



Arizona Charter Schools Program
Arizona Department of Education

Mission: AZ Charter School Program Ensures High-Quality Educational Choices by
Selecting, Monitoring, and Assisting Transformative Leaders

**Arizona Charter Schools Program
Start-up Grant Project Years 2021-25 Subgrantee* Application**

** In compliance with Uniform Guidance 2 CFR §200.330, AZCSP awardees have been determined to be subrecipients of CFDA 84.282 A awarded to the Arizona Department of Education, Charter Schools Program, October 1, 2018. Subrecipients will also be known as non-federal entities.*

Purpose

Arizona Charter Schools Program is to, from the amount available (ESEA §4302(b)(3)), support the startup of new charter schools, the replication of high-quality charter schools, and the expansion of high-quality charter schools on a competitive basis (ESEA §4303 (b) (1)).

Eligibility

The applicant must submit an application to apply for the startup subgrant to obtain assistance in planning, program design, and the initial implementation of its charter schools. The entity applying for this grant must be a Not for Profit organization registered and in good standing with the Arizona Corporation Commission at the time of the application submission.

Applicants can apply in 2019 if they meet the following conditions:

- 1) the applicant has already submitted its charter application to the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools (ASBCS) in June 2019 or
- 2) must have already submitted a replication application to ASBCS. Either application must be approved by ASBCS at its December 2019 public meeting.
- 3) New Arizona State University (ASU) sponsored charter schools must also be approved by December 2019.

Before the non-profit organization can receive the AZCSP application, it must complete and submit the Arizona Charter Schools Program Grant Eligibility Form and the applicant Registration Form. Both forms are available at the AZCSP website: <http://www.azed.gov/charter-school-program/>.

Notice

1. The charter school must meet the federal definition of a charter school found in ESEA §4310(2).
- (2) CHARTER SCHOOL —The term “charter school” means a public school that—
 - (A) in accordance with a specific State statute authorizing the granting of charters to schools, is exempt from significant State or local rules that inhibit the flexible operation and management of public schools, but not from any rules relating to the other requirements of this paragraph;
 - (B) is created by a developer as a public school, or is adapted by a developer from an existing public school, and is operated under public supervision and direction;

- (C) operates in pursuit of a specific set of educational objectives determined by the school's developer and agreed to by the authorized public chartering agency;
- (D) provides a program of elementary or secondary education, or both;
- (E) is nonsectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations, and is not affiliated with a sectarian school or religious institution;
- (F) does not charge tuition;
- (G) complies with the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.), section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g) (commonly referred to as the "Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974"), and part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;
- (H) is a school to which parents choose to send their children, and that—
 - (i) admits students on the basis of a lottery, consistent with section 4303(c)(3)(A), if more students apply for admission than can be accommodated; or
 - (ii) in the case of a school that has an affiliated charter school (such as a school that is part of the same network of schools), automatically enrolls students who are enrolled in the immediate prior grade level of the affiliated charter school and, for any additional student openings or student openings created through regular attrition in student enrollment in the affiliated charter school and the enrolling school, admits students on the basis of a lottery as described in clause (i);
- (I) agrees to comply with the same Federal and State audit requirements as do other elementary schools and secondary schools in the State, unless such State audit requirements are waived by the State;
- (J) meets all applicable Federal, State, and local health and safety requirements;
- (K) operates in accordance with State law;
- (L) has a written performance contract with the authorized public chartering agency in the State that includes a description of how student performance will be measured in charter schools pursuant to State assessments that are required of other schools and pursuant to any other assessments mutually agreeable to the authorized public chartering agency and the charter school; and
- (M) may serve students in early childhood education programs or postsecondary students.

2. The proposed school shall meet one of the following definitions of educationally disadvantaged:

- 1) A school serving at least 40% racially and ethnically diverse students; or
- 2) A school serving at least 40% economically disadvantaged students eligible for federal lunch program support; or
- 3) A school serving at least 40% students with disabilities; or
- 4) A school serving at least 40% English Language Learners (ELL).

Select one of the four categories on page 2 of the accompanying AZCSP Eligibility Form.

3. To receive a replication or expansion subgrant, the applicant must demonstrate that is a high quality charter school as per ESEA §4310 (8).

HIGH-QUALITY CHARTER SCHOOL. —The term "high-quality charter school" means a charter school that—

- 1. shows evidence of strong academic results, which may include strong student academic growth, as determined by a State;

2. has no significant issues in the areas of student safety, financial and operational management, or statutory or regulatory compliance;
 3. has demonstrated success in significantly increasing student academic achievement, including graduation rates where applicable, for all students served by the charter school; and
 4. has demonstrated success in increasing student academic achievement, including graduation rates where applicable, for each of the subgroups of students, as defined in section 1111(c)(2), except that such demonstration is not required in a case in which the number of students in a group is insufficient to yield statistically reliable information or the results would reveal personally identifiable information about an individual student.
4. A subgrant may be no more than 5 years of which no more than 18 months can be used for planning and program design. ESEA §4303(d)(1)(B) & 4303(h)(1)(B).
 5. AZCSP encourages applicants to propose academic programs and instructional practices that work for all students including serving students in rural communities.
 6. Allowable costs are described in the Budget Narrative Section G. Instructions for describing Planning and Implementation activities are in the Budget Narrative Section G.

Application Evaluation

The AZCSP grant is aligned with the US Department of Education Charter Schools Program Priorities and the submitted application will be scored in light of these priorities. All applicants will be subject to review of previous state and federal education performance. *2 CFR §200.205 (1)* The Evaluation Criteria are provided to assist in meeting the expectations of the application. It is not the application.

Application Submission

In preparing the application for submission, use 12-point Times New Roman, Arial or Calibri font, double line spacing, and 1-inch margins. Tables may be in an 11-point font.

Submit in pdf format to AZCharterSchoolProgram@azed.gov

Application deadline is **October 7, 2019, 11:59 PM (MST)**

Capacity interview will be held during the week of October 21, 2019.

Application Assistance

In-person application assistance is available in public trainings provided by AZCSP staff. Locations and dates are posted on the AZCSP webpage: <http://www.azed.gov/charter-school-program/>. Important written information regarding the application, its policies and procedures are also located on the AZCSP web page. AZCSP recommends applicants to attend the public training opportunities and to use the resources provided.

