Monday, students receive WEEKLY CC Statements - progress report to share with family, a snapshot of academics/behavioral and HW completion,	Home Visits: Family Orientation process concludes with 30-minute home visit before school year begins. Conducted ANNUALLY , staff begins relationship with every family.
Newsletter: Families are part of our community and most important partners. All families receive MONTHLY newsletter detailing academic highlights with a focus on academic growth, student achievement,	Personalized Learning Plan Conferences: EACH FALL , you will meet with your student's faculty mentor and plan for the year by setting goals with your student.

ACADEMIC RESPONSIBILITIES

I. PROFESSIONALISM

A. ATTENDANCE AND LATENESS

Attendance Requirements

Attendance is crucial to student's success at Valor Collegiate. Students demonstrate their professionalism and preparedness

to learn by showing up to school every day and on time. Students cannot master the content and skills of our rigorous academic program without being here every day. To that end, we have very clear attendance requirements. **Students MUST bring in a note after each day they are absent.** The note must include:

- The date of the absence
- The reason for the absence
- A phone number where a parent or guardian can be reached

- The parent/guardian signature

Excused and Unexcused Absences

We realize that there are times when students will not be in school, but Valor Collegiate strongly believes that your student’s education should be his or her priority. Valor Collegiate will only count as excused the following reasons for absence from school:

- A **note from a doctor** explaining an illness or injury that prevents the student from attending school
- A **death** in the immediate family or other significant family crisis
- **Religious** holidays
- **Suspension** from school

All other absences will be unexcused.

Students who have fifteen or more unexcused absences will be automatically referred for retention in the current grade at the end of the academic year. Advisors will contact families of students with attendance issues.

After three unexcused absences the advisor will remind the student and the family of Valor Collegiate’s attendance policy in a phone call.

After **six unexcused** absences, the advisor, along with the school leader, will arrange a meeting with the family and the student to address the situation and help develop a plan of action to ensure the student’s attendance at school.

Lateness

All students are expected to arrive at school no later than 8:00 am. If a student reports to school after 8:00, they will be considered late. Late students receive a Demerit, which is deducted from their Character Currency account, and are placed in Lunch Detention that school day. They must also publicly apologize to the community in that mornings All School Meeting.

B. CALENDAR AND SCHEDULE

Calendar

The Tennessee Public Charter Schools Act of 2002 requires that charter schools meet, at a minimum, the state’s requirement for instructional time in other public schools (TCA 49-13-105). The Valor Collegiate school year has 190 instructional days, divided into three trimesters and a week-long student orientation at the beginning of the school year. Prior to the start of the school year, the Principal meets with families three times once students are enrolled at a series of events called Parent University, which prepare families for the Valor Collegiate experience. In addition to our extended day and year, we also provide approximately 25 days of Saturday Academy for students that need additional time to achieve mastery of curriculum in preparation for TCAP exams and end-of-year comprehensive assessment and also for behavior support.

Typical 5th Grade Student Schedule

5th Grade Section Example						
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	
7:30-8:00	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	7:30-8:00
8:00-8:15	Mentor / Fitness	Mentor / Fitness	Mentor / Fitness	Mentor / Fitness	English 83 min	8:00-9:33
8:17-8:32	ASM	ASM	ASM	ASM		
8:35-10:20	English 105 min	English 105 min	English 53 min 8:35-9:28	English 105 min		
			Math			Transition
					Math	9:35-11:08

			53 min 9:30-10:23		83 min	
10:20-10:22	Transition	Transition		Transition		
10:22-11:40	Math 78 min	Math 78 min	History 53 min 10:25-11:18	Math 75 min	Transition	11:08-11:10
					History 53 min	11:10-12:03
			Fitness 2			
11:40-11:50	Fitness 2	Fitness 2	Lunch	Fitness 2		
11:50-12:30	Lunch	Lunch	Learning Lab	Lunch	Fitness 2	12:03-12:10
12:30-12:55	SSR	SSR	53 min	SSR	Lunch	12:10-12:40
12:55-1:48	History 53 min	History 53 min	12:00-12:53 Fitness 3	History 53 min	Learning Lab 53 min	12:40-1:33
			Science 55 min			
1:50-2:43	Learning Lab 53 min	Learning Lab 53 min	1:00-1:55 Dismissal 2	Learning Lab 53 min	Fitness 3	1:33-1:40
					Science 53 min	1:40-2:33
2:43-2:50	Fitness 3	Fitness 3	Faculty PD	Fitness 3		
2:50-4:05	Science 75 min	Science 75 min	2:05-4:05 120 min	Science 75 min	Mentor Groups 92 min	2:33-4:05
					ASM	
4:05-4:15	Dismissal 1	Dismissal 1		Dismissal 1	Dismissal 1	4:05
4:15-5:00	Office Hours 45 min	Office Hours 45 min		Office Hours 45 min	Office Hours 45 min	4:15-5:00
5:00	Dismissal 2	Dismissal 2		Dismissal 2	Dismissal 2	5:00

C. STUDENT SUPPLIES

Being a Valor Collegiate scholar means being prepared for class with the necessary supplies; this is an important component of being ready to learn. If students do not have pens, pencils, or paper, they may ask to borrow supplies from other students before class begins. Students without the required materials may receive a Demerit. Repeated occurrences of unpreparedness will result in a phone call home and Lunch Detention. All materials listed below can be purchased from Valor Collegiate during Parent University and throughout the year as needed.

