

New School or New Site Amendment Request Form

The Charter Contract, was entered into by and between the New Mexico Public Education Commission, and [Explore Academy], effective [1] of [JULY], [2014]. [Explore Academy] was approved for a [five (5) year] Charter Contract.

[Explore Academy] Charter Contract currently states:

CURRENT SCHOOL SITE: EXPLORE ACADEMY – 5100 Masthead NE, Albuquerque, NM 87109

GRADE LEVELS SERVED: 6-12

[Explore Academy] requests consideration from the Public Education Commission (PEC) to change the terms of its Charter Contract, Section 8.01(a)(x), as follows:

PROPOSED NEW SCHOOL OR SCHOOL SITE: EXPLORE ACADEMY – Westside Campus (address TBD)

GRADE LEVELS TO BE SERVED: 6-12

REQUESTED ENROLLMENT CAP: 700

PROPOSED SERVICE LOCATION: ALBUQUERQUE NORTHWEST SIDE

FIRST DAY OF OPERATIONS: AUGUST 2020

PROPOSED SCHOOL LEADER: JUSTIN BAIARDO

GOVERNING BOARD STRUCTURE: CURRENT EXPLORE ACADEMY GOVERNANCE COUNCIL

[Explore Academy] New School or New Site amendment request is hereby submitted by, [Justin Baiardo], on [May 3, 2019], and affirms the school meets the following eligibility criteria:

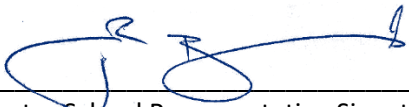
- ☒ Received no lower than an overall “B” letter grade in any of the past three years with no single indicator in the letter grade receiving a rating below “C” in the most recent year, or in all of the past three as for which a Tier evaluation is available, have been identified as Tier 1 in the Academic Performance Framework; and
- ☒ Has been renewed at least once or is eligible for expedited renewal; and
- ☒ Has not had its board of finance revoked within the last three years; and
- ☒ Informed the school district in which the school is seeking to locate a new school or school site of the intention to open a new school in the district. Notification must have been provided on or before the second Tuesday of January or before submission of the amendment request, whichever is earlier; and
- ☒ With the participation of the PEC, held a community input hearing in the district in which the school is seeking to locate the new school or school site; and
- ☒ Is seeking to open a new school or school site located in the same district as the current school; and

☒ The school must confer with the PEC to convert to the 2018 contract template within 30 days of the vote on this request; and

☒ The school's governing board is in compliance with all reporting requirements.

OR

☐ Has received a discretionary waiver from the Secretary of Education to locate in a different district.



Charter School Representative Signature

Date

5-3-2019

[Explore Academy's] New School or School Site amendment request was reviewed and voted upon by the Public Education Commission and is hereby:

☐ APPROVED

☐ DENIED

Chair, Public Education Commission

Date

NOTICE OF INTENT – SECOND SITE

EXPLORE ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL



April 30, 2019

Dear Office of the Superintendent of Albuquerque Public Schools,

Explore Academy Charter School, located within your boundary at 5100 Masthead NE, intends to submit a Second Site Amendment Request to the Public Education Department proposing a second Explore Academy campus within the APS boundary on the westside of Albuquerque. The second campus is proposed to open in August 2020 and serve grades 6-12 using the same curricular model as the current Explore Academy campus.

Thank you,

Justin Baiardo
Founder and Director
Explore Academy

CHARTER AMENDMENT – SECOND SITE

EXPLORE ACADEMY



ATTACHMENTS ~ AMENDMENT REQUEST

APPROVED BOARD MINUTES*

(Attached)

NARRATIVE*

Attach a narrative that responds to the following prompts:

DESCRIBE THE RATIONALE FOR THIS REQUEST.

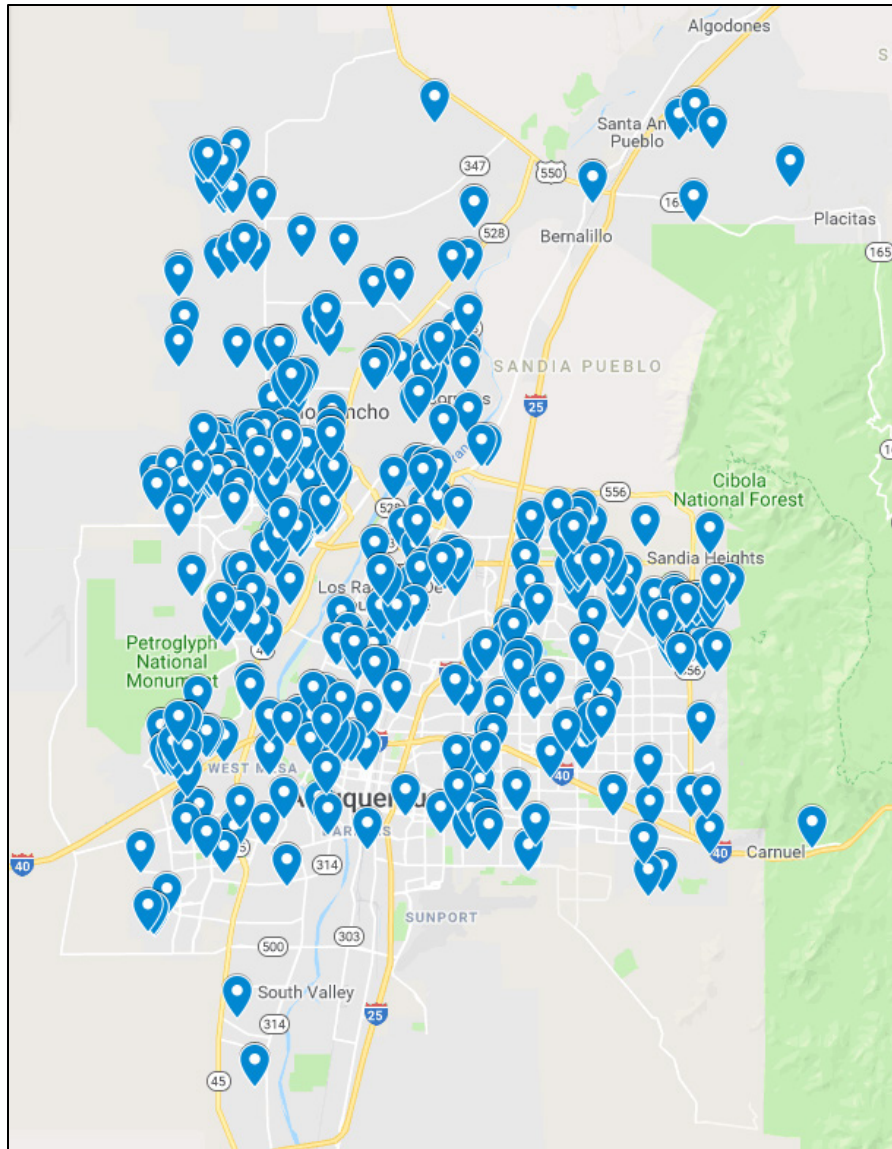
Explore Academy has increased its enrollment in recent years to significantly exceed its capacity, and as a result, the school has an extensive waitlist for all grades levels (6-12). Due to the interest and overall demand in Explore Academy's academic model, the school's leadership has dedicated its mission to continue to provide its model to as many students as are interested in the school's academic programs.

The slight majority of students (over 60%) enrolled at Explore Academy come from Albuquerque's westside, including the majority of the students on Explore Academy's waiting list. Given the commute time (specifically when crossing from west to east Albuquerque) and the logistical concerns of the distance between students and their school of choice, it is appropriate to envision a future where students could attend a school of choice closer to their residences.

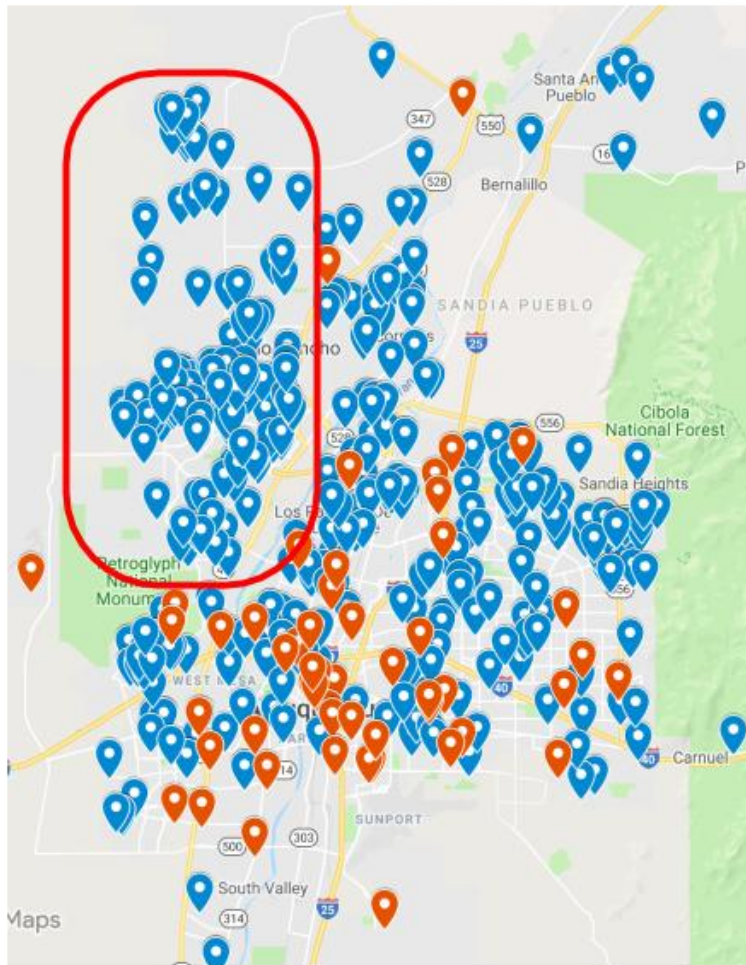
At present, Explore Academy students who travel from the westside spend significant time on the school bus to come to school each morning. Out of the six buses Explore Academy currently utilizes, three are used to transport students from the northwest side of Albuquerque (including Rio Rancho) alone. For students traveling by bus, the average for those students who first get on is over one hour of ride time (65 minutes), resulting in over two hours of bus ride time each day. Compared to its other routes, the extended distance (20 miles for westside routes vs. 13 for other routes) is the result of a) a larger space required to support pickup near student households and b) the overall distance from the westside to the current school location.

Furthermore, students on the westside of Albuquerque, specifically the northwest side, have little to no options for school choice as there currently exists no middle or high school charter programs within the entire northwest side of Albuquerque. Given the high percentage of the city population who lives on the westside, this would create a void for the school choice educational landscape within the area.

The images inserted below show new student interest submissions for Explore Academy for the upcoming (2019-20) school year (in blue) as well as the existence of state and local district charters that serve the greater Albuquerque area (in red). The overall abundance of students with interest in school options, specifically in attending Explore Academy, shows a void of available options within their geographic region.



Blue - student interest forms for 19-20 for grades 6-12 at Explore Academy. 60% come from southwest and northwest zip codes. There are many markers in this area that are tightly clustered in westside neighborhoods. This westside student application data for enrollment is in addition to the over 50% of the current student population that comes from the westside this school year.



Red - All charter schools (APS, RRPS, PEC). There is a large area of the northwest side that has no charter schools for students to provide educational choice for grades 6-12.

IDENTIFY AT LEAST ONE APPROPRIATE, VIABLE FACILITY/ PROPERTY IN THE TARGETED GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION.