AZCSP 2021-25 Application

A. ESEA Part C 4303 Compliance – Non-Scoring Section. *(It is recommended that applicants review the following citations from ESEA Title IV, Part C Expanding Opportunity Through Quality Charter Schools. Failure to address them accurately and completely will disqualify the application from consideration. Links to ESEA Title IV, Part C, 4301 et. al, CSP Nonregulatory Guidance, and Office of Management & Budget Uniform Guidance can be found at the AZCSP Website.)*

1. A description of how school governance is prepared to continue to operate once the subgrant funds are no longer available. *ESEA Title IV, Part C, Sec. 4303(f)(1)(A)(vi)(II)*

Empower College Prep is prepared to continue operating the charter schools funded through the AZCSP grant in a manner consistent with the application once the subgrant funds are no longer available. This will occur as a result of increased enrollment and associated per pupil funding, and the ability to plan for replacing start-up items over a period of time rather than all at once.

Empower College Prep is aware AZCSP funds are only for planning and implementation. The school intends to use funds to hire and compensate the founding school leaders and teachers during the six-month planning phase, provide professional development, acquire instructional materials and technology for students and staff, purchase furniture (i.e. tables, chairs, white boards, etc.), engage the community and recruit students and staff.

Once the subgrant funds are no longer available, Empower College Prep anticipates having increased enrollment resulting in per pupil funding for instructional materials, technology replacement and repair, furniture replacement and repair, community engagement and recruitment of staff and students. Specifically, the school anticipates growing from 25 students per grade during the first year to 75 students per grade by the end of the five-year start-up period, which will generate adequate funds to replace the revenue from the AZCSP grant when

these funds are no longer available. In addition to state equalization funds, the school also receives additional per pupil funding from Title 1, Title II, Title III, and IDEA funds as a result of serving a population with more than 90% of students qualifying for free or reduced lunch and around 16% of students having special needs.

Additionally, Empower College Prep will budget for scheduled replacement and repair of these items. For example, computers will have a 4-year life expectancy and include a 5% annual replace/repair line item. Other expenses, such as classroom furniture, will have a much longer lifespan, which will make these more economical to replace using per pupil funding after the grant funds are no longer available.

Finally, Empower College Prep will continue to pursue grant opportunities and fundraising, which has resulted in more than \$200,000 annually at its other operations.

As a result of increased enrollment and associated funding, budgeting for planned replacement and repair of items, and grants and fundraising, Empower College Prep is prepared to continue operating the charter school funded through the CSP grant in a manner consistent with the application once CSP funds are no longer available.

2. A description of how the eligible applicant will support recruitment and enrollment practices to promote inclusion of all students, including by eliminating any barriers to enrollment for educationally disadvantaged students including foster youth and unaccompanied homeless youth. *ESEA Title IV, Part C, Sec. 4303(f)(1)(A)(viii)(I)*

Since Empower College Prep's mission focuses on children in low-income communities, our recruitment and enrollment practices include multiple strategies that promote inclusion of all students, including by eliminating any barriers to enrollment for educationally disadvantaged students including foster youth and unaccompanied homeless youth.

ECP considers marketing and communication during the recruitment period to be the first opportunity to build integral partnerships between the school, families, and the community. ECP will design flyers about the school in multiple languages that will be printed and distributed to households in the targeted territory in order to inform English-speaking and non-English speaking students about the school, thus eliminating a language and information barrier that could prevent enrollment for educationally disadvantaged students.

ECP staff and current students will distribute flyers in high-traffic locations in the target area, such as El Super grocery store on Camelback and 23rd Ave, as well as informing students and families through daycares, local churches, and door to door canvassing to further eliminate any barriers that could prevent enrollment for educationally disadvantaged students.

To further eliminate barriers to enrollment for foster youth and unaccompanied homeless youth, the school will leverage existing partnerships in these communities. A foster community associated with Arizona 1.27 meets at the school site, and two current employees formerly worked for Southwest Key Programs. Through these partnerships, the Empower College Prep has previously enrolled and will continue to recruit and enroll students from these disadvantaged populations.

ECP will also maintain a web site to communicate information about its school and continue to build partnerships with community organizations who serve educationally disadvantaged students, including foster youth and unaccompanied homeless youth. Through these partnerships, we will inform students and guardians about ECP, enroll these students in our school, and collaborate with these organizations to meet the other needs of these families that affect their education, as included in the logic model.

Enrollment Policy

In accordance with A.R.S. §15-184, Empower College Prep shall enroll all eligible scholars who submit a timely application, unless the number of applications exceeds the capacity of a program, class, grade level, or building.

Empower College Prep shall not limit admission based on ethnicity, national origin, gender, income level, disabling condition, proficiency in the English language or athletic ability.

Open Enrollment Lottery

If for any grade level, the number of applicants exceeds the number of openings, there will be an Open Enrollment Lottery to determine enrollment and waitlist numbers. The Open Enrollment period for Empower College Prep is January 1 through March 31 of the prior school year and is NOT first come, first served during this time. Applications that are submitted during the Open Enrollment period are included within the lottery pool. Applications submitted after Open Enrollment will be added to a waitlist and processed on a first-come, first-served basis behind applications received during the Open Enrollment period.

Randomized lotteries will be held after the Open Enrollment period on April 3, 2020 and the first Friday in April in subsequent years. Results will be available after lotteries have been conducted, by April 24, 2020 and the fourth Friday in April in subsequent years. Dates will be added to the Empower College Prep website as needed for the lottery.

During the lottery process, all scholars who have completed and submitted applications during the Open Enrollment period are grouped according to whether or not they meet applicable and verified enrollment priority status. A separate lottery is performed for each of these priority groups in the order listed below; the final lottery is for scholars who have no applicable enrollment priorities. Within each priority category, applicants are sorted and

numbered in random order. Lottery results will determine the enrollment or waitlist status of each applicant that applied during the Open Enrollment period.

Enrollment Priority Status

In accordance with A.R.S. §15-184 the following types of applications are eligible for “Priority Status” during the lottery and the waitlist:

1. Scholars returning to the organization after having attended the previous school year at Empower College Prep.
2. Scholars who have siblings enrolled in Empower College Prep for the current year
3. Scholars who are in foster care or meet the definition of unaccompanied youth prescribed in the McKinney-Vento homeless assistance act (42 United States Code section 11434a); scholars who are children, grandchildren, or legal dependents of Empower College Prep employees or members of the governing board.

Parents of the scholars chosen by the lottery for an offer of admission will be notified via telephone, first class mail, or email. If parents accept the offer of admission, they will be given five business days to complete a registration packet to enroll their scholar. All forms will be in English and Spanish, and accommodations will be made for students and families who speak a different language.