- A 1 ½ inch three ring binder for each class
- Valor Collegiate Academic Planner
- Supply of pencils and black ink pens (two of each should be in hand each day)
- Supply of 8 ½-by-11 inch loose leaf white notebook paper (about 200 sheets, placed in binder)
- Plastic pocket for pens and pencils (placed in binder)
- Colored pencils, crayons, or markers
- Glue stick
- Small pair of scissors
- Erasers
- Personal pencil sharpener with cover

- Workbooks and textbooks
- Calculators (for use at school only)

II. EXCELLENCE

A. HOMEWORK POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS

Homework completion is mandatory for academic success. The following expectations apply for all Valor Collegiate Students:

- A. It is the student’s responsibility to record his or her homework each day in their Valor Collegiate Academic Planner.
 - B. Completed homework must be reviewed and the homework planner must be signed nightly by the child’s parent or guardian, or the child will face a CHARACTER CURRENCY stock deduction.
 - C. In order for a homework assignment to be considered complete, it must:
 1. Be written in complete sentences
 2. Have the correct heading, including the student’s first and last name
 3. Have no skipped questions – all questions must be attempted. If a child really is confused, he or she may restate the question and attempt to answer it.
 4. If a child completes every question on a homework assignment, it will be considered complete; however, teachers will still grade assignments. As such, children may still receive a low grade even on a complete assignment.
- If a child needs assistance with his or her homework, he or she must do the following, in the order listed:
 1. Ask his or her parent or family member for assistance.
 2. Contact his or her teacher and leave a specific message. Children may only call their teacher one time. Multiple calls and calls with no message are unacceptable.
 3. Even if a child does not successfully reach any of the above resources, he or she must still complete every question on his or her assignment in order for it to be considered complete.

A child who does not turn in his or her homework assignments or receives a grade below 70% on any assignment will be required to attend Homework Center. Once a child is identified as needing Homework Center, his or her attendance is mandatory. Homework collection and grading is completed by no later than 12:00 noon each day, and the Office Coordinator contacts the parents of those students required to attend Homework Center by 1:00 pm. Note that Homework Center attendance does not change the daily pm pickup time unless the student must attend Homework Center on a day he or she would otherwise attend off-site enrichment.

B. ASSESSMENT

We remediate academic gaps and challenge students with high levels of rigor using our cycle of assessments, which calls for frequent assessment and immediate intervention based on their results. Prior to the start of the school year and during the first week of orientation, students take baseline diagnostic assessments so that teachers can structure curriculum and instruction to meet students where they are and ramp them up quickly. Throughout the year students are assessed on four-week cycles of assessments and are quizzed weekly on course content to provide multiple data points for teachers, students, and families. Data allows us to know what to reteach and how as all students move toward master of course content. Near the end of the year, students take TCAP exams in English Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies to measure mastery of grade standards.

C. GRADING POLICY

Students at Valor Collegiate will earn grades based on their demonstration of mastery of Valor Collegiate curriculum standards, which have been informed by Tennessee State Standards, the Common Core, and as needed supplemented by Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, and the AP, SAT and ACT exams. Grades will include student performance on in-class work, homework, assessments, and other components as applicable to each content area.

We outline below the ways in which letter, percentage, and rubric grades will be used at Valor Collegiate and what these grades mean in terms of a student’s level of mastery of the State Content Standards.

Letter	Percentage	Rubric	Meaning
A+	98-100%	4	Student earning an A in a course is consistently demonstrating advanced levels of mastery with the content standards.
A	93-97%		
A-	90-92%		
B+	88-89%	3	Student earning a B in a course is consistently demonstrating proficiency with the content standards.
B	83-87%		
B-	80-82%		
C+	78-79%	2	Student earning a C in a course is consistently demonstrating basic competency with the content standards.
C	73-77%		
C-	70-72%		
F	Below 70%	0 or 1	Student earning less than 70% in a course is not yet demonstrating a basic level of mastery with the content standards and needs to demonstrate mastery of the standards before credit will be earned.

Note: Valor Collegiate does not give Ds. We are aware that the lowest grade most colleges and universities will accept for entry is a C-. Because our mission is to prepare every Valor Collegiate student for success at four-year colleges and universities, we align our grading practices with these standards.

Each Friday, students will receive a progress report. This progress report will contain all student grades for the entire semester for each class. At school, each student's advisor will review the progress report with the students. Students will bring home the progress report each Friday afternoon and we strongly encourage parents to use the information contained in the progress reports to reinforce at home what we have identified students need to work on here at Valor Collegiate. We also suggest that you keep a binder at home with your student's progress reports and journals. In addition to receiving the progress report, parents will also receive a progress report reply form which must be signed and returned to the school the Monday after a progress report is sent home. Students who do not bring back a signed reply form will be assigned Homework Center.

In addition, teachers meet frequently to assess student progress. The areas discussed in these meetings include academic performance, participation, engagement, effort, ability to follow directions, and organization. Not only do the teachers discuss these categories, but they also develop ways to support a student's progress. These comments and strategies are shared with a student's advisor and other teachers.

Valor Collegiate students receive semester report cards that include:

- A grade for the semester's coursework and comprehensive assessments
- An overall grade for the academic performance during the semester in each class

Valor Collegiate students receive final report cards that include

- An overall grade for each year's coursework and comprehensive assessment

D. PROMOTION AND RETENTION POLICY

We believe that students should only be promoted when they have demonstrated mastery of our academic standards. Valor College

Prep is founded upon the understanding that promoting students to the next grade because of their age, not their readiness to do the work, is not beneficial to students. Thus, one of the most critical and distinctive aspects of Valor Collegiate's academic program is its promotion policy. To build a culture of learning and achievement, and to hold students accountable for their own efforts in their education, Valor Collegiate uses a strict and simple promotion policy: in order to be promoted to the next grade, middle school students must pass each core academic course in each semester with a minimum C- average.