FOR SALE | OFFICE

4580 PARADISE BLVD NW

Albuquerque, NM 87114



SALE OVERVIEW

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

SALE PRICE:

\$4,750,000



or an owner/user seeking

69,300 SF building was

the J.C. Penney Company

PROVIDE A DETAILED STAFFING PLAN CONSISTENT WITH EACH STAFFING CHART SUBMITTED WITH THIS REQUEST. DESCRIBE HOW THE STAFFING (ADMINISTRATIVE, INSTRUCTIONAL, AND NON-INSTRUCTIONAL), ENROLLMENT, AND TARGET POPULATION NEEDS WILL BE ADDRESSED BY THE FOLLOWING PROCESSES:

- RECRUITMENT;
- HIRING; AND
- TRAINING.

One of the most effective recruitment methods employed for the original campus has been word-of-mouth recommendations from educators, administrators, parents, and community leaders. In speaking about the school and its mission, the founding team has been able to develop relationships with a variety of educators and individuals who are passionate about education. This led to some of the most talented teachers from across the city joining the Explore team. The founding team members were all teachers, therefore had connections with other teachers from their various school sites. In order to adapt this strategy for the second site, the expansion team has developed relationships with local teacher organizations, teacher preparation programs, and community organizations in order to meet and introduce ourselves to educators across the greater Albuquerque area, focusing on the westside and south valley. The team feels that once we have some students, parents, and teachers on board, they will be able to spread the word into the community through those who are supporting the school during its planning year and recruit staff, both teaching staff and support staff, over time.

The team also plans to attend professional conferences in order to foster relationships with local

organizations. This will allow us to not only spread the word about the opening of the school, but also to recruit educators and skilled professionals such as counselors, therapists, administrative assistants, etc. who are members of local and national organizations or who are attending conferences or trainings where we are presenting or attending. Local career and job fairs will also provide an avenue where we are able to connect with the community and advertise our open positions. The school leader and staff who are recruited early in the planning year will be present at as many local events and conferences as possible to inform educators and industry leaders alike about the opening of Explore Academy and the employment opportunities that will be available on campus.

The school's administrative team has also had success with internet advertisements to post open positions. This has included websites such as Indeed.com, but we have also recruited teachers from posts on our Explore Academy website and on social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram. Our goal is to make our school and its mission known widely throughout the city, thus increasing our reach and attracting potential teachers to apply for a position.

There will be a steering committee formed for administrative staffing for the new campus. This committee will collect applications and vet candidates, hold interviews and collect information about each applicant, and then recommend a school leader/principal to the Governing Council. The appointed school leader will then work with the existing campus administration to hold interviews for any other administrative staff. There are current staff members (teachers) who have or are obtaining admin licenses are training on site to become administrators for Explore Academy and it is possible that someone who has already worked for the school will transition into a leadership role for the westside campus, a transition that will help make the campus launch more seamless and successful.

Department heads and the administration from the current site will form committee for the non-instructional staff hiring process. This committee will conduct interviews and review applicants to form an effective team for information technology, clerical, counseling, educational assistant, and other non-instructional positions.

The instructional staff hiring process for Explore Academy has been developed to support candidates from the beginning. All applicants have one on one time for meeting with applicants and discussing the model and answering their questions. The interview process includes questions related to curriculum, content instruction, pedagogy, etc., but also includes an opportunity for all applicants to present their flavor ideas and showcase their creativity and teaching experience. They are also able to teach a mini lesson to the interview committee to demonstrate their skills and passion for education. This process was developed to allow candidates to not only present their unique background and experience, but also to immerse themselves in the Explore Learning model from the very beginning of the process.

In order to train and support newly hired staff for the westside campus, we will focus on high quality training, professional development, and support systems. Aside from the teaching duties outlined in an Explore Academy teaching contract, one of the most powerful teacher tools is the staff handbook. The handbook is more than just a list of policies and procedures; it outlines important aspects of the instructional model and serves as a guide for teachers to orient themselves to the school and its processes and procedures. The handbook includes sections about course numbering, frontloading, flavoring of the seminars, assessment (including sections on Bloom's Taxonomy and formative vs. summative assessment), exit exams, course catalog and writing course descriptions, and seminar-style learning. This handbook is paired with staff orientation before the start of school that allows departments to align their schedules and seminars, allows teachers to ask questions and request materials, allows for specific training in areas such as gradebook requirements and student data collection, allows for Google training, etc.

Staff development is a vital part of Explore Academy due in large part to the innovative and unique educational model employed by the school. Site leadership will ensure that staff are trained and supported starting before the beginning of the school year and throughout the year as well. The orientation topics as well as other staff supports are on the agenda of the weekly staff meetings that are attended by all staff. These meetings allow staff to discuss pedagogy and best practices, staff requirements, student data and issues, etc. These meetings also serve as a platform for administration to relay information, reinforce requirements and requests, and deliver messages. All policies and procedures are outlined from day one, so staff are aware of their responsibilities and requirements related to training, teaching, grading, data reporting, communication, preparation and planning, and

collaboration.

All staff complete a yearly professional development plan (PDP) that outlines their goals for the year and provides a space to reflect on their progress toward these goals at the end of each term. This time to outline goals that align with the school requirements while also challenging the teacher as a reflective, continually-improving educator allows teachers to truly reflect on their student progress as well as their own performance and make adjustments each month rather than waiting until May to look back at the school year's results. This also allows teachers to refresh their goals and methods every month and make changes and adjustments to realign themselves to school mission and vision when necessary.

Ongoing staff development involves coaching in areas such as instructional model, curriculum development, pedagogical coaching, technology integration, student-driven instruction, and data-driven education. In order to teach successfully at Explore Academy, teachers must first be taught the instructional model in order to grasp the choice-based learning on which it is based. Teachers are instructed in how to build their curriculum for each seminar using themes, or flavors (as explained in the school model section), as well as how to gather materials for the flavors they create. There are templates and examples that are provided by Explore Academy staff (admin, instructional coach) that can help guide new teachers until they are able to create curriculum on their own. Staff are also instructed in methods of instruction that correspond with the learning model, such as socratic lessons, seminar-style teaching, and student-lead lessons. This method of facilitating student investigation and learning rather than lecturing and assigning work can take some time to adjust to, so content experts and instructional video examples are available to help teachers learn the model and the methods it uses.

In addition to classroom-related training, teachers are also taught the scope and sequence of seminars from grade 6-12 so they understand the way students progress through the curriculum. This includes training in the daily schedule and flex period usage (such as tutoring, mentoring, collaboration, planning time, etc.). This training also includes the breakdown of graduation requirements, the breakdown of standards assigned to each seminar in the teacher's content area, the common exit exams that will be administered for the seminars the teacher is teaching, and the grading system for formative and summative grading processes and reporting.

Teacher training sessions occur throughout the school year: during sessions throughout the summer before each school year, during on site orientation days before the start of school, during allotted times on term break days, and during weekly staff meetings. The term break days and weekly staff meetings allow site administration to hold full-staff training as well as breakout sessions to address teacher needs throughout the year. This built in staff time also allows for immediate response to staff needs as they arise.

To support teachers throughout the year, there are several methods of data collections and teacher effectiveness monitoring. Site leadership will conduct both frequent walkthroughs as well as formal observations to evaluate teacher effectiveness and provide support for teachers when they are struggling with any aspect of the position. These are meant to be both formative and summative in nature, allowing for reflection and improvement but also holding teachers accountable for their performance and for student progress. Along those lines, students are surveyed at the end of each term (see School Model section for more information) about the seminar and the teacher for that term. These surveys provide valuable insight into the efficacy of the teacher, the flavor, and the instruction for the term. This data is compiled and given to teachers in order to promote reflective practices that lead to improved instruction and therefore improved student achievement.

In addition to the school-wide support and development for teachers, there are also two types of teacher mentorship that also provide coaching and support for staff at Explore Academy. For first year teachers who are entering the teaching profession for the first time, whether from a student teaching and a teacher-training program, or from an alternate licensure program or fellowship, mentor teachers are assigned to provide support and guidance through their entire first year teaching. This partnership is meant to provide the teacher a point of contact who can lend their support above and beyond what is provided by site leadership and experienced teachers. Starting in year two of operation, there will also be mentors assigned to teachers who are new to Explore Academy, even if they are experienced educators from other school systems. This school-specific mentoring relationship will provide support as the teacher adjusts to the unique model and instructional practices that are required to teach at Explore.

Retention of high quality teachers is also a top priority for Explore Academy. The Explore Academy model allows teachers to do something that is often overlooked and hard to accomplish in traditional schools; it allows them to teach, and to do it authentically and creatively. This may sound like an exaggeration, but in many schools across the country, curriculum is uniformly aligned horizontally and vertically within a subject area with assigned texts and teaching schedules that keep all teachers, and in turn their students, on an identical path that does not allow for variation or improvisation. The mandated adherence to a strict scope and sequence paired with the averaging of grades, often inflated with curving practices and extra credit, results in a system where teachers are not using their pedagogical skills to teach, and students are not actually responsible to learn all the required material to earn course credit.

Explore Academy retains teachers because we have completely changed this paradigm; our teachers truly teach. Each teacher creates their seminars based on their own experiences, personal and academic interests, and understanding of their students and community. This allows the teachers the ability to have autonomy and creative license to design and create their own curriculum. We understand that high-performing teachers truly take pride in their craft and work continually to improve and adapt their lessons to meet the needs of their students. At Explore Academy, the small class sizes paired with the engaging seminar curriculum allows teachers to facilitate student learning daily with frequent opportunities for feedback, adjustment, individualization, and intervention. Teachers know where each student is in their path to proficiency for every standard within the focused, 22- or 44-day seminars that focus on a few standards/skills at a time. When quality teachers are given the ability to design their own pathways in order to reach common goals, the results are astonishing. Teachers who excel in the craft of teaching remain at Explore Academy because the model provides satisfaction and fulfillment every term.

Another crucial practice that helps Explore Academy retain high quality teachers is the continual support of the administration and experienced staff. Teachers who are highly successful in the classroom bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to their instruction. The founding team of Explore Academy was comprised of teachers. That team and its success, combined with the dozens of teachers who work and operate the current campus, has created a school that is, in reality, shaped and formed by teachers. Where some charters are founded by businesses or companies, we were founded by teachers who wanted the freedom to teach creative, choice-based curriculum and to do it effectively. This has allowed Explore staff to develop comprehensive support systems for teachers. These systems include weekly staff meetings, ongoing professional development that is based on data and school need, detailed staff training materials related to all aspects of the school (such as educational model, technology integration, instructional and grading practices, etc.), and built in collaboration time at regular intervals to promote sharing of best practices and strategies as well as materials and ideas.

There are other aspects of a school that promote retention such as competitive teacher pay, flexibility related to teacher's personal needs such as appointments and emergencies, quality and availability of classroom supplies and teaching materials, and community building and appreciation initiatives built into the school culture. We focus on these criteria as well, thus providing the best possible teaching experience for our teachers. Our current rate of staff retention is over 95%. This shows that the model is truly appreciated and embraced by the teachers. Of the teachers from 2017-2018, the staff almost all scored Highly Effective or Exemplary. This shows that we have the right systems in place to retain high-performing teachers and to allow them to make astonishing academic progress with Explore Academy students.

IF CHANGES TO STAFFING ARE NOT NEEDED, PROVIDE AN EXPLANATION.