If the registration packet is not completed within five business days, admission will be offered to the next scholar in line or selected through the lottery process who will also have the same amount of time to complete the registration packet. Parents/guardians who do not complete the registration packet on time will need to reapply.

Sibling Priority Status

Sibling priority only applies when the incoming applicant has a sibling that is officially enrolled or currently attending an Empower College Prep school.

A “sibling” is defined as an immediate family member of the applicant, or a blended family member of the applicant that resides under the same roof as the applicant.

The sibling must be currently enrolled at an Empower College Prep school.

If sibling withdraws from the school before applicant is offered enrollment, priority status will be revoked.

Scholars with siblings already attending get a higher priority than newly accepted scholars.

Priority status does not guarantee placement.

Kindergarten Enrollment Policy

In accordance with Arizona Education Code 15-821 (C), scholars entering kindergarten for the upcoming school year must be five years old before September 1 of the current school year.

Scholars who turn five before January 1, but on or after September 1 of the current school year in which they wish to enroll may complete an application and may be considered for early admission to kindergarten. To ensure that early admission is in the best interest of the child, consideration will be granted on a case-by-case basis as determined by an individual evaluation. This evaluation may include a maturity assessment, and interviews with the School Director or designee, and/or academic diagnostic testing. The School Director shall make the final determination on early acceptance at an Empower College Prep school.

First Grade Enrollment Policy

In accordance with Arizona Education Code 15-821 (C), scholars entering first grade for the upcoming school year must be six years old before September 1 of the current school year.

Scholars who turn six before January 1, but on or after September 1 of the current school year in which they wish to enroll may complete an application and may be considered for early admission to first grade. To ensure that early admission is in the best interest of the child, consideration will be granted on a case-by-case basis as determined by an individual evaluation. This evaluation may include a maturity assessment, and interviews with the School Director or designee, and/or academic diagnostic testing. The School Director shall make the final determination on early acceptance at an Empower College Prep school.

3. A description of how the eligible applicant will support all students once they are enrolled to promote retention and reduce the overuse of discipline practices. *ESEA Title IV, Part C, Sec. 4303(f)(1)(A)(viii)(II)*

Empower College Prep will use a variety of relationship-building, instructional, and management techniques to support all students once they are enrolled to promote retention and reduce the overuse of discipline practices that remove students from the classroom. The result will be increased time engaged in instructional activities and higher rates of continuation at the school that is similar to that of other Empower College Prep schools -- over 85% throughout the year, and about 20% higher than the rates of surrounding, high-poverty schools.

To build relationships, teachers and staff will do home visits at the beginning of the year. This will culminate with an orientation night in which parents meet all of the teachers and staff at the school the week before school starts. During the first week of school, classes build purpose, procedures, and routines to reduce and prevent opportunities for misbehavior that might require discipline practices. These are codified school-wide and part of teacher in-service, which results in consistency in students' experiences. During training, teachers also

learn consistent practices for getting and keeping students' attention, directing and re-directing actions, and other management and instructional techniques based on the text, Teach Like a Champion.

During the first weeks of school, teachers give students diagnostics and complete 45-day screeners to learn students' zones of proximal development and additional needs students may have. They also explicitly teach the school's core values to build a sense of community working toward common goals. Frequent individual and group celebrations, including trips and opportunities to use "Den Dollars" to purchase items from the "Wolf Den" for good behavior and demonstration of the core values, further build a positive community and reduces and prevents needs for discipline.

The school will employ paraprofessionals and a Culture Coordinator who are able to "push in" to provide social-emotional support rather than removing the child from the class. Instructional coaches coach and develop teachers to provide adequate accommodations to alleviate the need to remove students as well.

Finally, the intervention process is rooted in problem-solving, not punishment. An hour is set aside each week for groups of teachers to meet with students who need additional supports and structures to be successful. The resulting plan is communicated with all staff who work with the student, including electives teachers, and a "student champion" is assigned to rally the student to succeed.

All of these structures and techniques support all students once they are enrolled to promote retention and reduce the overuse of discipline practices that remove students from the classroom.

4. A description of the roles and responsibilities of eligible applicants, partner organizations, and charter management organizations, including the administrative and contractual roles and responsibilities of such partners. *ESEA Title IV, Part C, Sec. 4303(f)(1)(C)(i)(I)*

Empower College Prep is not affiliated with any charter management organization and assumes full responsibility for academic, financial, and operational requirements through its staff and vendors.

The school principal is responsible for the academic success and achievement of all students. The principal oversees all regular education and special education teachers and coaches, the front office staff, and administrative support personnel. The principal and Director of Finance and Operations co-supervise the Operations Coordinator and Manager of Facilities and Operations for all IT, transportation, food, and other operational aspects of the school. They also co-supervise the HR Coordinator and Grants and Finance Manager to ensure compliance with all employment laws and requirements of all grants and donations. The specific responsibilities of the principal include:

- Develop school vision, goals, and strategy that are aligned to the organizational vision and values. Invest the school community and key stakeholders in working relentlessly toward the fulfillment of this vision and goals. Monitor progress and implement strategic adjustments as necessary to ensure the vision and goals are met each year.
- Recruit, hire, evaluate, and retain talented teachers and support staff to implement the school's instructional and cultural programs with advice and support from the Executive Director or his/her designee.

- Review and continually increase the effectiveness of the school's curriculum-instruction-assessment framework that is aligned to organizational standards, goals, and instructional best practices in order to maximize learning for all students. This includes participation in establishing formative assessments, aligned curriculum materials, and an evaluation process with formal and peer feedback cycles.
- Review and continually increase the effectiveness of the school's programs to facilitate scholars' internalization and consistent demonstration of the school's core values and habits/mindsets necessary for success in college and positive impact in one's community.
- Oversee the coaching and development of teachers through training sessions, the review of unit plans and assessments, the review of lesson plans, and frequent classroom observations and feedback. Establish and monitor systems for peer review, and peer observations, and professional learning communities.
- Facilitate the creation and revision of curriculum for each subject, including standards to be mastered in each quarter and a vision for mastery of each standard; recommended texts and resources for each subject; and supplemental and remedial resources for each subject.
- Actively participate in student recruitment and enrollment stability. Ensure a safe, positive environment where children and adults seek to come to work and learn. Monitor, synthesize, and provide the necessary information and direction to current and new students/families, teachers, support staff, and others in the school community.
- Oversee the yearly revision of the Curriculum and Instruction Handbook and lead the staff-wide training and implementation of the practices described in the handbook,

including the instructional practices, behavioral expectations, and systems for administering consequences.