We believe that students must take responsibility for their educational futures, and give us the opportunity to support them as they pursue academic success. In keeping with this thinking, students should maintain a 95% attendance rate in order to be considered for promotion to the next grade. Any student who has fifteen or more unexcused absences from school will be automatically referred for retention in the current grade at the end of the academic year.

III. TEMPERANCE

A. CLASS PARTICIPATION

Valor Collegiate scholars have affirmative responsibilities in the classroom regarding participation. 100% of our students are expected to be engaged in classroom instruction. In order to educate every student to become excellent readers and speakers of English language, our classrooms are designed to be literacy-rich environments with high-levels of student interaction and discussion. Students receive Merits and Demerits for classroom participation.

B. BEING A POSITIVE MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

Valor Collegiate scholars have affirmative responsibilities to be contributors to an achievement-oriented school community. Students will have numerous opportunities to hone leadership skills and volunteer in and around the school to enhance school culture. Students have affirmative responsibilities to help each other and to be respectful to others.

IV. KINDNESS

A. OUR PHILOSOPHY TOWARDS DISCIPLINE

We believe that a structured and disciplined school environment is a key driver of academic progress and student success. Learning cannot occur in the midst of chaos and distraction. To that end, we place a high value on discipline and order, and believe that it is the responsibility of every adult in the building to work collectively as one voice in order to ensure that students understand, without any doubt or confusion, exactly what the expectations for behavior are and how the school will respond to infractions.

B. REWARDS – CHARACTER CURRENCY SHARES

We will implement a token economy revolving around a paycheck system. This system will allow teachers to reward students for positive behavior and penalize students for exhibiting behavior that does not uphold the school's Core Values and Character Strengths. Each week, students will receive 5 shares of CHARACTER CURRENCY stock valued at \$10 each. Individual classroom teachers are then responsible for awarding or deducting CHARACTER CURRENCY stocks from students throughout the week. The worth of our CHARACTER CURRENCY stocks has been determined by our Character Strengths. Students can earn new CHARACTER CURRENCY shares only by exhibiting all of character strengths. At the end of each week, the grade level Coach will tally the week's awards and deductions using the school's culture management system and print CHARACTER CURRENCY Account statements. These statements will be distributed to students on Fridays during Connections time. Students must bring these paychecks home, have a parent or guardian review the paycheck and sign it, and bring it back to school the following day. Students must maintain a certain weekly paycheck average in order to qualify to go on Study Trips.

Eligible students may redeem their paychecks once a week on Fridays during Connections pursuant to Valor Collegiate's Currency Redemption Plan, which allows for the redemption of shares in exchange for the receipt of mission-appropriate materials (college notebooks, pens, and t-shirts) and school supplies. Eligible students must have an average daily balance in their CHARACTER CURRENCY share account of \$2,500 and have earned no fewer than 5 CHARACTER CURRENCY shares during the preceding week (Friday – Thursday).

Students can earn Badges through a rigorous process and acknowledged for their achievement during ASM. Eligible students must have an average daily balance in their CHARACTER CURRENCY Shares brokerage account of \$5,000 and earn five or more CHARACTER CURRENCY shares per week over a five-week period. Students must provide two one-page essays, a teacher recommendation, and excel in a brief interview. Valor CEO members are trained to lead and model our Core Values, learn to lead Circle Up, and receive certain privileges like wear college paraphernalia on Valor Fridays, transition independently, and redeem shares in the CHARACTER CURRENCY Shop for achievement-oriented supplies.)

C. SCHEDULE OF OFFENSES

Our discipline system is defined by clarity, consistency, and consequences. Students will be receive consequences for doing any of the following:

Minor Offenses	Moderate Offenses	Serious Offenses
Arriving Late to School/Class	Chewing Gum, Eating Candy, Chips	Cheating
Being out of Uniform	Chronic Tardiness	Cutting Class or School
Being Unprepared for Class	Deliberately Disrupting Class	Damaging, destroying or stealing Personal or school property or attempting to do so (including
Disengaged	Disrespecting a Fellow Student	Disrupting Saturday detention through
Improper Use of Student Planner	Disrespecting Faculty, Staff	Gambling
Lack of Organization	Disrespecting School Property	Gross Disrespect of Faculty, Staff or
Inappropriate Noise	Drinking Soda	Gross Disrespect of Fellow Student
Making Excuses	Engaging in Horseplay	Leaving school grounds without permission
Misuse of Resources	Failure to Return a Signed Progress Report	Making verbal or physical threats, empty or otherwise
No Pass in Hall	Ignoring/Refusing	Plagiarizing or Forging
Not Following Faculty Directions	Littering	Skiping all or a portion of Homework
Not Tracking Speaker	Pharmaceuticals w/o Prescription	Setting off false alarms
Poor Attitude	Profanity	Sexual, racial or any form of harassment or intimidation
Poor Posture	Receiving 3 Demerits in One Week	Using abusive, vulgar or profane Language

D. LEVELS OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Any time a student does not meet Valor Collegiate’s behavioral expectations and an infraction to the school’s Code of Conduct has been incurred, swift, decisive and consistent disciplinary action will ensue. These disciplinary actions follow a model of escalating consequences, and may include, but are not limited to:

Once students graduate from Valor Institute, they are expected to conduct themselves like Valor Collegiate Patriots and they are held accountable for performing in accordance with the school’s Code of Conduct. The staff works together during summer professional development to norm responses to student behavior. In all circumstances, intervention for misbehavior or doing the wrong thing begins with a nonverbal correction but escalates to the consequences below as necessary to protect instructional minutes and deliver on our promise of uninterrupted learning.