N/A

IDENTIFY THE TARGET POPULATION OF THE PROPOSED SCHOOL, AND DEMONSTRATE A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF THE FOLLOWING:

THE STUDENTS THE PROPOSED SCHOOL INTENDS TO SERVE;

- DEMAND FOR THIS PROGRAM WITHIN THE IDENTIFIED LOCATION OF THE PROPOSED NEW SCHOOL
- HOW THE POPULATION IS SIMILAR TO, OR DIFFERENT FROM, THE POPULATION CURRENTLY SERVED BY THE SCHOOL(S) OPERATING UNDER THE CHARTER;

- **WHETHER THE STUDENTS WILL BE PRIMARILY NEIGHBORHOOD OR COMMUTER;**
- **A DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE POPULATION;**
- **CURRENT LEVELS OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE FOR THE TARGET POPULATION; AND**
- **NEEDS NOT CURRENTLY MET FOR THE TARGET POPULATION.**

Students the proposed school intends to serve

The proposed school intends to serve students who reside on the westside of Albuquerque. The target population are students zoned to the following schools:

MIDDLE SCHOOLS	HIGH SCHOOLS
Taylor Middle James Monroe Middle Tony Hillerman Middle L B Johnson Middle Garfield Middle John Adams Middle Jimmy Carter Middle Truman Middle Ernie Pyle Middle Harrison Middle Mountain View Middle Rio Rancho Middle Lincoln Middle Eagle Ridge Middle	Cibola High Volcano Vista High Valley High West Mesa High Atrisco Heritage High Rio Grande High Cleveland High Rio Rancho High

The map below shows the locations of the district schools on the westside of Albuquerque (including Rio Rancho and APS middle and high schools)

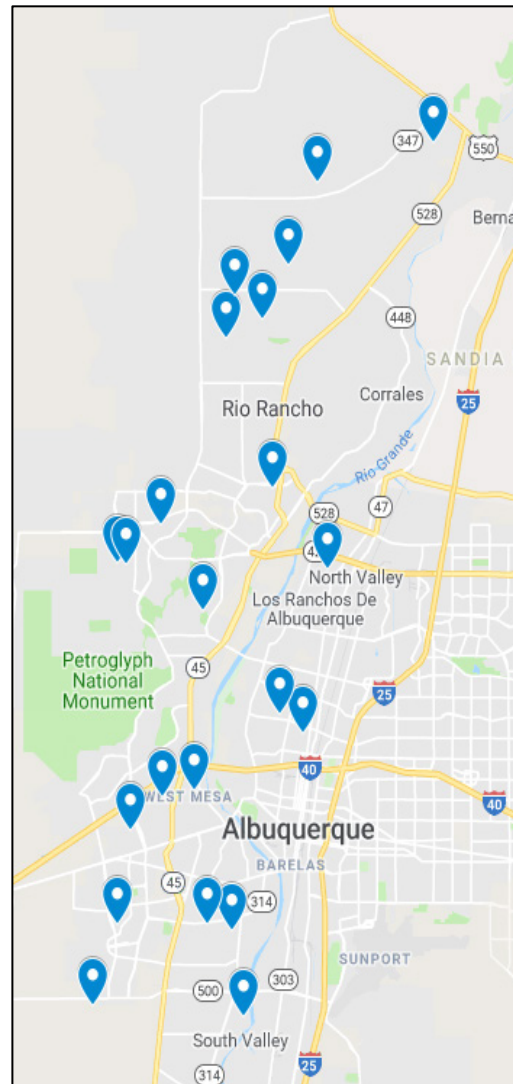
This area encompasses students from the north (Rio Rancho) as well as from the south valley. As shown in the maps above, there is a large area where students have no educational options beyond their assigned district school. The proposed Explore Academy campus would serve these students and their families.

Demand for this program in target location

See the above narrative and the associate map. Explore Academy has an extended waiting list of students from within the proposed geographic area. Given that a westside Explore Academy campus would start with middle school and phase-in future grades across subsequent years, many students currently on the waitlist would have the opportunity to begin 7th grade in the westside campus and continue through graduation. In this sense, after its initial startup year, the school would only need to enroll students to fill its 6th grade class each year. Based on the level of interest, this goal seems more than achievable.

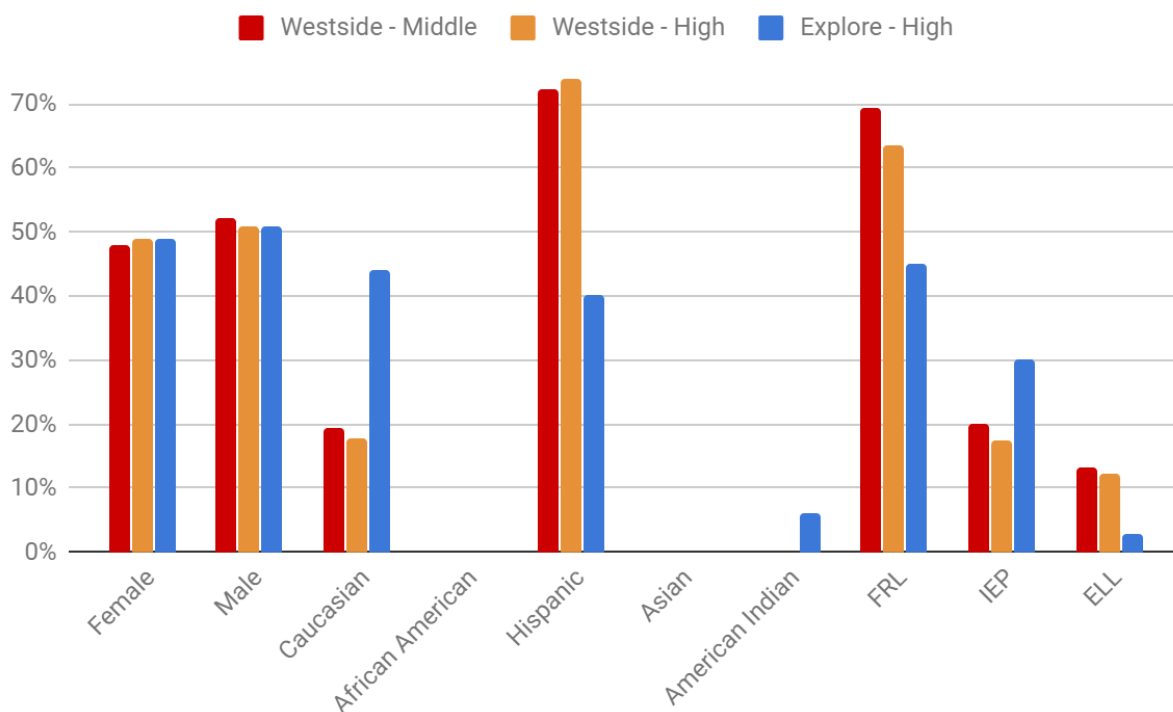
Population comparison to current site

See the below chart. Demographically, Explore Academy currently serves, and demonstrates success with, a population that is ethnically and socioeconomically similar. There is a difference in the percentages of Caucasian and Hispanic populations in the current school when compared to schools on the westside of Albuquerque, but it is important to acknowledge that the students at the current Explore



Academy campus come from all areas of the city. Most of the current site's Hispanic students come from the westside, so it is expected that the new campus would have a much higher Hispanic population, and in turn ELL population, than the current site. Another difference to note lies within the percent of students with special needs served at the current Explore Academy site. The current campus has a higher percentage of students with IEPs when compared to westside schools, both middle and high school, demonstrating the success the school has continued to demonstrate with at-risk students and students who need more individualized, supportive curriculum and instruction.

	FEM	MALE	CAUC	AFR AM	HISP	ASIAN	AMER IND	FRL	IEP	ELL
Westside - MS	47.97%	52.03%	19.39%	<5	72.24%	<5	<5	69.48%	20.14%	13.21%
Westside - HS	49.03%	50.97%	17.63%	<5	73.92%	<5	<5	63.66%	17.58%	12.25%
Explore Acad.	49%	51%	44%	<5	40%	<5	6%	45%	30%	3%

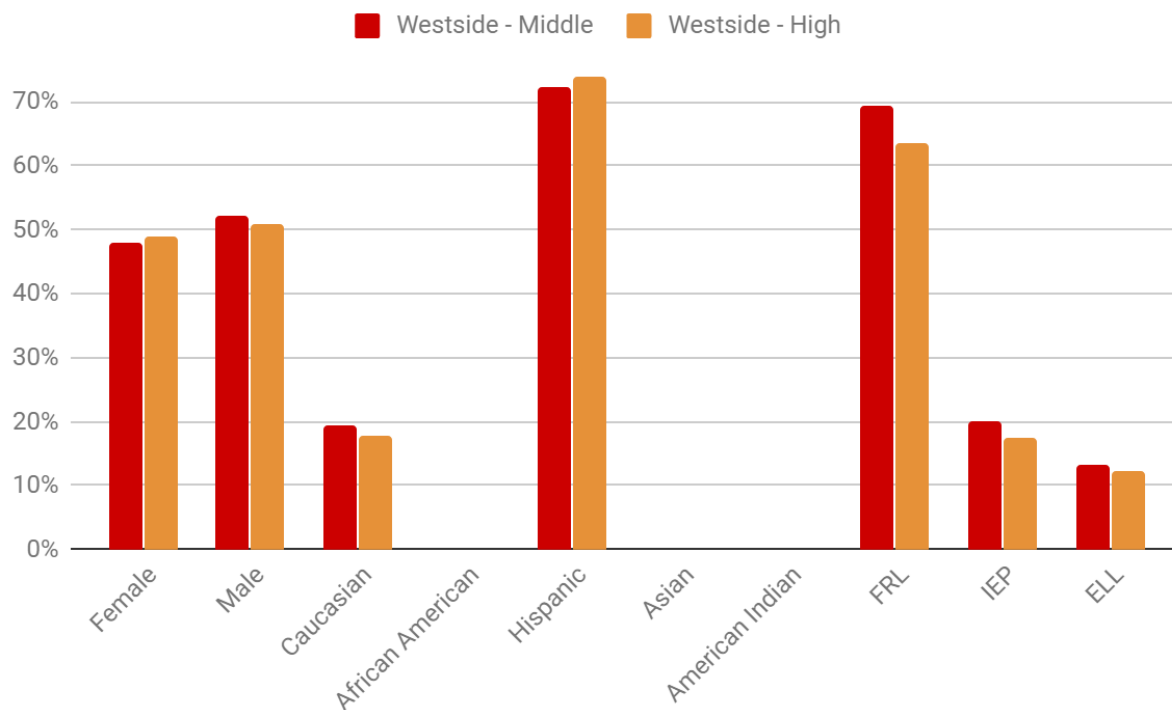


Neighborhood or commuter

Given the potential proximity to the student population, for the majority of students who would attend a westside Explore Academy campus would be considered a neighborhood school.

Demographic of target population

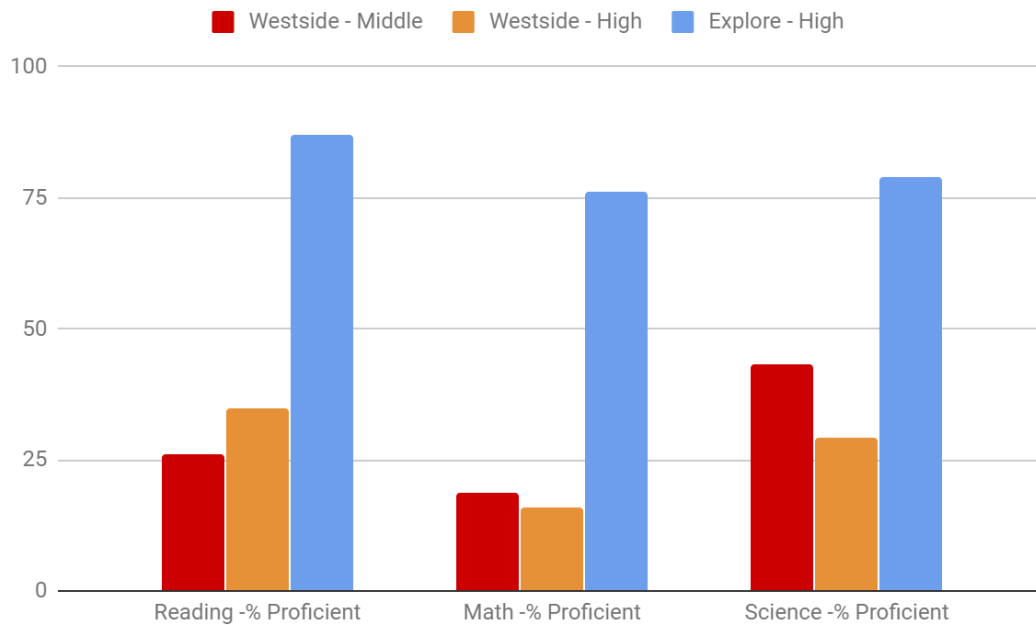
The ethnic and socioeconomic population data for students from westside Albuquerque middle and high schools, as seen above.