- Participate in the creation of the school budget and demonstrate strategic use of resources that supports goals and vision for the school.
- Synthesize and ensure access to data and information to individuals responsible for instructional, cultural, and operational outcomes.

The principal reports directly to the Executive Director, who reports directly to the school board and represents the organization to the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools. The school board and corporate board are identical, and they are responsible for governance and oversight of the Executive Director's academic, financial, and operational performance.

The Director of Finance and Operations is responsible for developing and monitoring systems to ensure the organization operates in a manner that allows the instructional staff to focus solely on fulfilling the mission of the organization, that is fiscally sound, and that is in compliance with all authorizing and regulatory agencies and funder requirements.

- Actively participate in the strategic planning for the organization to reach its short-term and long-term goals, especially focusing on the management and allocation of the organization's resources and smooth, sustainable operations.
- Lead the annual budget development and implement systems to monitor financial performance relative to budget. Provide regular, accurate financial reporting to the Governing Board and other stakeholders. Ensure adherence to the school's fiscal policies and procedures and ensure that the annual financial goals of the organization are met. Oversees financial and accounting processes for the organization, including facilitating the annual audit and income tax preparation. Oversees internal staff

resources and external services in relation to accounting processes to ensure accuracy.

Recommends strategies to reduce expenses and generate increase revenue in the short-term and long-term.

- Negotiate contracted services and oversee service providers. Develop, train, and oversee the implementation of school systems that are not contracted and are required to sustain instruction and culture of the school in a safe, positive environment for scholars, staff, families and community members (i.e. state testing, Synergy, Deanslist, NWEA, EADMS, food service, transportation, facility management, space scheduling, special events etc.)
- Recruit, hire, train, evaluate, and retain necessary staff to execute the school's operations and support the fulfillment of the school's goal and vision.
- Manage the Finance/Operations team, including staff for compliance and technology, to ensure smooth operations throughout the schools and organization, including but not limited to oversight of the purchase and maintenance of technology equipment, infrastructure, implementation of technology training, and management of technology consulting relationships are required to fully support instruction at the school. Develop and audit systems with appropriate internal controls for operations, procurement and inventory. Ensure school-wide compliance with health and safety laws, charter contracts, Department of Education mandates, and all federal and state workplace regulations (i.e. certification, Highly Qualified status, Fingerprint Clearance Cards, e-verify, etc). Additionally, ensure compliance with all regulations regarding student records and mandated programs (i.e. enrollment/withdrawal information, attendance, Special Education & English Language Learner classification, free/reduced lunch

classification, student achievement, demographics, and other required student and family information) and ensure sound administrative record-keeping.

- Oversee HR functions including payroll, benefits, on-boarding new staff, and ensuring staff discipline is handled in a manner consistent with the organization's core values and compliant with laws and regulations.

The Manager of Facilities and Operations is responsible for the outcomes of operations, facilities, and technology on all Empower College Prep campuses. The specific responsibilities include:

Technology Infrastructure & Resource Coordination

- Establish network infrastructure for each school site.
- Identify technological needs of each school site and all staff and manage budget to purchase, install, and implement.
- Identify hardware and software needs of each school site and all staff and manage budget to purchase, install, and implement.
- Develop inventory system to be used across operations; train relevant staff on system.
- Research and vet any vendors for technology; negotiate contracts when necessary.
- Research and develop ways to integrate technology into classrooms; stay informed on emerging technologies in education, and train relevant staff.
- Manage application, deadlines, and reimbursement of E-Rate to ensure organization gets maximum amount of reimbursement possible.
- Research technology and facilities grants.
- Prepare reports for technology and support operations/technology for internal and external audits.

- Manage facilities of both sites and oversee maintenance specifically for land/buildings owned by Empower College Prep; support future expansion and build-out with regards to facilities, resource allocation, and capital budgeting.

Establishing and Maintaining Systems

- May be required to manage a discretionary budget for technology or facility supplies. Required to accurately track expenses and show judgement when approving other staff members' requests for purchases.
- Oversee transportation budget and implement systems alongside management to efficiently track fiscal and operational changes.
- Oversee ordering of technology inventory and accurately track in inventory system agreed to by Director of Finance and Operations (must comply with grant restrictions and long-term organizational strategy).
- Create systems to monitor technology across the organization (teacher check-in/check-out, student monitoring, technology cart audits, etc.).
- Conduct internal audits of procedures to ensure effectiveness and revise as necessary.
- Manage operational and technology budgets.
- Oversee projects as assigned the require coordinating resources across departments.
- Manage organizational Google domain for staff and students.
- Website management and maintenance.
- Establish ticket system; respond to technology tickets in a timely manner and oversee other staff responding to tickets.
- Support technology integration across systems.

Leadership and Management

- Manage Technology and Facilities Associates and Operations Coordinators.
- Support professional development (coaching and training).

Organizational Support

- Support school-site operations, especially when involving technology-based solutions.
- Support operations that expand beyond a single school-site.
- Help evaluate systems and materials related to organizational/school expansion.
- Generate cost comparisons for labor or materials to determine the best way to meet organizational outcomes in a fiscally sustainable way.

The Staffing Coordinator is responsible for overseeing all staff files, employee on boarding, and district level reporting for students and staff. The specific responsibilities are:

Employee Records/Parent & Volunteer Compliance

- Remain current with hiring qualifications for teachers and staff (including, but not limited to, teacher or administrator certification, Highly Qualified status, and eVerify and Fingerprint Clearance Card requirements).
- Manage employee, independent contractor, and volunteer on-boarding.
- Work with external broker (when necessary) to oversee the enrollment of employees in their benefits.
- Support internal and external audits as they relate to past or current employees or volunteers and their files.
- Manage and keep current any employee databases.
- Record employee PTO/sick time balances, reconcile with payroll, and maintain records each year for rollover balances; pull reports for managers as needed.
- Approve and reconcile employee benefits bills to employer.

- Complete employment verifications as needed.
- Make regular contributions on behalf of employer per payroll deductions.
- Track hourly employee spending according to annual budget.
- Manage staff, independent contractor, and volunteer files and ensure records are safely and confidently kept on file in accordance with state retention schedules and organizational policies.
- Ensure parents or volunteers have valid background checks or other credentials required for their participation with the organization.

District Reporting of Student/Staff Data

- Respond to inquiries internally or from outside agencies related to student information across the organization (e.g., Civil Rights Data Collection, Department of Economic Security, Special Education teacher request).
- Submit required AzEDS data on behalf of organization or pull information as needed for Director of Finance and Operations or other leaders.
- Generate Charter Estimated Counts as required by Arizona Department of Education annually.
- Support the training of the registrar at each campus in student information systems and file management.