Students who commit minor offenses receive a demerit as a first level of correction.

This is the second level of correction for all students. Any student who receives a Reflection sheet in class is assigned to Principal Office Hours from 4:15-5:00 pm.

This is the third level of correction for all students. An in-school suspension is defined as the suspension of a student from Valor

College Prep for a period not exceeding three (3) school days that occurs on school grounds. An in-school-suspension occurs when students repeatedly commit moderate offenses. Once the student returns to school, the student must issue a Public Apology in order to be welcomed back into the Valor Collegiate community.

Except in the case of an emergency situation, in which the Principal has determined there is a clear and present danger to the lives, health and safety of students or school personnel, any suspension will be preceded by a conference conducted by the Principal. This pre-suspension conference will include the student and, if possible, the teacher(s) or other school personnel involved in the matter. At this conference, the student will be informed of the reason for the contemplated disciplinary action, the evidence against him or her and evidence in support of his or

her defense. After the pre-suspension conference, the Principal will be empowered to suspend the student for a period of one (1) to ten (10) school days in the event that the Principal determines that the student has committed one of the serious offenses named above.

Before the student returns to class, the student, his or her parent or guardian, the Director of Curriculum and Instruction and/or the Principal will meet in order to address the student's behavior and plan for improvement. Suspensions may not be appealed. Once the student returns to school, the student must issue a Public Apology in order to be welcomed back into the Valor Collegiate community.

A student who is expelled will be subject to due process under Tennessee state law. At Valor Collegiate the due process will be as follows (subject to legal review and Board approval):

- Principal will follow standard disciplinary policies and procedures for investigating the facts, obtaining witness statements, and ensuring adherence to due process procedures.
- If the Principal believes it is warranted, the student will be expelled.
- The Principal shall report to the Nashville Police Department any documentable or suspected incident involving illegal drugs, firearms, explosives, or other weapons outlined in TCA 39-17-1309.
- Following the Principal's decision to expel, there is an appeal process:
- The Principal will give written or actual notice of the expulsion to the parent/guardian within 24 hours, including giving notice that the parent/guardian or student has five (5) days to file an appeal.
- All appeals must be filed, orally or in writing, within five (5) days after receipt of the notice of expulsion.
- The parent/guardian, the student or a teacher requested by the student can appeal the decision.
- Absent a timely request for appeal, the decision of the Principal will be final. The appeal will be filed with the Governing Board of Directors. The hearing will be held no later than 10 days after the beginning of the expulsion. Notice of the time and place of the hearing will be provided to the parent/guardian, the student, the Principal and a teacher who chooses to file an appeal.
- The Governing Board of Directors may affirm the decision of the Principal, order removal of the expulsion unconditionally or upon such terms and conditions as it deems reasonable. The action of the Governing Board of Directors is final.

Valor Collegiate shall include in each application to the Tennessee Department of Education for assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Act the following report of expulsions imposed in accordance with this policy as it applies to the Gun Free Schools Act:

- the name of the school concerned,
- the number of students expelled from the school, and
- the types of weapons concerned.

The Valor Collegiate policies and administrative rules and regulations pertaining to student conduct shall be filed with the Commissioner of Education.

Discipline and Special Education

In the case of a special education student, or a student who receives 504 accommodations, Valor Collegiate will ensure that it makes the necessary adjustments to comply with the mandates of State and federal laws, including the

IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Plan of 1973, regarding the discipline of students with disabilities. Prior to recommending expulsion for a Section 504 student or special education student, the Principal will convene a review committee to determine whether the student's misconduct was a manifestation of his or her disability; whether the student was appropriately placed and receiving the appropriate services at the time of the misconduct; and/or whether behavior intervention strategies were in effect and consistent with the student's IEP or 504 Plan. If it is determined that the student's misconduct was not a manifestation of his or her disability, that the student was appropriately placed and was receiving appropriate services at the time of the misconduct, and that the behavior intervention strategies were in effect and consistent with the students IEP, the student may be expelled.

The school contracts with a charter bus company to provide transportation to students.

A. TRANSPORTATION ELIGIBILITY

Transportation eligibility is determined on the basis of the student's grade level and the distance between the student's residence and school. The table below shows how transportation eligibility is determined. For example:

- A fifth-grader who lives one mile from school is eligible for full fare transportation.
- An eighth-grader who lives one mile from school is not eligible for full fare transportation.

*We will work with every family to ensure that you have a safe and timely ride to school each day and will work with parents to coordinate car pools and other transportation solutions for neighborhood families.

B. BUS SERVICE AND STOPS

Yellow bus service will be available for our Opportunity Academy (5-8) students. The following provides details and eligibility requirements for that service.

Yellow bus service is provided from designated stops at designated times to and from schools receiving this service.

TO be Determined

Discipline on the school bus is identical to the systems and procedures that the school provides on campus. We partner with our transportation providers to ensure that transportation is safe, timely, and consistent with our school culture.

1. Students can receive merits and demerits for bus behavior.
2. Students must be silent on the bus at all times unless instructed otherwise.
3. Students cannot work on school assignments on the bus that require a pencil, pen, or other writing instrument to complete them for safety reasons. Any student caught completing homework on the way to school will receive Lunch Detention.
4. Students may not deboard the bus upon arrival to school until a member of the Valor Collegiate staff boards the bus to begin morning procedures.
5. Students who frequently misbehave on the bus, committing moderate offenses (more than 3 times) will be ineligible for transportation services for the remaining school year. Students who misbehave on the bus, committing any serious offense, will be ineligible for transportation services.