Current levels of academic performance for target population

The chart below shows the academic proficiency for the middle and high schools in the target area. The reading, math, and science proficiency rates for the current Explore Academy campus are also shown.

	PERCENT PROFICIENT		
	READING	MATH	SCIENCE
WESTSIDE ~ MIDDLE	26	18.79	43
WESTSIDE ~ HIGH	34.88	15.75	29.13
EXPLORE ~ HIGH	86.9	76.20	79



The chart below shows the most recent (2017-2018) school letter grade for each of the target area middle and high schools. Explore Academy has earned an A for the past three years, as well as surpassing all other schools in growth in both ELA and math.

MIDDLE SCHOOLS	GRADE	HIGH SCHOOLS	GRADE
Taylor Middle	C	Cibola High	B
James Monroe Middle	D	Volcano Vista High	B
Tony Hillerman Middle	B	Valley High	D
L B Johnson Middle	C	West Mesa High	C
Garfield Middle	F	Atrisco Heritage High	C
John Adams Middle	F	Rio Grande High	C
Jimmy Carter Middle	F	<i>Cleveland High</i>	B
Truman Middle	F	<i>Rio Rancho High</i>	B
Ernie Pyle Middle	F		
Harrison Middle	F		
<i>Mountain View Middle</i>	A		
<i>Rio Rancho Middle</i>	A		
<i>Lincoln Middle</i>	B		
<i>Eagle Ridge Middle</i>	B		

Needs not met for target population

Based on the lack of choice, fundamentally, the basic needs families and students on Albuquerque's west side are not being met. Choice in education is a vital asset to parents in providing the type of education they feel is best for their student. For an area of town to provide no such alternatives, especially alternatives that have demonstrated a pattern of academic success, there remains a stark need.

Compounded by this void in options for parents is the current educational achievement landscape on the westside of Albuquerque. Based on the achievement data provided above, there is concern over the quality of schools within the neighborhood areas that students are zoned to attend with the average

In addition to the academic need for more educational options on the westside of Albuquerque, this area of the city is unique in its demographic statistics as well. The population density on the westside is significantly higher than for Albuquerque overall (5537 people per square mile vs. 3096 people per square mile). The average household size is 5.6 people compared to Albuquerque's average of 2.5 people per household. 51.5% of the households on the westside are families with children, and this number increases annually as more residential neighborhoods are added. The percent of school-age children on the westside is also higher than in the city overall with 24.3% of people residing in the westside being students in school (compared to 17% in Albuquerque overall).

The average rent and mortgage payment on the westside is much lower than in the city overall, leading to more families and low-income households with school-age children in the westside neighborhoods. 29% of families on the westside are below the poverty line, compared to only 17% of all Albuquerque families. This makes commuting to a school of their choice, even if it is a free public school, much more challenging both economically and logistically.

DESCRIBE HOW THE SCHOOL WILL PROVIDE A QUALITY ACADEMIC OPTION AND/OR A UNIQUE PROGRAM OF INSTRUCTION THAT IS CURRENTLY UNAVAILABLE TO THE TARGET POPULATION AND HOW IT WILL MEET THE NEEDS OF THE TARGET POPULATION.

The curricular approach and educational philosophy employed at Explore Academy has three areas of focus:

- Objective 1: Greater student accountability using a standards-driven system in course design and academic reporting
- Objective 2: Selectivity and student choice for all classes to promote both a customized and individualized form of an elective-based education
- Objective 3: College preparation through the implementation of a curriculum which increasingly resembles and simulates college academics in structure, rigor, and content.

Objective One

The primary objective specifically focuses on the academic standards in an attempt to develop all students in each of the core academic areas for which they are responsible as high school graduates, an area of concern across the educational landscape. To combat this concerning trend, and given the recent trends in education which holds schools and teachers more accountable in the proficiency of their students, the curriculum at Explore Academy promotes strong, foundational core knowledge and increased student accountability for every core standard, and thus ensures that every Explore Academy graduate is a well-rounded educated citizen and that the school itself is successful in the current educational climate.

The school's curriculum is divided into smaller increments of instruction, called seminars, each of which will span twenty-two (22) days in length for grades 8-12 and forty-four (44) days in length for grades 6-7. These seminars are Explore Academy's courses and are formed around a group of common academic standards. As an example, instead of a student taking a traditional physics course which would include a unit of study on forces and motion, Explore Academy students take a specific seminar devoted to forces and motion, its own individual course, taught over the span of a 22-day period. Using the New Mexico state academic standards, the entire curriculum for all four core subjects is divided into these smaller, more focused areas of study.

Explore Academy's seminar-based approach focuses instruction on an area which receives little to no focus in a traditional academic setting: specific student academic accountability. In a traditional academic setting, a student receives a final grade for a semester of work, covering dozens of standards; yet the final grade that student receives does not accurately reflect nor describe in what standards, within the scope of the class, he or she showed proficiency or lack thereof. That student who passes his or her class, even with a grade as low as 60%, a level far below what is considered proficient, is deemed by the school and the state to be proficient in all the standards contained therein. Schools and their staffs are being measured and evaluated based on student performance, yet those schools, and their staff members, exist within a system, under the traditional academic model, which does not specifically hold students accountable for all the information they are required to know. Schools operating under the traditional educational model are thus held accountable for students who are themselves not held accountable for their academic proficiency.

It is the Explore Academy philosophy that grading periods must become more frequent, and thus more specific, to hold students accountable for each of the academic standards. This benefits all parties, for with greater specificity comes a more resolute image of student comprehension. Examinations at the conclusion of each seminar (exit exams) are directly tied to each of the standards within the seminar, with each exam question based directly on one of the academic standards around which the seminar is focused. Thus, at the conclusion of a given seminar, students, parents, teachers, and the State of New Mexico, will know, with precision, in which specific areas each student has shown proficiency.

Objective Two

The second objective aims to focus on educating the individual. In the current traditional educational format, a teacher is forced to employ differentiated instruction in attempt to provide some specific learning methods for each student. Differentiated instruction is defined as the process of ensuring that what a student learns, how he or she learns it, and how the student demonstrates what he or she has learned is a match for that student's readiness level, interests, and preferred mode of learning. Thus, all students within a given class would be provided with forms of instruction and assessments that are specifically tailored to their individual learning needs. This theory of instruction is ideal, yet in practice, with student-teacher ratios at their highest levels, this approach can never be realistically implemented. The focus of Explore Academy is to move away from the unrealistic goals of differentiated instruction and instead change the focus to a systemic form of individualized instruction: a differentiated curriculum.

For each middle school seminar, there are multiple options for academic content within the seminar, allowing students to build the capacity to make academic choices that best meet their interests and needs with the guidance of their teacher. For each high school seminar, there are multiple versions from which students can choose, with each version possessing its own emphasis and providing its own forms of instruction. These are called seminar-versions or "flavors", and it is through this differentiation that students develop the freedom for academic choice. Each flavor within a given seminar is taught through a different theme, using different learning styles or modalities, and thus allows students, for the first time, the freedom to choose how they will fulfill the academic standards set forth before them. To clarify, regardless of which version of a given seminar a student chooses, he or she will still be receiving instruction over the same standards as the alternate versions; the difference is how they will be learning.

This idea of a differentiated curriculum is at the core of the Explore Academy philosophy: that all classes can be elective in nature. Because all flavors of a given seminar share the same fundamental elements on the exit exam, the evaluation on which the awarding of credit is based, Explore Academy is able to verify that all students who are receiving credit show proficiency in all of the required standards, regardless of the curricular path they chose.

Through the model as described above, students more effectively learn the academic objectives for which they are responsible. More effective learning takes place when students can apply their knowledge or show interest in what they are learning, and by providing them with the options for learning content how they desire, they are more likely to invest themselves in their learning, apply it to their interests, and retain that knowledge over the long term, thus adequately preparing them for

summative assessments or college entrance exams such as the ACT, as well as reducing the need to re-learn that information again through developmental/remedial college courses.

Objective Three

The third facet of the Explore Academy's academic philosophy involves preparing graduates for success in college. There are three components to the Explore Academy's college readiness approach. As students fulfill their academic obligation within the core standards, they enroll in seminars across Explore Academy's major programs through which they focus their studies beginning in their sophomore or junior year. Much as a student declares a major at the university level, there are extensive offerings for areas of emphasis for students to explore their interests.

This type of extension provides three main positive functions. First, it allows students to pursue their academic interests, leading to greater student commitment, all the while nurturing their academic motivation. Second, this approach allows the school's upper division seminars to continually re-emphasize and reinforce the core standards, allowing students to go deeper in their understanding within a given area. Third, and most importantly, it serves to develop their college readiness and career selection by not only providing them with a taste of college-level academic rigor, but essential insight into the reality of the careers in which they potentially see themselves.

Seminars within the various major programs are designed specifically for the purpose of preparing students for an effective transition into college. All the seminars within a given major program transition to simulate college academics in both content and rigor, and thus provide extensive experience without the need for Advanced Placement courses. With the glaring deficiencies present across secondary public schools in providing adequate preparation for college-level rigor, this system not only provides students with a glimpse of the academic expectations from college courses, but a true understanding of the demands within their prospective field of study.

Increased Student Responsibility

One major component directly linked to success after high school is the development of students as responsible and independent learners; this is a critical focus of Explore Academy. The traditional educational model does little to promote student independence and individual student responsibility; in fact, it could be asserted that it does quite the opposite in creating a culture of dependent learners who are incapable of thinking and acting for themselves. This form of passive education has created students who have become detached and disengaged, waiting for their education to come to them.

The primary causal factors, employed by this system in creating this culture of complacency, is the denial of student choice in education, which, on average, begins in early and continues through high school. Yet as students enter post-secondary education (college), they find themselves confronted with levels of responsibility which are foreign and for which they are unprepared, and ultimately fail to adapt to the pressures therein.

By allowing students to choose their curricular path, and make choices in their own best interest, Explore Academy develops its students as responsible, active learners who create their own pathways personalized toward their own educational success. Moreover, as students enter their major program(s), increased responsibilities are placed on them to work at level of rigor which parallels that which will they find in college, all with the added support of the Explore Learning system.

Learning as the Focus

The traditional educational system's use of grades has distorted the learning process, shifting the goal of education away from learning toward the collection of points and the achievement of specific letter grades. To combat this trend, and to bring learning back to the forefront, Explore Academy minimizes the use of summative grades to focus more on learning.

The students in our public schools have become conditioned to perform the work required to achieve the grades with which they are comfortable rather than actually focusing on the learning of information. As a system, we use these grades to qualify and quantify the learning that takes place in classrooms across the country, when in reality, the disproportionate scaling of grades, rampant levels of academic dishonesty, superfluous extra credit, submission of late work, etc. have created students who know how to manipulate the system and can perform the work without learning the material.

For this reason, all work at Explore Academy, both in and out of the classroom, is done for the purposes of assessing what students know and is thus formative in nature. Feedback on student work is continually provided for the intrinsic benefit of providing students and parents with a measure of where the student stands in the learning process, and is thus not calculated into the student's final grade in the class. As a result, the incentive is shifted away from simply completing the work to actually learning what is expected.

At the completion of each seminar (every 22 or 44 days), students take an exit exam which assesses the scope the information (standards) presented within the seminar. The score on this single exam comprises the student's score within the course and is the basis for the awarding of credit. Thus, the focus of daily work and homework is shifted to help the student measure where he or she is in the process of learning rather than using such instruments as summative assessments in and of themselves.

Explore Academy's curricular program has been developed from and is supported by a significant body of research and data, and as such, the format of its instructional model is built for immediate success now and in the future educational climate.