Hiring

- Creates job postings and descriptions and post openings internally and externally.
- Maintain candidate records for hiring managers.
- Develop and maintain system to filter and screen candidates for hiring managers.
- Pull candidate and employee data/reports as needed.

The Grants and Finance Manager assists the Director of Finance and Operations by overseeing and tracking the funding that comes through the organization with current accounting practices and expert Excel-based, financial analysis. As well as support the DFO in other areas of finance such as accounts payables and payroll reporting. The specific responsibilities include:

Grants Management: Create, maintain, and analyze a portfolio of private and government grants

- Research and stay informed on all Government Rules and Regulations by attending trainings as needed and researching new Regulations as they arise.
- Maintain knowledge and stay abreast of developments in grant work and provide trainings to staff on a regular basis.
- Monitor developments through the analysis of information obtained through the budget, government resources, commodities, and government agencies.
- Prepare plans of action for heading up specific grants through financial analysis.
- Analyze financial information of partners and determine risks involved in partnership.

Grants Tracking and Reporting

- Review and update organization applications, budgets, amendments, and extensions of government or local grants.
- Prepare external financial and compliance reports for organization grants as requested by government donor, foundation and other private major donor award(s) based on expenditures records in the General Ledger (G/L) and in accordance with the reporting requirements of each agreement. Investigate and resolve any accounting problems and ensure that properly documented adjustments are made to the G/L.

- Maintain auditable master agreement files for appointed organization grants. Provide documentation as requested by the Manager for external audits of government-funded activities.
- Maintain an up to date summary for each grant in charge and ensure the grant tracking sheets are up to date as well as to ensure all documents related to Grants are accurate in the grant binders and organization assigned site.
- File Completion Reports at the end of each grant reporting period.
- Review grant expenditure reports (budget versus expenses for direct, indirect, match, and program income) and provide an expense analysis report to the corresponding staff for review on a monthly basis.
- Each year complete and review the award annual requirements.
- Monitor expense accounts to ensure accurate reporting to the budget.
- Maintain a thorough understanding and skill set in the financial system in order to extract data and produce reports that are organized and easy to read.
- Prepare, assist, and review any grant closeout documents.

Bookkeeping Support

- Support the month-end close process and prepare monthly financial statements.
- Maintain the chart of accounts and manage department heads to stay within annual budgets.
- Supply budget information/context to department heads, School Directors, DFO, or Executive Director as needed.
- Adjust monthly balances for chart of accounts and report variances to DFO.

- Assemble information for external auditors for the annual Single Audit and other external monitoring visits from authorizing agencies.

Accounts Payable and Payroll Reporting

- Process bills and accurately code budget line item, class tracking, and campus for DFO approval.
- Monitor monthly payables and ensure timely payment of recurring invoices.
- Maintain vendor relations with external partners.
- Prepare preprocess payroll register each pay period, accounting for salaries, hourly earnings, deductions, and paid time off.
- Manage time clock system for hourly employees.
- Maintain an orderly accounting filing system.
- Support DFO with monthly reconciliation process.

Leadership and Management

- Manage Finance Assistant.
- Develop, train, and support professional development of Finance Assistant

Finally, the school contracts with the following vendors to fulfill the following roles and responsibilities:

Academic Services

- SIS- Student Information System - Education Technology Consortium
 - Responsible for membership, maintenance, hosting, and support for Synergy state reporting software
- Assessment Technology Incorporated

- Responsible for student testing platform and reports of student achievement and growth

Special Education Services

- Carl Grasso - School Psychologist
- NOVA Individualized Learning Center - Alternative Placement School responsible for educational services of students who require a more restrictive learning environment.
- Dunker Enterprise LLC - Student Counseling
- IEP pro - Student Special Education Individualized Education Plan software
- New Horizon Therapy - Responsible for providing speech services
- Trina Feliciano - Responsible for providing occupational therapy services

Teacher Recruitment & Professional Development

- Arizona State University - Student teacher placement
- Teacher for America - Teacher recruitment and development
- David Roberts - Teacher development
- Professional Recruiters Group, Swing Education, and Teachers on Call- Substitute teacher services

Operational Services

- Desert Choice Transportation - Student Transportation responsible for safe, timely student transportation to and from school.
- North Phoenix Baptist Church - Elementary school facility lease
- Valleywide transportation - Student bus transportation responsible for field trip transportation

- School Operations Solution - Responsible for National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Administration and support services
- Deanslist - Responsible for Student Meal Tracking
- L&M Catering - Responsible for catering for student meals
- Mitel - Responsible VOIP phone system and support
- Charter Schools Development Corporation - Responsible for project management for new facilities
- SPS+ Architects - Responsible for architect services for new facilities
- Waltz Construction - Responsible for contractor for new facilities

Legal Services

- Osborn Maledon

Accounting services

- Aspire Business Consultants

Community Partnerships

- Grand Canyon University - Provides access to Learning Lounge, dual enrollment courses, and practicum teachers
- North Phoenix Baptist Church - Provides English as a Second Language (ESL) and financial literacy classes to families
- Maricopa Literacy Volunteers - Provide GED classes
- St. Mary's Food Bank: Kids Cafe - Provides meals for the after-school program
- The Arizona Recreation Center for the Handicapped (ARCH), the YMCA, and Grand Canyon University - Provide access to high quality facilities such as the soccer fields and gym

- Phoenix Police Department -Will place a School Resource Officer (SRO) in the school upon approval of the School Safety grant
- Simpson and Westwood Neighborhood Associations - Provide support to the school
- The Center for the Future of Arizona (CFA) and the National Institute for School Leadership (NISL) - Provide executive leadership training to current and aspiring school leaders
- Off Madison - Provides support in our community outreach

5. A description of how the eligible applicant will solicit and consider input from parents and other members of the community on the implementation and operation of each charter school that will receive funds under AZCSP. *ESEA Title IV, Part C, Sec. 4303(f)(1)(C)(i)(IV)*

Prior to opening, Empower College Prep will solicit and consider input from parents and other members of the community on the implementation and operation of the schools receiving AZCSP funds in several ways.

First, Empower College Prep has sought input from existing families in the elementary school that serves grades 3-8 about their needs. These families have expressed concern about the quality of education their students are receiving in grades K-2. Additionally, they have expressed a desire to have all students in one school that takes responsibility for their educational results from Kindergarten through 12th grade while preserving appropriate separation between students in different grade bands for safety reasons.