UNIFORMS

A. GENERAL POLICY

Clothing worn by students at Valor Collegiate should emphasize the fact that the school is both a community and a place of work. Students should dress in a way that expresses their membership in the community and that suits the standards of a workplace. Their attire should be neat and tidy and should conform to the Valor Collegiate uniform at all times.

Valor Collegiate's uniform consists of a blue Valor jacket or shirt, blue or grey Valor pants (boys) or skirt (girls), and dark blue, orange, or grey running shoes. Each student is required to wear their attire as follows.

- An official Valor Collegiate shirt. Undershirts must be solid (color to be determined).
- The official Valor Collegiate jacket.
- Official Valor Pants and/or skirt.
- Blue, orange, or grey running shoes (official Valor shoes optional and may be earned).

The student uniform at Valor Collegiate are specifically forbids the wearing of:

- Any clothing with legible writing or images (other than the Valor Collegiate logo). This refers even to clothing worn under another shirt, for example a t-shirt under an oxford shirt.
- Jeans. This includes khaki-colored jeans.
- Carpenter-style pants or pants with large pockets on the sides.
- Hats, caps, bandanas, hoods or night wraps. (Students may wear headbands for the purpose of holding back hair, but they may not cover the majority of the head and they must be Valor Collegiate colors.)
- Jackets or overcoats that are not official Valor jackets (except while outdoors)
- Beepers, iPods, cell-phones, or other electronic items. These items will be confiscated and returned only to a parent or guardian.
- Any clothing tied around the waist or neck.
- Any clothing which is inappropriate for the workplace (i.e. miniskirts, excessively baggy pants, elaborate jewelry, etc.).

No student will be admitted to class until his or her attire meets the requirements listed above. Families with questions or concerns about the uniform policy should consult the Principal. Further, the Principal and other faculty reserve the right to restrict individual items of clothing as necessary, given notification of a parent or guardian, if such clothing interferes with normal school activities.

Uniforms should be clean and neat at all times; students whose gym clothes are dirty or offensive smelling will be considered to be out-of-uniform and will be unable to participate.

Attachment 24: School Visits

Mr. Dickson visited the following schools in his research for the design on Valor Collegiate Academy:

School	Location	Focus of Visit
Summit Public Schools: San Jose HS	San Jose, CA	Math Program
Rocketship: Si Se Puede ES	San Jose, CA	English Language Learner program
KIPP: Heartwood MS, HS	San Jose, CA	Leadership, Math
KIPP: King HS	Hayward, CA	Critical Thinking, History
Aspire: Phoenix Academy MS, HS	East Palo Alto, CA	Blended Math, Art
Leadership Public School: Richmond HS	Richmond, CA	Response to Intervention Untracked 9th grade, teacher leadership
Hillsdale High School	San Mateo, CA	
Synapse School ES, MS	Redwood City, CA	Social-Emotional Learning
High Tech High MS, HS	San Diego, CA	Project Based Learning
Democracy Prep MS	Harlem, NY	Middle School
North Star Academy ES	Newark, NJ	School systems
Univeristy Heights	Newark, NJ	Middle School
New Visions HS	Harlem, NY	Turnaround HS
KIPP TEAM High School	Newark, NJ	High School
KIPP Memphis	Memphis, TN	Mentoring, RtI, Reading Levels
Power Center	Memphis, TN	Blended Learning
Citizens of the World	Los Angeles, CA	Constructivist Learning
Denver School of Science and Tech	Denver, CO	Middle School
Strive Prep	Denver, CO	Middel School
GALS (Girls Athletic Leadership School)	Denver, CO	Fitness program

The following group of people helped give feedback, were thought partners, or gave helpful edits to the actual charter application. In addition, VCA conducted 25+ events in parents living rooms in order to get insight and feedback on what they were interested in for their children.

Nashville Family Input:

In addition, Mr. Dickson also conducted 26 family room events over the past 9 months in Nashville with parents of students in 3rd grade or younger. From these meetings he was able to share his ideas about his model and listen to input from families on what type of educational they wanted for their children. A summary of the general findings of these meetings is given below:

In our meetings with parents, we have found a desire for the following school characteristics:

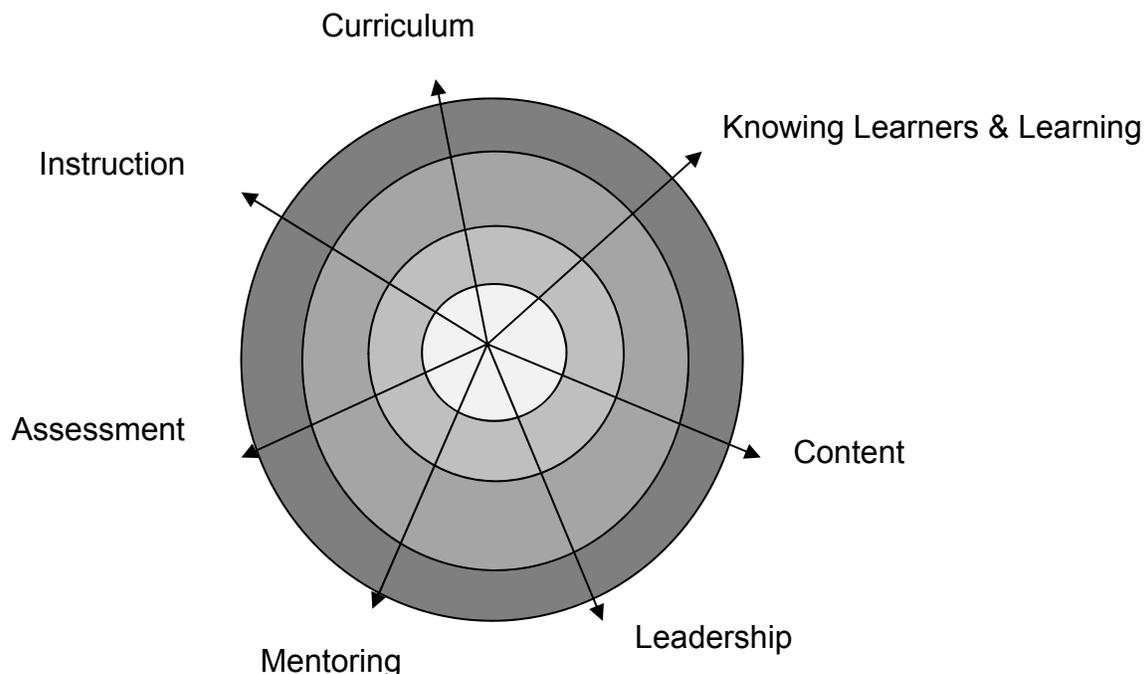
- Physically and emotionally safe culture
 - Small and personalized experience
 - Excellent at building strong character strengths as well as academics
 - A wide range of interesting elective courses and extra-curricular activities
 - Rigorous and college preparatory for all students
- Serves a truly diverse student population in a high performing environment

Attachment 25 – Valor Continuum

Valor Collegiate Professional Development Continuum

Valor’s Professional Development Program

Valor aims to attract, develop, and retain the highest-performing educators in the profession. The Professional Development Program aims to support this goal by 1) supporting individual Valor educators to grow as classroom teachers, mentors, and school leaders, and 2) creating a learning community that collaboratively examines our practices and their effects on student learning and the school community.



The Continuum

Valor educators will work to improve in seven “strands”, organized visually into a bullseye (above). These strands align with the Role of the Educator document, which defines the basic expectations of all Valor educators. The circles represent increasing proficiency in a particular area. The following describes what each level represents. Included are some ideas about what a teacher performing at a given level might also be doing – these are guidelines only.

Educator Levels on the Continuum

The Continuum is tied to the Valor Compensation structure as follows:

- There are six levels of performance that correlate to base salary compensation. Under this model, teachers performing at a specific level would receive base salary compensation within a defined band that would be competitive in the industry with a commensurate level of performance.
- The proposed levels are related to placement on the seven strands of the continuum.
 - (1) 1 or more Basic
 - (2) 7 of 7 Proficient
 - (3) 4 of 7 Highly Proficient (must include Instruction) and the other three must be proficient
 - (4) 7 of 7 Highly Proficient and National Board Certification
 - (5) 4 of 7 Expert and other three must be highly proficient
 - (6) 7 of 7 Expert

Summary Sheet of Continuum Strands

<u>Continuum Strand</u>	<u>Substrands</u>
I. Content	IA. Content Knowledge <i>Understand the subject matter, as well as the history, structure, and real-world applications of the subject.</i>
	IB. Pedagogical Content Knowledge <i>Understand how the subject matter can be taught.</i>
II. Curriculum	IIA. Differentiation <i>Differentiate instruction when necessary in order to give students access and support in reaching for the same deep understandings.</i>
	IIIB. Facilitating Cooperative Learning <i>Facilitates cooperative learning opportunities through complex instruction and collaborative instruction strategies</i>
	IIIC. Backwards Planning <i>Utilizes the principles of <u>Understanding by Design</u> to create backwards planned units.</i>
	IIID. Interdisciplinary Teaching <i>Enables students to make connections across subject areas by designing and implementing interdisciplinary curricula.</i>
III. Instruction	IIIA. Classroom Management <i>Manages any group of VCA students effectively (class, mentor group, Learning Lab, MARS, substituting, Study Trips, etc) – holding high expectations while letting students know we care.</i>
	IIIB. Execution of Lessons/Curriculum <i>Effectively executes curriculum/plans in class, mentor group, IL, MARS, substituting, etc</i>
IV. Assessment	IVA. Formative Assessment <i>Uses ongoing formative assessment to adjust planning and instruction.</i>
	IVB. Authentic Assessment <i>Provide meaningful authentic assessment opportunities to improve student learning.</i>
V. Knowing Learners and Learning	VA. Adolescent Development <i>Uses an understanding of how learning is affected by adolescent development, cultural/school context, and social and individual learning theory.</i>
	VB. Special Needs & Learning Differences <i>Uses an understanding of how learning is affected by learning disabilities in order to meet the needs of students with learning differences.</i>
	VC. English Language Learners <i>Uses an understanding of how student learning is affected by language development in order to meet the needs of English Language Learners.</i>
VI. Mentoring	VIA. Mentoring <i>Serves as a role model, advocate, & partner in education. Be informed about the college process, be able to teach about the process, and be able to counsel students about the process.</i>
VII. Leadership	VIIA. Self Awareness VIIIB. Self Management VIIIC. Social Awareness VIIID. Relationship Management

One Example Rubric – additional rubrics not included due to space limits.