Instructional Approach of the Seminar

In the words of the memory researcher Edward Bolles, "We remember what we understand; we understand only what we pay attention to; we pay attention to what we want." This quote closely reflects the Explore Academy philosophy, providing students a choice in how they receive their education.

The focus of the seminar-style of instruction focuses on a two-way discourse between teachers and students, eliminating the teacher as the sole source of information. The seminar structure requires a 50/50 split in the communicating of information, sharing the role across all participants within the class structure.

Extensive research in this area points to three main factors that promote long-term student comprehension: inherent interest, experience, and application, all of which represent the three main focal areas of the Explore Academy curriculum. Furthermore, when long-term memory is the objective, as in the creation of an educated student, research specifically details implementation of the following six actions:

Action One: Make Skills Relevant

Students read and understand information faster and more thoroughly when it is relevant to them, or rather, when they are interested in the topic at hand. Explore Academy students select their own educational pathways, working toward the goal of preparing them for college and career. Explore Academy's environment is built around providing students with a college experience prior to stepping on a college campus, and as such, it becomes a much more relevant endeavor. This feature is compounded by the "major" programs the school offers, which provide students with a glimpse into the field(s) of study they wish to pursue. Thus, their enrollment, and the skills they develop, all become relevant to their future.

Action Two: Use Low-Density Teaching Methods

Learning has been proven to be much more effective when the amount of content provided, or rather required of the learner, focuses on fewer objectives. Within this thread, for maximum effectiveness in teaching, only 50% of material should be new, and that the focus of learning should be to connect new material with one's previous knowledge. This principle is further supported in research which illustrates the importance of educational simplicity, with fewer objectives emphasizing depth over breadth, in the quality of learning and the establishment of retention..

Explore Academy seminars are driven by both a specific focus in a given content area and the vertical alignment of a particular skill set. In this sense, each seminar is not a standalone unit but a continuation of a larger process which works to establish connections between its own unique material and the material presented within other seminars, thereby creating a more holistic approach in education and thus creating cohesiveness between individual seminars. To this end, Explore Academy seminars constantly review, reiterate, and reinforce material from other seminars to establish a system of comprehensive education that spirals learning targets continually.

The focus on low density instruction operates outside the classroom as well. The Explore Academy schedule is built with the focus that less is more when it comes to student learning, and as such, students will attend fewer classes per day (five) in comparison to the traditional high school student who must budget his or her time and effort across more courses (seven or eight classes enrolled at a given time). This effort leads to a greater focus on depth over breadth.

Action Three: Use Short Classes and Short Learning Modules

According to research, segments of learning should be as concise and specific as possible. Within this vein of thought, the dissemination of too much information can actually be counterproductive and be detrimental in the learning process, causing a state of information overload where previous information, which has not yet had the chance to solidify, is constantly being replaced by new information. The stream of information, to which students are constantly bombarded, does little to establish the long-term retention of information.

Because Explore Academy seminars are shorter in length and more specific in their focus, they can better promote the establishment of long-term knowledge. The focus and specificity additionally serves the school and its teachers by providing a more accurate measurement of each student's proficiency level, allowing better insight as schools and teachers work to meet increased levels of accountability as required by the State.

Action Four: Repeat the Message Often

Reiteration and reinforcement of information have been shown to be critical factors in the establishment of long-term memory. Further research characterizes repetition as a key driving force in moving information from short-term to long-term memory and countering what is known as the fading effect, which describes the natural loss of information over time. Material that is retained over more extensive periods of time, termed residual memory, is created directly from repeated exposure and is the basis for long-term retention.

The strategy of information repetition is seen between and within Explore Academy seminars which, based on their flavor, work to continuously incorporate information from other content areas and build on existing content knowledge and skill sets covered in lower-level tiers within the same content area, thus creating greater cohesiveness between individual seminars. This reinforcement of ideas works to tie the individual seminars into one solid framework that addresses learning targets repeatedly through various content areas and seminar flavors.

Connections between seminars, and the concepts therein, creates and develops what is known as neuroplasticity, where the brain physically reorganizes neural pathways as new connections are made between existing areas where information is stored. As one begins to understand a concept from a more global perspective, including its relatedness to other concepts and real-world application, the way that information is stored in brain changes and the longevity of the stored information increases significantly.

By providing a spiraling curriculum between seminars, with seminars constantly drawing on information from other disciplines to apply to new information, information is reinforced and greater levels of long-term memory can be established.

This philosophy operates within the seminar timeframe as well. While each seminar focuses on a few specific academic standards, the way in which these standards are presented to students builds connections within the twenty-two or forty-four day term. By using spiraled instruction, where the teacher circles back on instructional objectives and learning targets in an effort to continuously tie content together, information is repeated often, albeit with new connections, thus strengthening the understanding and interrelatedness of each individual objective.

Action Five: Provide the Learner with Motivation

Learning becomes most effective when the learner has inherent motivation to learn. This intuitive notion is the basis for what is termed choice theory, developed by Dr. William Glasser and his culmination of over fifty years of research and practice in the areas of psychology and counseling. The guiding principle in choice theory asserts that behavior is central to our existence and is driven from within, and that we as humans are most successful when we are internally motivated. As it relates to the classroom, Glasser's theory describes a choice-based education as one in which students are (a)

provided a warm, supportive classroom environment where they are respected, (b) asked to perform only useful work (no compulsory homework), (c) pushed to do the best they can, and (d) continuously asked to evaluate their own work and improve it (feedback).

In addition, a teacher in a seminar-based environment steps into a mentoring role rather than one that is supervisory in nature, helping to facilitate, support, and drive the learning process rather than simply disseminate information. Such teachers are interested in quality, and must continuously challenge students to nurture that level of quality into existence. Grades thus become less of a focus given that they “tend to turn the process off because the students work for your grade instead of their own judgment of quality.” (Glasser, 1998).

The theory asserts that there is not one road to quality, but rather several, and when given a choice, the individual will find more success on the road of his or her choosing. This strategy in providing each student with his or her own customized educational pathway is the foundational principle of Explore Academy.

Action Six: Provide the Learner with Feedback

Appropriate feedback within the educational process is a crucial element in the learning process, especially when it possesses the following characteristics: goal-oriented, ongoing, timely, and specific.

Explore Academy focuses on learning as a process and not an end in and of itself, and thus feedback and guidance become integral components in this process. With the exception of the single summative assessment at the conclusion of a given seminar (the exit exam), all work is guided toward the goal of attaining proficiency / mastery through guided, experience-based learning.

Assessments provided within the scope of a given seminar, including homework, in-class work, projects, and quizzes, are formative in nature and thus meant to serve as a mechanism to provide feedback to students and parents. Explore Academy utilizes these assessments as measures within the learning process and not as measures in the attainment of learning. It thus becomes in the best interest of the student to not only complete the work, but to understand the work as they complete it.

Because Explore Academy is based on active student learning, the teacher takes on a mentoring role where he or she can more effectively assess student learning and attainment of the learning targets for each seminar and provide timely and specific feedback throughout the duration of the learning experience.

Explore Academy’s approach is suited to meet the needs of Westside students by individualizing their education through choice-based seminars and in-depth support systems. The entire school model is designed to meet the needs of each student, individually, thus resulting in a learning environment that is tailored specifically to support our Las Cruces students and bring them unprecedented academic success.

The curriculum, developed within the structure of the Explore Learning model, will be unique to the culture and flavor of the westside students it serves. It is customized through seminar flavors and school activities to truly embody the interests and needs of the students who attend the school. The customization of the curriculum allows the Explore Learning model approach to meet the needs of each individual student on campus, ensuring that they receive the instruction, guidance, and support needed to make academic progress. The on-site tutoring and academic support systems such as at-risk and “cuspy” (on-the-cusp) reporting ensure that no student is lost in the crowd. Instead, all students are monitored and supported as individual learners.

Another component of the approach that meets the needs of all students who attend Explore Academy is the use of placement testing to assign students to the seminars that are appropriate for their skill and performance levels. This allows the school to schedule students in a way that places them in seminars that will close their respective learning gaps when they enter Explore Academy. The school pairs this intentional student placement with small class sizes, usually never exceeding eighteen (18) students per classroom in order to provide not only an individualized curriculum through choice, but also an individualized classroom experience where each student is able to receive ample attention from their teachers.

The Explore Academy approach will also allow westside students to become responsible, independent, and skilled learners. The school incorporates technology training and usage into all

seminars, preparing students for college and careers in an ever-immersive technological world. With the rigorous, standards-based curriculum and grading structure, students graduate from Explore Academy prepared for college not only with solid academic knowledge that is free of learning gaps and deficiencies, but also armed with organizational, management, and technical skills that will bring them success in their post-secondary endeavors.

PROVIDE A DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF HOW THE CHARTER SCHOOL WILL MEET THE ENROLLMENT TARGETS IDENTIFIED IN THE ENROLLMENT MATRIX. INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

- ~ **A PLAN FOR MEETING TARGETS;**
- ~ **NECESSARY ADVERTISING AND/OR PROMOTION TO MEET THE TARGETS;**
- ~ **THE TIMELINE FOR ENROLLMENT AT THE PROPOSED SCHOOL, AND EXPLAINS THE PROCESS FOR COMMUNICATING TO THE PUBLIC.**

ENROLLMENT MATRIX

GRADE	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
6	120	120	120	120	120	120
7	120	120	120	120	120	120
8		110	110	110	110	110
9			110	110	110	110
10				90	90	90
11					80	80
12						70
TOTAL	240	350	460	550	630	700

Plan for meeting targets and advertising

As the current Explore Academy site has a significant number of students on its waitlist, it will be able to meet its target enrollment projections by utilizing the same marketing and word-of-mouth strategies. For its initial 7th grade class, it is conceivable that some 6th grade students from the current Explore Academy campus will migrate to the westside campus based on its proximity to the location of their home. In addition, many of the 6th grade families that currently reside on the waiting list (for 2019) will have greater opportunity for enrollment at 7th grade (for 2020) given the opening of the second site. Many of these families have already expressed interest in enrolling if/when a second Explore Academy site does come into existence.

While the school's enrollment is supported by extensive networking among its current families, it will continue to market its academic programs, specifically those available at its new campus, utilizing similar strategies that have proven effective in the past (news media, direct mail, information events at cooperating schools, etc.).

Timeline for enrollment

Upon approval, the school will immediately start marketing (based on the methods described above) to provide an extended time frame to allow for a longer student enrollment period prior to a presumed lottery in the spring prior to the opening of the new campus. At the time of approval, it will notify all families currently on the school's waiting list to submit interest for the following school year, which would then include an expanded enrollment across both school locations. The current site had a waitlist for several grades, especially 6th grade, by December 2018 for the 2019-2020 school year. Thus, it can be predicted that both the current campus and the westside campus will begin to show full projected enrollment for 2020-2021 very early in the spring of 2020.

Communication with the public

The dissemination of information about enrollment at Explore Academy is achieved through a multimodal approach to marketing and community outreach. Through the school's website, families are able to access a wealth of information about the school, its model, and its enrollment process as well as details such as transportation, school calendar and schedules, programs, etc. The new version of the website has been optimized for mobile viewing and will launch this spring to allow families to easily access information and contact the school from their smartphones and tablets without the constraint of having to use a computer for the website interface. Additionally, the school updates its social media and information apps (Facebook, Instagram, Remind) often, allowing families access to information conveniently and quickly. Mailers are also used to reach families using traditional mail systems to provide them with flyers that are informational and engaging. These are sent out a few times in the spring of each year, allowing families to learn about the school, its enrollment possibilities, and its planned parent nights. The parent information nights are a more interactive, personal method for introducing the school to families and the community it will serve. They are held monthly starting in November each year and will allow families the chance to come in, hear about the school, ask questions, and meet the administration and teachers.