In addition to their input, our outreach team has spoken to hundreds of families near the school about the needs they perceive. Quality of education and continuity in education have been priorities shared by these families, too.

Beginning in January, the school will employ a Parent and Volunteer Coordinator who will work with the recruitment team and marketing team to leverage paid media advertising, social media, presence at community events, door-to-door canvassing, town hall meetings, and direct contact with the local business community and non-profit organizations to share about the school's expansion, obtain a list of families interested in attending the school, and learn additional needs they wish to be met. The Parent and Volunteer Coordinator will work with community partners and the school principal to develop programs aligned to the needs the families communicate. The Parent and Volunteer Coordinator will work closely with the Manager of Marketing and Communication to follow up with individuals via text, email, social media, and the school's web site to communicate how the programs the school and its community partners offer meet the needs families express when providing this input, and to seek additional input into the family and student programs the school offers.

Through this cycle of input, program development, and communication, the school anticipates it will develop programs deeply aligned to the community's needs and interests, including financial literacy and planning to prepare for college, how to support homework at home, curriculum misconceptions (especially around how Math is taught in younger grades), Internet access at home, how to support reading and homework completion at home, English development for parents, continuing education for parents, healthcare for families, and nutrition and parenting tips for children ages 0-4.

After the lottery in April, the school will host an Open House for all families to build community with each other and develop focus groups to refine the programs and form supportive volunteer groups. The goal is that each classroom would have at least one parent and one community member who facilitate the volunteer needs in the classroom and who collectively meet with the Parent and Volunteer Coordinator to inform him or her of changing needs they identify that can best be met by community partners.

Finally, the school will implement two surveys per year of all families to assess their satisfaction with the programs offered and with the quality of education their children are receiving. The surveys will also provide opportunities to share additional ideas for continuous improvement of the school's operations.

6. A description of how the eligible applicant will support the use of effective parent, family, and community engagement strategies to operate each charter school that will receive funds under AZCSP. *ESEA Title IV, Part C, Sec. 4303(f)(1)(C)(i)(VI)*

Empower College Prep will support the use of various effective parent, family, and community engagement strategies to operate its school receiving funds under AZCSP. This mutual engagement is a central piece of Empower College Prep, which envisions teachers partnering with parents to transform the educational and life opportunities of its children, and to empower these children to transform their community, their country, and their world.

Before opening, the school will use the strategies described in the previous section to engage parents, families, and the community by seeking input that informs the development of family and student programs the school provides along with community partners. This will include surveying the community and seeking additional input through email, social media,

and our website. Surveying will continue throughout the year, and the information will be shared with the principal and team of staff, parents, community members, and students who are responsible for conducting the Comprehensive Needs Assessment. The availability of programs to meet these needs will be communicated to families, businesses, non-profits, and others in the community through mediums overseen by our Manager of Marketing and Communications, as referenced in the logic model in this application.

Additionally, the school will implement several other effective engagement strategies for parents, families, and the community. One strategy is a Meet the Teacher Night. Another is a Curriculum Night. Both will include time to sign up for additional resources, parent education sessions, and volunteer opportunities. The school will also implement a monthly Parent Advisory Committee and Booster Club formed at the first orientation after the lottery. Quarterly, the school will hold parent-teacher conferences. Expo Nights will feature student work for parents, families, and the broader community. Businesses will also be encouraged to host things at the school, especially programs open to our students and families.

Two surveys will occur each year. Administrators will work with the Parent and Volunteer Coordinator and Manager of Marketing and Communication to ensure the feedback is acted on and communicated.

7. A description of how the eligible applicant will consider and plan for the transportation needs of the school's students. *ESEA Title IV, Part C, Sec. 4303 (f)(1)(E)*

Empower College Prep has considered and planned for the transportation needs of the school's students in order to make its educational opportunities accessible to all children and for transportation not to be a barrier to scholars' learning. Empower is committed to

providing transportation to and from school for all of its scholars, just as it has done historically with its other school sites. Empower College Prep Elementary School serves grades 3 - 8 and currently has just over 400 scholars enrolled. Empower scholars live an average of 3 miles away from the school, with commutes ranging from half a city block to over 10 miles each way. 75% of Empower elementary scholars ride the school bus every day. It is expected that this percentage will carry over into the kindergarten - 2nd grades as surveys of our existing families indicate their intent to send their younger children to Empower College Prep and rely on school bus transportation to do so.

As an overwhelming body of research supports, chronic absenteeism can have negative short- and long-term impacts on student achievement. The effects of chronic absenteeism as early as pre-kindergarten and kindergarten can not only affect the academic achievements for that school year, but ultimately affect future academic success as well as graduation rates. According to a 2015 report by Attendance Works, at least 10% of kindergartners are chronically absent from school, and the chances of chronic absenteeism greatly increases for families living in poverty. Among the barriers for these families are lack of nearby or safe route to school. Empower College Prep is committed to reaching these families and providing a reliable, safe, and consistent option for families to send their children to school each day.

Planning for school transportation will include financial, logistical, and safety components. In regard to finance, the school will incorporate the cost of busing all scholars in its annual budget and future projections. There will also be a discretionary transportation fund that will pay for city bus passes for families who it is not feasible to add to a route. Public transit is highly accessible to the location of the school, as there are 19 public transit stops within 1.1 miles of the school. These are transportation costs that Empower College Prep has

previously budgeted and planned for, so the expansion to grades K - 2 will not add significant financial burden to the operational budget.

Empower considers the experience on a school bus to be an extension of the academic day. Since so many scholars begin and end their day on a school bus, the culture and tone for the day can be set while riding to and from school in the morning and afternoon. Empower has had several years of experience crafting strategic parameters for the routes that help ensure a positive transportation experience. One such parameter is crafting routes such that scholars are not on the bus for longer than 90 minutes before or after school. The bus drivers are also trained and encouraged to use similar language used by their teachers and school staff in regards to encouraging desired behaviors or disciplining when necessary. The logistics of planning for transportation also include how Empower will determine and communicate to its families what their bus stop information is. Empower plans to gather scholars' addresses during the enrollment process and map all addresses prior to the start of school. In collaboration with the bus company, Empower will determine which stop is closest to a scholar's home, or if necessary, add a stop to a route. Empower will communicate these stops to families during orientation night in July before school begins in August. Throughout the year Empower will accommodate changes for scholars who become homeless or otherwise identified as unaccompanied youth under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. To ensure the safety of all those on the bus, routine safety drills will occur with bus riders and drivers to prepare for emergency situations, should they ever occur.