I. Content. Accomplished teachers have mastery over the subject(s) they teach. They have a deep understanding of the history, structure, and real-world applications of the subject.
(from NBPTS Core Principle #2) (CSTP 4)

Standards	Basic	Proficient	Highly Proficient	Expert
IA. Content Knowledge <i>Understand the subject matter, as well as the history, structure, and real-world applications of the subject.</i>	I know and understand the information and skills encapsulated in the standards of my course.	I am knowledgeable in my content and familiar with the content of other courses in my discipline, and am able to build on skills and content taught previously, and teach skills and content that needed for future courses.	I am knowledgeable enough in my content to spiral within my content and knowledgeable enough in the other courses in my discipline to design intradisciplinary lessons and units designed to create a metaconceptual bonus for students.	I am knowledgeable enough in my content to spiral within my content, and knowledgeable enough in the other courses in my discipline to design and teach intradisciplinary lessons or units that intentionally lead to a metaconceptual bonus.
	I am committed to eventually teaching all levels of my discipline.	I am confident teaching half of the levels of my discipline.	I am confident teaching most levels of my discipline.	I am confident teaching all levels of my discipline.
	I recognize the value of content professional development.	I keep my content knowledge current by engaging in formal professional development.	I keep my content knowledge current by engaging in informal and formal professional development.	I keep my content knowledge current by engaging in regular formal and informal professional development and dialogue with the professional community of my discipline.
	I recognize the need for outside resources.	I can find resources to continue students' learning outside school.	I have resources to continue students' learning outside school.	I have resources to continue students' learning and to motivate student interest outside school.
IB. Pedagogical Content Knowledge <i>Understand how the subject matter can be taught.</i>	I recognize the importance of teaching concepts at the heart of the discipline that are not part of my standards.	I am familiar with the concepts at the heart of the discipline that are not part of my standards.	I teach concepts at the heart of the discipline that are not part of my standards as separate lessons.	I incorporate concepts at the heart of the discipline that are not part of the standards into my core content.
	I recognize common difficulties and problem areas in my content.	I know common difficulties and problem areas in my content, and address them after they have been uncovered in students.	I proactively address common difficulties and problem areas.	I proactively address common difficulties and problem areas.
	I recognize misconceptions when students present them in class.	I know common misconceptions and alternate conceptions of my content, and deliberately uncover them.	I know and recognize common misconceptions and alternate conceptions of my content, and deliberately address them when they are uncovered.	I proactively provide experiences to uncover and address misconceptions and alternate conceptions.

VCA will have a Skill Based Step and Ladder as part of the compensation plan for faculty and leadership. As teachers improve on the Valor Professional Development Continuum they will receive raises to their Base Salary. The estimated Salary Bands are shown below:

Valor Collegiate Salary Bands		
Level	Range	Approx Years Experience
Emerging	35k-44k	0-3 years
Accomplished	45k-54k	3-5 years
Master	55k-74k	5+ years
Expert	75k-100k	10+ years

VCA intends to hire a mixture of new and experienced teachers and pair those teachers on teaching teams. We will pay Emerging teachers a little less than the typical MNPS public teacher (with the value proposition that we will give them incredible professional development and coaching which will allow them to make more at VCA in 3-5 years.) We will pay Master teachers more than the typical MNPS veteran teacher. We anticipate having very few Expert teachers, but do hope to encourage great teachers to stay in the classroom by having a “career” option in the classroom that rivals leadership positions within a school.

Salary

Every employee’s base salary should meet the following criteria:

- Be competitive for the education industry.
- Reflect the current level of demonstrated skills, knowledge and performance of the employee.

Classroom-Based Employees

For classroom-based employees, the VCA Continuum of Performance defines levels of skill, knowledge and performance, and allows for the transparent and objective assessment and evaluation of them. Thus, the Continuum should be the tool used to determine starting salaries and increases to the salary.

- There will be six levels of performance that correlate to base salary compensation. Under this model, teachers performing at a specific level would receive base salary compensation within a defined band that would be competitive in the industry with a commensurate level of performance.
- The levels are related to placement on the seven following strands of the continuum.

(7) Emerging 1 or more Basic
(8) Accomplished 4 of 7 Highly Proficient
(9) Master 7 of 7 Highly Proficient and National Board Certification
(10) Expert 7 of 7 Expert

- Any teacher who demonstrates a higher level of proficiency by January 30th of a school year will receive a salary increase consistent with the range for his/her new level of performance. The increase will be reflected in the salary beginning in September of the following school year.

Administrative Employees

For administrative employees, the Educational Leadership Continuum defines levels of skill, knowledge and performance, and allows for the transparent and an objective assessment and evaluation of them. Thus, the Leadership Rubric should be the tool used to determine the starting salaries and increases to the salary of administrative employees.

- There will be six levels of performance that correlate to base salary compensation. Under this model, administrators performing at a specific level would receive base salary compensation within a defined band that would be competitive in the industry with a commiserate level of performance.
- The levels are related to placement on the seven strands of the continuum.

(5) Emerging	1 or more Basic
(6) Accomplished	4 of 7 Highly Proficient
(7) Master	7 of 7 Highly Proficient and National Board Certification
(8) Expert	7 of 7 Expert

- Any administrator who demonstrates a higher level of proficiency by January 30th of a school year will receive a salary increase consistent with the range for his/her new level of performance. The increase will be reflected in the salary beginning in September of the following school year.

VCA acknowledges that a continuum or its equivalent will need to be developed for other non-classroom based employees, for whom the Leadership Rubric is inappropriate.

Attachment 28 – Professional Development: Summer Session Overview

Calendar for 2014 Summer

July 2014						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	1	2	
July 1 – Jul 19	Summer Bridge					
July 15–19	Faculty PD AND Summer Bridge					
30-Jul- 31	Faculty PD AND Valor Institute					
July 22–26	Faculty PD					
1–Aug	Valor Institute					

Summer Sessions:

Professional Development in the Summer Sessions will generally be differentiated according to teacher need. However, in the first year all teachers will go through the same prescribed program in order that we all start at Valor on similar footing.