PROVIDE A DESCRIPTION OF THE MARKET ANALYSIS THAT SUPPORTS THE SUCCESSFUL ENROLLMENT OF THE PROJECTED STUDENT COUNT. INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

- ~ **OTHER EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS IN THE TARGET AREA;**
- ~ **AN EXPLANATION OF NEED FOR THE SCHOOL; AND**
- ~ **FACTUAL DATA TO SUPPORT THE NEED.**

For students in the westside of Albuquerque, there are few options outside the district schools, particularly in the zip codes 87114 and 87120. In this area of the city, students are mainly zoned to Volcano Vista High School and West Mesa High School. These students have to attend their zoned school in order to use school transportation or walk to class each day, or they have to travel to other areas of the city to attend charter schools authorized by APS and the PEC, even if it means using their own transportation daily to commute to another area of town. This lack of options for the westside students and their families leaves many with no option but to stay in their zoned school without pursuing other educational possibilities that would better meet their needs.

Students in the target area of the Albuquerque's westside have expressed interest in attending Explore Academy's current campus on a consistent basis, comprising over half of the interest forms submitted annually. This level of interest paired with the lack of westside-located educational options shows the need for an Explore Academy campus that is closer to the families on the westside. An additional site on this side of town will also provide many new families with the ability to choose a successful, college-prep educational model for their children without a long commute across town. The need for high quality school options right in their neighborhood will help families gain access to educational opportunities that they currently do not have.

As described above, the data available supports the need for an educational option for students on Albuquerque's westside. Currently, no alternative educational options exist, so the freedom for student choice is severely limited.

As data from the Greater Albuquerque Housing Partnership (www.abqgahp.org) describes, approximately 44% of Albuquerque's population is located on the city's westside, with that number projected to grow to 58% over the next 10-15 years, thus demonstrating the trend in a shifting population center toward the west area of the city. From the same source, it is estimated that over 500,000 individuals commute across the river (from the west to east side) each day, with that number increasing to over 1,000,000 in the next 10-15 years, thus providing a credible need in options for students that are more localized than what is currently available.

IDENTIFY THE CONCRETE RESOURCES, IF ANY, NEEDED FOR IMPLEMENTATION. CONSIDER THE CHANGES NEEDED TO CURRICULUM, ASSESSMENT, AND INSTRUCTION TO IMPLEMENT THIS REQUEST. PROVIDE THE RATIONALE FOR YOUR RESPONSE. IF THE RESPONSE INDICATES THAT RESOURCES ARE NOT NEEDED TO IMPLEMENT THE REQUEST, EXPLAIN

WHY.

The current Explore Academy campus has all the systems in place to expand to two campuses. There are some concrete resources that will be replicated from the current site in order to launch the additional site on the westside. These resources, and their acquisition/creation, will be integrated into the 2020-2021 launch activities for Explore Academy as a whole. This includes resources for onboarding, curriculum, assessment, operations, and data.

- Scope and sequence: Each content area will require a common scope and sequence breakdown that will be implemented and followed at both campuses. This will include the breakdown of all standards and skills taught and assessed in each seminar, grades 6-12.
- Common exit exams: The assessments used for each seminar, called exit exams, are crucial to the model since they determine the final grade, and credit earning result, of each seminar. The exit exams will be expanded and updated for use across two sites, taking both content and test security into account.
- New curriculum: Teachers who are hired to teach in the westside campus will undergo the new teacher training that incorporates pedagogy, systems, and model-specific instructional practices into a comprehensive training that begins very soon after the initial hire date and progresses through the first day in August. This training includes guidance on the creation of new flavors, how to develop Explore curriculum, and how to teach in the Explore model.
- Course catalog: Each summer, the Explore Academy Course Catalog is released to families to kick off the new school year and its upcoming registration and orientation processes. The westside campus will need its own printed catalog and event to announce the upcoming school year to families and the community while also showcasing the highly engaging class content that will be available to students in the upcoming school year. The teachers will have training to write courses and their descriptions to create a high quality course catalog around which students and families can plan and prepare for their upcoming school year.
- Updated logistics: The transportation plan and bus routes will be adjusted and optimized for the inclusion of a second site. Within a few years, there will no longer be a need to run buses from the westside to the current campus, so the transportation planning each year will allow for the most efficient and logical use of buses to allow students to commute to and from each site safely and quickly.
- School systems and operating logistics: The systems used at Explore Academy for surveys, data analysis, credit analysis, etc. will all need to be adjusted, and sometimes expanded, to meet demands of two sites. This includes expanding capacity of data input and analysis systems related to students, teachers, and reporting requirements.

THE FIRST PAYMENT FOR A SCHOOL YEAR IS NOT DISTRIBUTED UNTIL JULY 1ST OF THE FISCAL YEAR. EXPLAIN HOW THE SCHOOL WILL MANAGE ALL EXPENSES PRIOR TO RECEIVING THIS INITIAL PAYMENT, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, THOSE ALREADY IDENTIFIED IN THE STAFFING AND RESOURCE COMPONENTS OF THE NARRATIVE. INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING, AS APPLICABLE:

- **RECRUITING, HIRING, AND TRAINING EMPLOYEES**
- **ADVERTISING AND/OR PROMOTING THE SCHOOL**
- **ENROLLING STUDENTS**
- **PURCHASE OF CONCRETE RESOURCES**
- **FACILITIES**
- **OTHER ITEMS AS INDICATED BY THE REQUEST**

In terms of expenses in the launch of a potential second campus, many of the mechanisms that will be required already exist within the scope of the school's current operation. Those elements which the school provides within the scope of its existing operations include employee onboarding (hiring, training), curriculum development, development of local assessments, usage of administrative systems, data management, and marketing for enrollment. These efforts will have to be expanded (eg: hiring

more employees than is typical for an upcoming school year) and should not require a significant increase in spending.

It is conceivable that the current Explore Academy site can and will share resources it has in excess which are currently in storage (tables, chairs, etc.) so as to offset some need for the second site in purchasing new furniture and other resources.

For those expenses that the second site will require, three funding pathways will exist. Upon approval, the school will apply for the Charter School Program grant to support its replication/expansion. This grant, if approved, will help provide the school with a significant level of financial support.

In addition, and as needed, the second site will operate as any new school site would be required to operate: utilizing the funds the state provides as they become available. In this regard, the second site can hold off purchasing of supplies until the summer prior to the school's opening in order to operate around the constraints of the July 10th distribution of SEG monies.

As a third source, with the assumption that the two schools will be served under one state budget, the second site could potentially benefit from funding support from the original Explore Academy site through expanded efforts in purchasing of resources/supplies/furniture as well as marketing. In this way, the second site would not be a burden in the financial stability of the original site, especially with the prospective funding source from the CSP grant.

In regards to facilities, the school is already actively pursuing exploratory research for facility options for a second campus. At the time of approval, the school will work to solidify a lease or lease-purchase agreement with building owners to provide a facility suitable for its educational program. Additionally, the school has made contact with investors for facility purchase or facility construction with a resulting lease plan that will allow the school to grow into a new facility until such time that the school is able to purchase the facility utilizing a mechanism similar to the bond deal purchase of the original Explore Academy site.

Administrative Completeness Review

An administratively complete request includes the following:

- Fully Completed Form
- Approved Board Minutes
 - o Comply with Open Meeting Law (if applicable)
 - o Board aligns with what is currently on file with PEC
- Narrative, addressing all prompts
- Additional Information
 - o Enrollment Matrices
 - o Staffing Charts
 - o Certification or Discretionary Waiver
 - o Community Input Hearing Transcript

Additional Information

Attach each of the following documents:

Enrollment Matrix

- Complete for the current school, detailing the current and targeted number of students served per grade for the subsequent three Fiscal Years.
- Additionally, complete the matrix for the proposed school for its first three Fiscal Years.

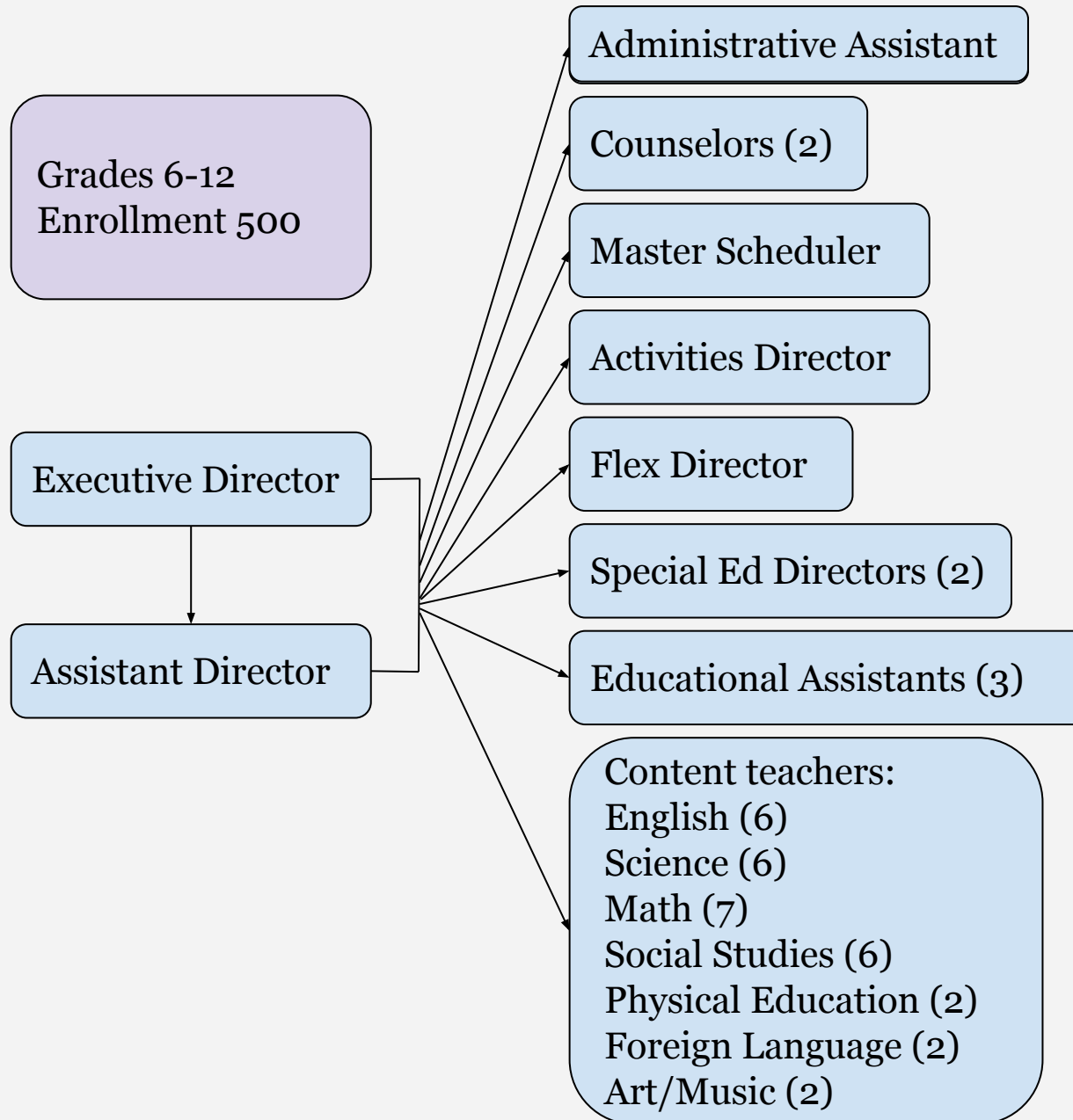
Staffing Chart

- Complete for the current school, identifying the current and anticipated staffing information for the subsequent three Fiscal Years.
- Additionally, complete the chart for the proposed school in its first three Fiscal Years.