Lastly, Empower College Prep provides school bus/van transportation for all of its scholars on school-sponsored field trips. Similar parameters are in place to safeguard safety and the school's culture while on these trips. By utilizing a consistent company for field trip

transportation, many of the drivers recognize and build relationships with our scholars and collaborate with the teachers and staff when any discipline issues arise. Routine safety drills are done on these buses as well to ensure safe transportation to and from field trips.

Empower College Prep is committed to the thoughtful preparation and planning of safely transporting all scholars to school every day so that each scholar is present in school in order to maximize their learning potential and achieve academic success in preparation for college and beyond.

8. A description of the administrative relationship between the charter school and the authorized public chartering agency including how the school's performance in the State's accountability system and impact on student achievement will be one of the most important factors for renewal or revocation of the school's charter, and how the authorized public chartering agency involved will reserve the right to revoke or not renew a school's charter based on financial, structural, or operational factors involving the management of the school. *ESEA Title IV, Part C, Sec. 4303 (f)(1)(C)(i)(II)*

Empower College Prep's authorizer is the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools (ASBCS), which authorized the original charter in 2012 to serve grades 4-12 with a maximum enrollment of 350. The ASBCS approved the addition of 3rd grade on May 27, 2013 and enrollment cap increase to 400 on December 15, 2014, to 680 on October 16, 2015, and to 915 on June 12, 2017. Currently, Empower College Prep operates two schools, Empower College Prep Elementary School serving grades 3 through 8, and Empower College Prep High School serving grades 9-12. The ASBCS is reviewing Empower College Prep's amendment to add grades K-2 and to increase enrollment to 1,200 students. This request is based on parents' request to have their students in a high-quality school that provides continuity in grades K-12.

Empower College Prep is currently authorized to operate through 2027 and will begin the renewal process in 2025 to continue operating after 2027. The ASBCS provides oversight of charter holders that is not over-reaching but protects the public's interest. This includes approval of any amendments and modifications to the charter contract. Approval may be provided by ASBCS Executive Director or placed on the Board's agenda. The list of amendments requests is:

- Becoming an Arizona online school
- Change in officers, directors, members, or partners of the Charter Holder
- Change the charter holder's address
- Change the entity name or legal status of the charter holder or change the ownership of the requesting charter holder
- Change in the charter holder's mission
- Add or remove a Charter Representative
- Change in enrollment capacity
- Change in grade levels served
- Change in the number of instructional days
- Adding a member campus
- Adding a new school
- Procurement Laws Exception
- Change in program of instruction
- School Closure
- Change in the members of the school governing body

- Change a school's physical address
- Change the name of one of its charter schools
- Uniform System of Financial Records for Charter Schools, or USFRCS Exception

For any expansion requests, which are amendments that include increasing the number of students, adding grade levels, or adding schools, have eligibility criteria, undergo a staff recommendation review, and have additional submission requirements.

Academic Performance

Approval of these requests is also based on the school's academic, financial, and operational performance. ASBCS will evaluate Empower College Prep's academic performance by one of the following indicators 1. Arizona's A–F Letter Grade Accountability System and state designations for school improvement. 2. School-specific academic goals. The school's performance in the State's accountability system and impact on student achievement will be one of the most important factors for renewal or revocation of the school's charter. The state designations for school improvement under indicator 1 take into consideration Arizona's plan for school performance under the provisions outlined in the Every Student Succeeds Act and A.R.S. § 15- 241.02.

For indicator 1, the overall ratings for the academic performance is determined in accordance with the matrix below:

	Overall Rating		
	1b. State Designation for School Improvement		
1a. A-F Letter Grade State Accountability	Not Identified for Improvement	Identified for Targeted Support	Identified for Comprehensive Support
A	Exceeds Standard	Does Not Meet Standard	Falls Far Below Standard
B	Above Standard	Does Not Meet Standard	Falls Far Below Standard
C	Meets Standard	Does Not Meet Standard	Falls Far Below Standard
D	Does Not Meet Standard	Does Not Meet Standard	Falls Far Below Standard
F	Falls Far Below Standard	Falls Far Below Standard	Falls Far Below Standard

For indicator 2, the overall rating for the academic performance is determined in accordance with the matrix below:

2. School-Specific Academic Goals	Overall Rating
School Exceeded its Goals	Exceeds Standard
School Met its Goals	Meets Standard
School Did Not Meet its Goals	Does Not Meet Standard
School Fell Far Below its Goals	Falls Far Below Standard

If Empower College Prep receives at least an overall rating of Meets Standard for three consecutive years, it meets ASBCS Academic Performance expectations. If Empower College Prep receives an overall rating of Does not Meet Standard or Falls Far Below Standard for three consecutive years, it has failed the academic performance expectations and the school will be assigned the Demonstration of Sufficient Progress.

The findings of the Demonstration of Sufficient Progress will be provided to the Board for consideration at the following times:

- If a charter school operated by the charter holder has failed to meet the Board's academic performance standard for three consecutive years
- During five-year interval reviews
- When considering a charter contract renewal request submitted by the charter holder
- Upon receipt of information that a charter school operated by the charter holder has been assigned a letter grade of "F" under the state accountability system
- When considering disciplinary action against a charter holder that has breached one or more provisions of its charter contract or is in violation of state or federal law

Financial Performance

The authorized public chartering agency involved will reserve the right to revoke or not renew a school's charter based on financial, structural, or operational factors involving the management of the school. Based on ASBCS's financial performance framework guide, the financial performance framework ensures that all charter holders are viable organizations with strong fiscal management practices. The financial framework consists of six measures:

1. Going Concern- Evaluate the charter holder's ability to continue operating
2. Default- Indicates if a charter holder is or is not in default on materials loans or facility agreements or both
3. Unrestricted days of liquidity-Indicates how many days' expenses can be paid without another influx of cash.
4. Adjusted net income-Considers whether a charter holder is operating within its available resources.
5. Lease adjusted debt service coverage ratio-Considers how easily debt principal, interest and facility costs can be paid as they become due.

6. Average daily membership - Averages the annual percent change in the charter holder's student count used for state funding for the three most recent completed school years.

A charter holder in **Good Standing** meets the Board's financial performance expectations. This means that the charter holder did not have any measures "Below Standard" and no more than one measure rated as "Approaches Standard."

If a charter holder is in **Adequate Standing**, it meets the Board's financial performance expectations. Under this rating, the charter holder did not have any measures "Below Standard" and two or more measures rated as "Approaches Standard."

If a charter holder is in **Intervention**, it must provide ASBCS board information on the charter holder's financial performance. A charter in intervention either has one or more measures as "Below Standard" or was in "Adequate Standing" for three consecutive years.