Each session will be 2 hours in length. We will do 4 sessions per day. The Calendar for the sessions is shown below:

Week 1	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4
15-Jul	VCA Culture	Execution	Summer Bridge /	
16-Jul	VCA Culture	Execution	Execution	
17-Jul	Assessment	Summer Bridge /		Assessment
18-Jul	Assessment	Execution		SPED/ELL
19-Jul	ELL			Cur Devel

Week 2	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4
22-Jul	Cur Devel	Cur Devel	Cur Devel	Assessment
23-Jul	Cur Devel	Cur Devel	Cur Devel	Cur Devel
24-Jul	SPED	SPED/ELL	Mentoring	Buddy Sys
25-Jul	Execution	Cur Devel	SEI 1	PEP
26-Jul	Execution	Cur Devel	SEI 2	ELL

Week 3	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4
29-Jul	VCA Culture	VCA Culture	Perfect Day	Perfect Day
30-Jul	Valor Institute		Perfect Day	Tech
31-Jul			Perfect Day	VCA Culture
1-Aug	Valor Institute			
2-Aug				

Descriptions of Sessions (92 hours)

VCA Culture: Faculty will be given a clear and vivid introduction to what they VCA culture for faculty and students looks and feels like. VCA leadership will use video, role playing, students, and parents to describe the VCA culture. In the first year VCA will use students and families from DSST and Summit Prep (we will fly them out for the first day, and also use videos of faculty, students, and parents describing the cultures at these schools). Faculty will also role play certain situations and be given feedback by VCA leadership. **(12 hours)**

Special Education Development: VCA leadership will conduct SPED training along with Martha O’Bryan expert Daren Dickson on best practices with IEP students, including reviewing and practicing the VCA RtI system, referral system, Grade Level team agendas, and typical high-yield strategies that are effective in the classroom. **(4 hours)**

ELL Development: Teachers will be trained for 2 days on the SIOP ELL model. This training will be integrated into the next two sessions (i.e., as faculty develop their assessments and curriculum for the school year, they will practice embedding high quality SIOP strategies into their lesson plans and curriculum – VCA leadership will give feedback on their implementations of the SIOP strategies. **(6 hours)**

Assessment: Faculty will be walked through the 5th grade Curriculum maps, Scope and Sequence, and Assessment proposals for 5th grade year. Faculty will then spend time in course teams breaking down assessment items, discussing objectives, and designing/revising internal assessments. **(8 hours)**

Curriculum Development: Faculty will be lead by the Principal and CEO through an extensive build out of each course’s assessment and curriculum for the year. It will be the major goal of the Summer Orientation that every faculty member will have worked with the Leadership team and fellow teachers for at least 4 days on developing their year-long curriculum. **(16 hours)**

Execution of Lessons: Faculty will practice and receive feedback on their execution of lessons. Faculty will work as a group and role-play classroom settings where each teacher will practice a select group of common classroom management techniques that will be used across the grade level. VCA leadership will introduce these common techniques and then give feedback and coaching on their implementation. In addition, faculty will practice with the Summer Bridge students and receive feedback from peers and leadership. **(12 hours)**

The Perfect Day: Having crisp, safe, and organized transitions during non-classroom time is very important. VCA will practice every non-classroom time transition with the faculty and ensure that everyone is clear on their responsibilities at all times during the schoolday. **(8 hours)**

Mentor 101: The VCA SPED team will lead the faculty through 2 sessions on how to be an excellent mentor, mostly training faculty on the Social-Emotional models that they will use to coach students in their non-cognitive growth. **(4 hours)**

Technology/Blended: Faculty will be trained on their laptops and all technology software that will be used at VCA. **(2 hours)**

Social Emotional Learning and Coaching: Faculty will receive training from the CEO on the Six Seconds and Valor SEI model, and how it has been integrated into the Valor Curriculum, Mentoring program, and Badge system. (4 hours)

Attachment 29 – Petition of Community Support

On March 17, 2103 the leadership and Board started a support petition for Valor Collegiate Academy. We are pleased to present the current status of the petition as of March 27, 2013.

The petition itself is printed here, and the results can be viewed at <http://www.gopetition.com/petitions/help-bring-valor-collegiate-academies-to-nashville.html>.

Petition Preamble:

Building a strong future for Nashville requires a high quality education for all of Nashville's children, regardless of zip code, race, or socioeconomic status. Valor Collegiate Academy intends to provide a world-class, college preparatory experience to students of all backgrounds in Nashville.

Valor teaches a rigorous, college-preparatory curriculum that is truly personalized for each student. Through a personalized learning plan, each student is encouraged and coached on their path towards acceptance to a four-year college or University. Valor uses rich data to help students grow as scholars and as human beings in a supportive, high expectations community.

Lead Founder Todd Dickson brings over a decade of educational experience to Nashville. He is most recognized for his success with Summit Preparatory Charter in Redwood City, CA. Under his leadership, Summit Prep was named the #118 best public high school in America for the first time in 2008, and the #76 best public high school in 2009. In 2010, Summit was named one of the Top 10 Transformational Schools in the country by Newsweek, and has been featured as an education solution in the nationally acclaimed documentary Waiting for Superman.

Nashville's Metropolitan Board of Public Education will be considering Valor Collegiate Academy's charter application in May of this year. A vital part of their decision will be based on the support of parents throughout the Nashville community. This petition is meant to demonstrate the excitement and support of Nashville parents in having MNPS provide this new opportunity for their children.

Petition Data

Signatures	Nashville	South Nashville
453	327	267