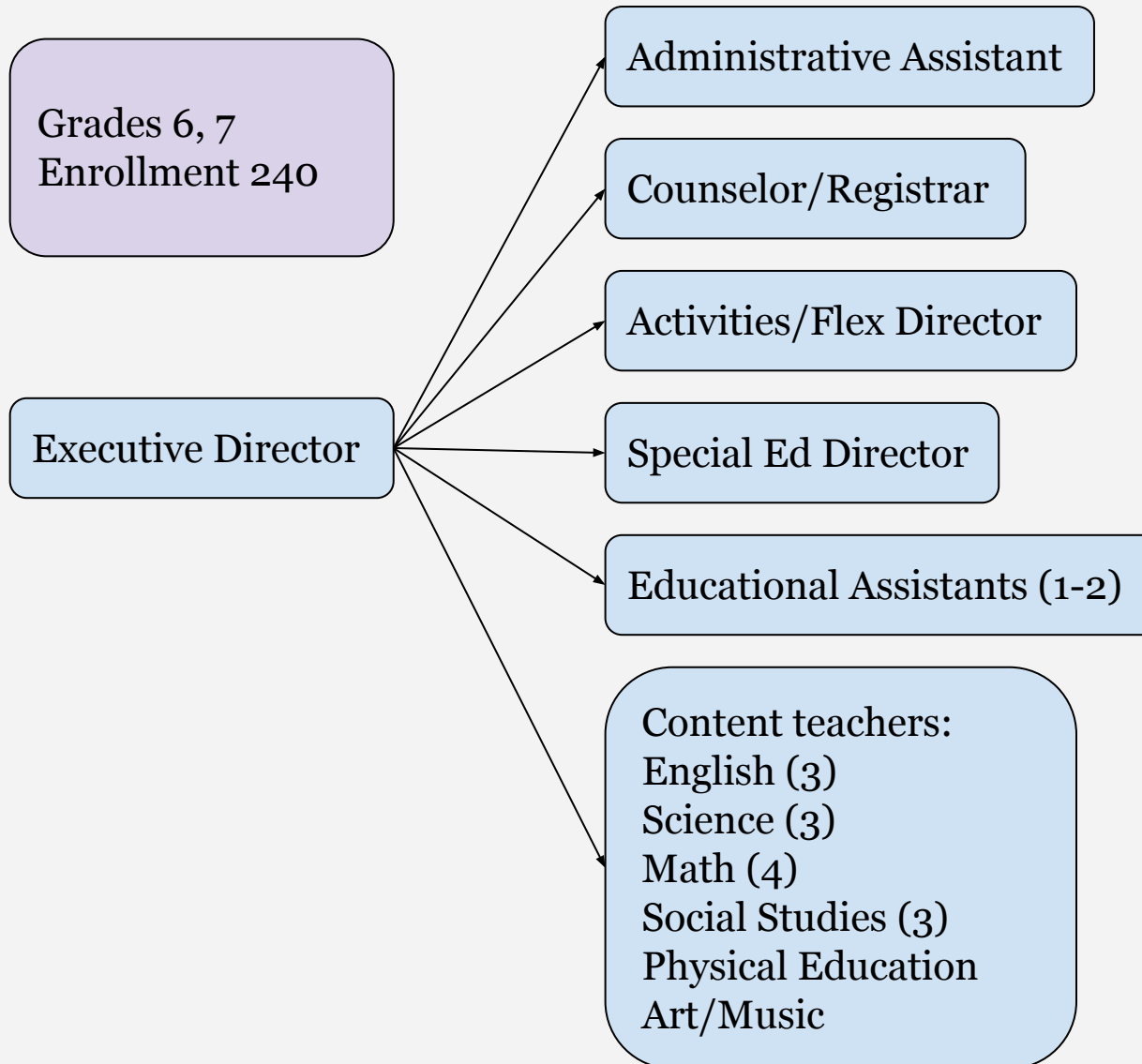
- ~ Certification that the new school or school site is located in the same district as the current school
- OR
- ~ Copy of the discretionary waiver from the Secretary of Education to locate in a different district.
- ~ Transcript from the community input hearing in the district in which the school is seeking to locate the new school or school site.

Explore Academy - New School Amendment Request Enrollment Matrix UPDATED						
Current site - 5100 Masthead						
Grade	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
6	80	80	80	80	80	80
7	80	80	80	80	80	80
8	80	80	80	80	80	80
9	80	80	80	80	80	80
10	70	70	70	70	70	70
11	60	60	60	60	60	60
12	50	50	50	50	50	50
Total	500	500	500	500	500	500
Proposed Second Site - Westside						
Grade	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
6	120	120	120	120	120	120
7	120	120	120	120	120	120
8		110	110	110	110	110
9			110	110	110	110
10				90	90	90
11					80	80
12						70
Total	240	350	460	550	630	700
	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
Total Proposed Explore Academy Students	740	850	960	1050	1130	1200

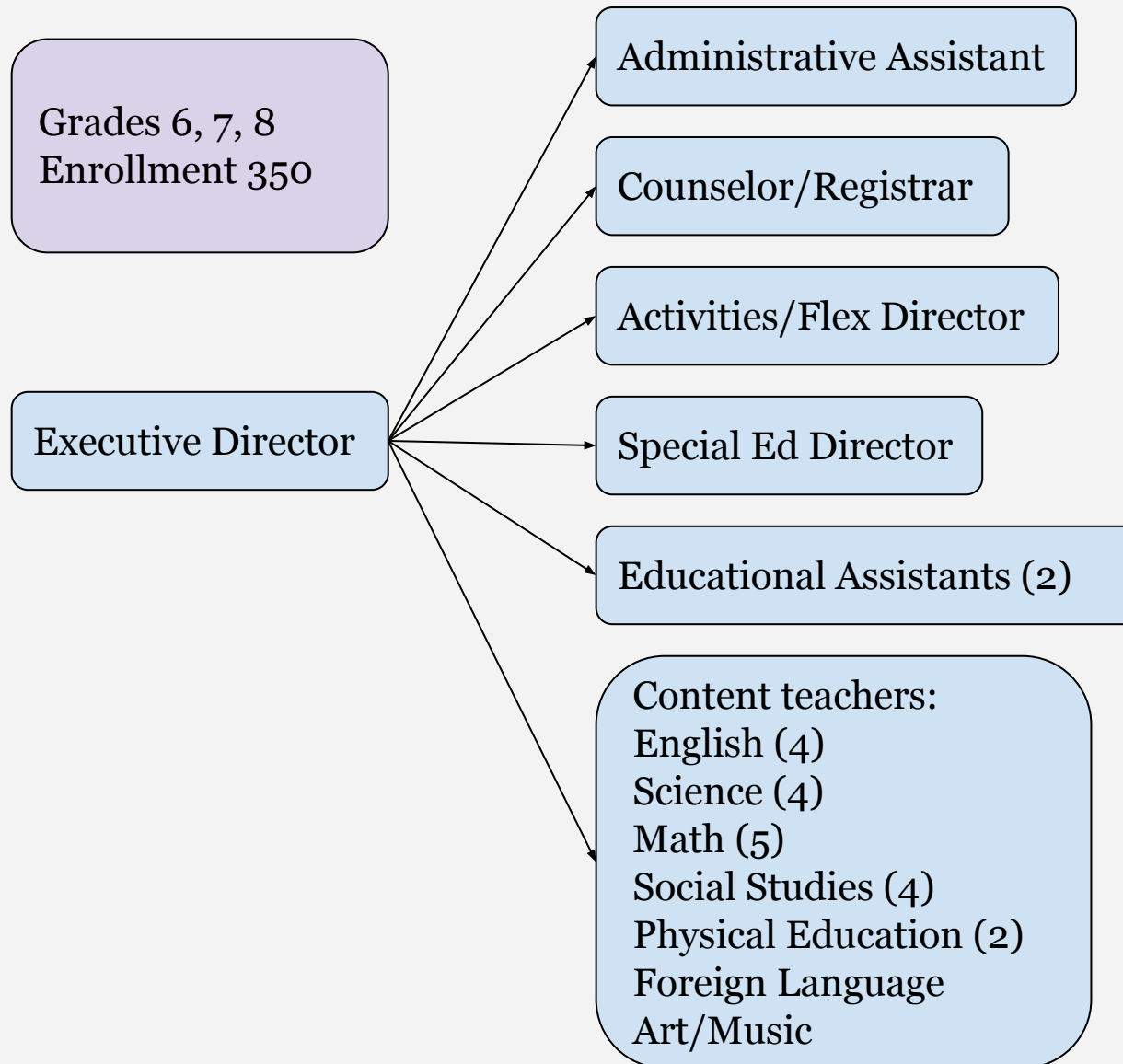
Current Staffing Chart - SY 2020-2021 and beyond



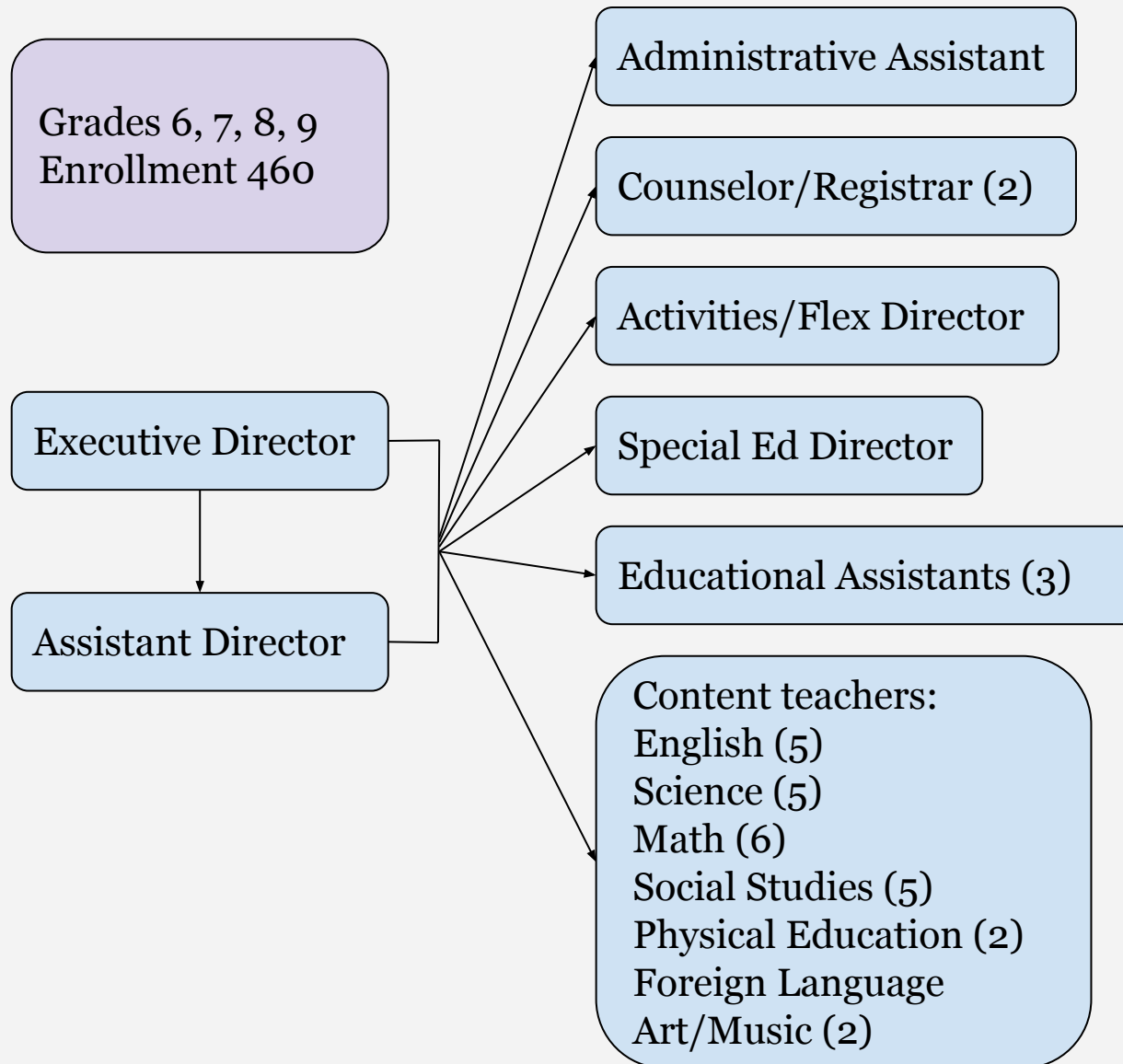
Staffing Chart Year 1 - SY 2020-2021



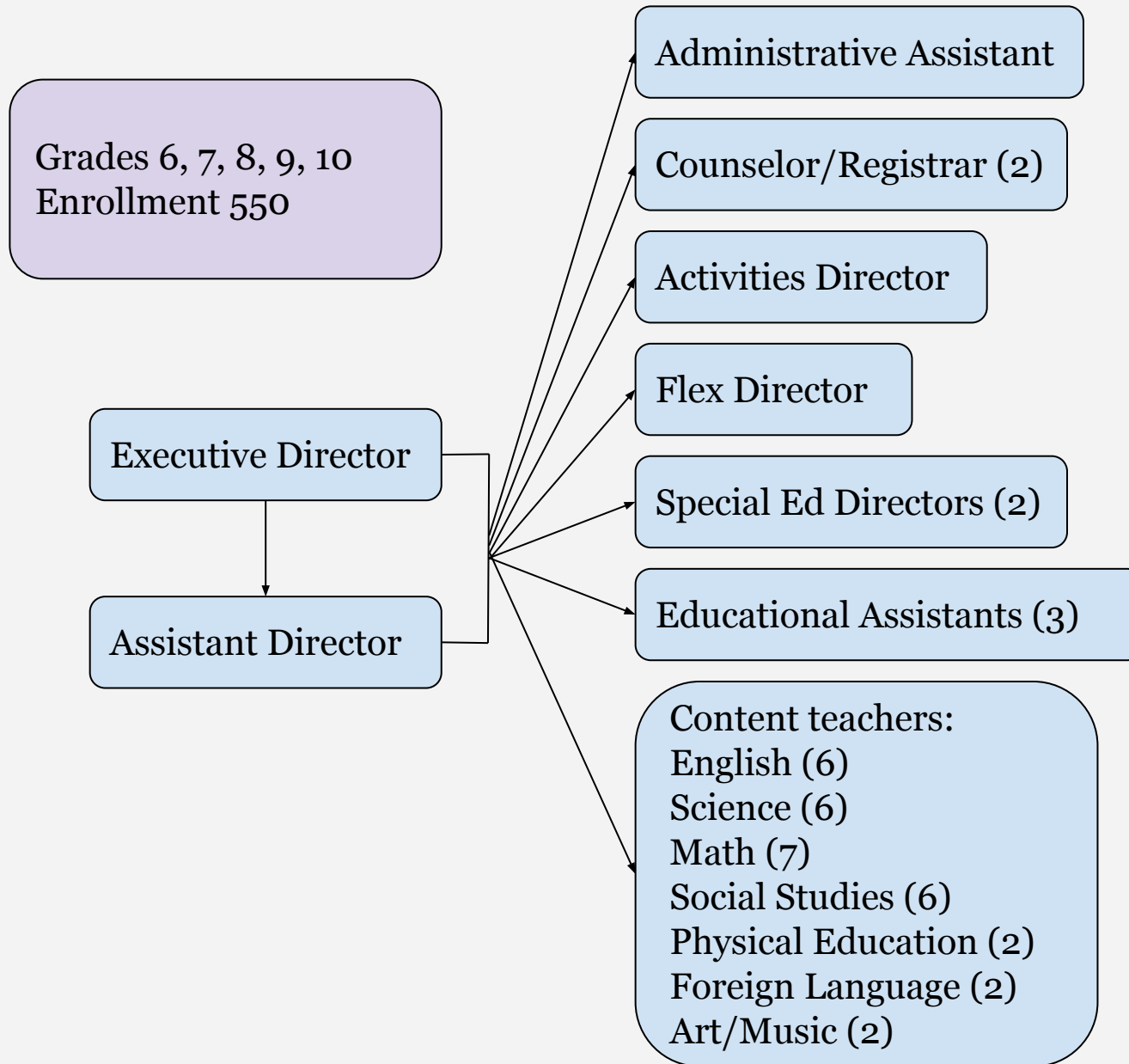
Staffing Chart Year 2- SY 2021-2022



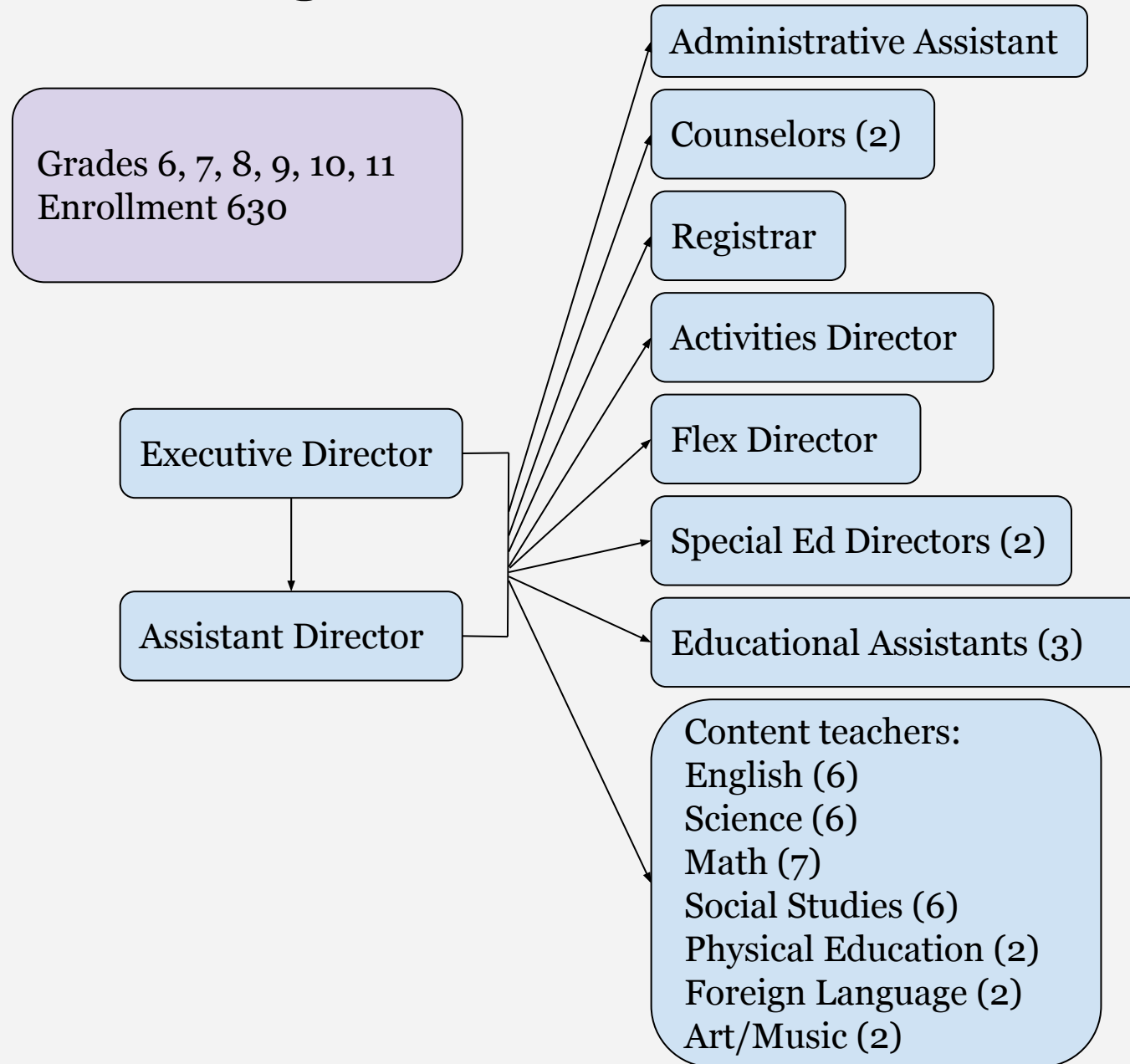
Staffing Chart Year 3- SY 2022-2023



Staffing Chart Year 4- SY 2023-2024



Staffing Chart Year 5- SY 2024-2025



EXPLORE ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL

Minutes – Governing Council Meeting (Regular)

Tuesday, March 12, 2019 - 5:30 p.m.

I. PROCEDURAL AGENDA

This meeting of the EA Governing Council was called to order at 5:30 p.m., by Vice-Chair Ralph Montano. A quorum of the GC was present, as follows: Ralph Montano, John Garletts, David Kulb and Ray Barton III. Jessie Pickard was excused. Staff: Justin Baiardo (Principal) and Ashley Wolfel (Bus. Mgr.).

- Mr. Kulb **motioned** & the GC approved the agenda of March 12, 2019.
- Mr. Garletts **motioned** & the GC approved the minutes of Feb. 12, 2019.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT - There were no public comments.

III. FINANCE REPORT

Ms. Wolfel presented the E.A. financial statements for February, 2019. Statements included: Revenues and Expenses, Bills and Disbursements, Bank Reconciliation and Outstanding Checks. In addition, two BARS (#23-I and #24-IB) were presented and explained.

- Following discussion, Mr. Barton **motioned** and the GC approved the financial statements, including the two BARS, as presented.

IV. E. A. SCHOOL BUSINESS & REPORTS

A. ADMINISTRATIVE

Mr. Baiardo updated the GC on the current EA enrollment status for SY2019-20. He indicated that the waiting list for the entering 6th grade alone, was now around 200 students. The current activity is centered around filling-in all of the applications which are siblings to existing EA students.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. R. K.', is located in the bottom right corner of the page.

Mr. Baiardo provided updated information on EA Network Development. Based on discussions with both the school's attorney and business services provider, it appears that there are now three potential organizational models for the network. Each model has both pros and cons, which were presented. Extensive discussion and analysis followed, especially regarding the desire to respond to the community demand for the EA educational model. The consensus from the discussion was to continue with the current strategic planning direction in developing a second EA campus.

Mr. Baiardo led a discussion relating to the EA Strategic Plan. In order to move the planned strategic initiatives forward in a timely manner, certain timeframes must be met. Most of these timeframes involve state approvals and financing requirements. Following a power-point presentation, which included a detailed review of regional planning data and EA family sourcing data, the GC indicated a desire to proceed with approval of the necessary applications for an expansion of the EA educational model.

- Mr. Barton **motioned** and the GC authorized the preparation and submission of an application to the state, as an amendment to the charter contract. The application should provide for expansion to a second EA school site on the westside of Albuquerque, with a student enrollment cap of 700 students.
- Mr. Barton **motioned** and the GC authorized the preparation and submission of an application to the state, as an amendment to the charter contract. The application should provide for a student enrollment cap increase of 200 more students, at the current Masthead campus.

B. INSTRUCTION

Mr. Baiardo provided an update on the "Student Achievement Metric" which was discussed at the last meeting of the GC. He presented some tracking data regarding the "Subject Mastery Metric" (i.e. Students need to achieve an 80% student performance to pass each class). Since high school students and middle school students have a different reporting timeframe, two separate metrics were tracked and reported. Then, these two metrics were merged and averaged, creating a school-wide metric. The GC engaged in a detailed discussion regarding the metrics and their implication for academic planning.

V. GOVERNANCE COUNCIL REPORT / BUSINESS

Mr. Barton provided an update about the gathering of market information, for charter school administrators. He also reported that the state has confirmed the completion of the required board training for 4 of the 5 board members.

VI. GENERAL DISCUSSION AND ADJOURNMENT

After a general discussion of current issues, there being no other business for the Governing Council, Mr. Montano **motioned** and the GC approved adjournment at 7:05 p.m.

Note: Unless otherwise noted, all actions by the GC are by a unanimous vote.