Operational Performance

Based on ASBCS operational performance framework guide, the operational performance framework ensures that all charter holders meet the requirements of state and federal law, charter contract, and administrative rule. The operational performance measures are:

Implementation of the Education Program

- 1.a. The delivery of the education program and operation reflect the essential terms of the educational program as described in the charter contract.
- 1.b. The charter holder adheres to applicable education requirements defined in state and federal law.

Financial and Operational Reporting and Compliance

- 2.a. The charter holder's annual audit reporting packages reflect sound operations.

- 2.b. The charter holder administers student admission and attendance appropriately.
- 2.c. The charter holder maintains a safe environment consistent with state and local requirements.
- 2.d. The charter holder is transparent in its operations.
- 2.e. The charter holder complies with its obligations to the Board.
- 2.f. The charter holder complies with reporting requirements of other entities to which the charter holder is accountable.

Additional Obligations

- 3. The charter holder complies with all other obligations.

Empower College Prep “Meets the Board’s Operational Performance Expectations” when it has an overall rating of “Meets the Board’s Operational Performance Standard” for the most recent two prior years for which an overall rating was calculated and has no measure that receives a “Falls Far Below Standard” rating in the current year.

Ongoing Monitoring

Compliance checks will continue to be conducted as part of the amendment request approval and expansion processes. Any issues found in the compliance check will be recorded in the operational dashboard of the school.

Evaluations on the academic performance expectations are conducted annually to ensure the charter holder is meeting or making progress towards meeting the academic performance expectations.

Per A.R.S. §15-183(I)(3), ASBCS reviews a charter at five-year intervals using the performance framework. During this review, ASBCS conducts an Academic Systems Review (ASR) which is collecting evidence of the implementation of the education program and

designing a method to measure pupil progress toward pupil outcomes, as required in the charter contract.

Reserve the right to revoke or not renew a school's charter

Per ARS-15 183(i)(3), the ASBCS has the right to revoke a charter holder's charter based on a school's failure to meet academic, financial, and operational expectations set forth in the performance framework. It may also revoke the charter if the charter school breaches one or more provisions of its charter.

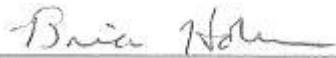
References:

1. <https://asbcs.az.gov/sites/default/files/Guide%20to%20Amending%20a%20Charter%20REV%203.27.18%20FINAL.PDF>
2. <https://asbcs.az.gov/sites/default/files/Academic%20Guidance%20Document%20Approved%20Revised%202.2019.pdf>
3. <https://asbcs.az.gov/sites/default/files/FPF%20Measures%20and%20Summative%20Ratings%20Guide%20for%20Posting%20FINAL.pdf>
4. https://asbcs.az.gov/sites/default/files/documents/files/Operational%20Guidance%20Document%20Revised%2010.15.18_FINAL.pdf

Assurance (Signed by the LEA Authorized Representative).

- a) The applicant will make following information publicly available, consistently with the dissemination requirements of the annual State report card, including on the website of the school, information to help parents make informed decisions about the education options available to their children, including –
 - i. Information on the educational program;
 - ii. Student support services;
 - iii. Parent contract requirements (as applicable), including any financial obligations or fees;
 - iv. Enrollment criteria (as applicable); and
 - v. Annual performance and enrollment data for each of the subgroups of students, except that such disaggregation of performance and enrollment data shall not be required in a case in which the number of students in a group is insufficient to yield statistically reliable information or the results would reveal personally identifiable information about an individual student. *ESEA Title IV, Part C, Sec. 4303 (f)(2)(G)*
- b) The applicant will annually provide AZCSP such information as may be required to determine if the charter school is making satisfactory progress toward achieving the objectives.
- c) The applicant will obtain technical assistance provided by AZCSP to meet the proposed objectives. *ESEA Title IV, Part C, Sec. 4303 (f)(2)(D)*
- d) The applicant will cooperate with AZCSP in evaluating the program assisted under this subpart.
- e) Such other information and assurances as AZCSP may require.
- f) The applicant will comply with the State's open meetings and open records laws. *ESEA Title IV, Part C, Sec. 4303(f)(1)(F)*.
- g) The applicant shall ensure that a student's records and, if applicable, a student's individualized education program as defined in IDEA, are transferred to a charter school upon the transfer of the student to the charter school, and to another public school upon the transfer of the student from a charter school to another public school, in accordance with applicable State law. *ESEA Title IV, Part C, Sec. 4308.*

- h) The applicant will use financial management systems, including records documenting compliance with Federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of the Federal award, that are sufficient to permit the preparation of reports required by general and program-specific terms and conditions; and the tracing of funds to a level of expenditures adequate to establish that such funds have been used according to the Federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of the Federal award. *2 CFR §200.302&303*

Brian Holman	Executive Director
LEA Authorized Representative	Title
	10/4/2019
eSignature of LEA Authorized Representative	Date
Empower College Prep	10/7/2019
Applicant Organization	Date Submitted

B. Abstract - Non-Scoring Section. (Max 300 words)

The abstract narrative should include objectives, expected outcomes, and impacts.

Empower College Prep's objective is to develop a K-2 program that begins with students and families at the beginning of their educational pathway in order to eliminate the achievement gap during early childhood and ensure **all** students are on the pathway to college so they are empowered to full their personal mission in life.

The expected outcomes of developing the K-2 program is that the dozens of students we are committed to graduating and sending to college will enroll in Kindergarten, and their families will join programs through partnerships that support them in supporting their children's education. These children will become scholars who have developmentally appropriate social and emotional skills and a healthy self-image bolstered by success in school, including at least 90% being proficient on AZELLA and reading, and mastering whole number relationships, place value, and basic operations by 3rd grade.

The impact will be a pipeline of students and families in the community partnering with the school to transform their families' educational and life opportunities, increased stability in these families, increased high school and college graduation rates, and ultimately productive, empowered citizens who transform impoverished neighborhoods into a prosperous, thriving community.

C. Preference Points - Not Required -- Total points possible: 5 points added to the total score

A description of how the applicant will increase high school student academic achievement and graduation by participating in dual or concurrent enrollment programs or early college high schools.

Empower College Prep's K-2 program will increase high school student academic achievement and graduation by increasing readiness to "read to learn" by 3rd grade and removing the need for remediation or retention, increasing motivation to succeed and commitment to school, increasing socio-emotional health, and dramatically increasing the percent of students who participate in dual enrollment courses in high school and ultimately earn a college degree after graduating.

Early reading proficiency is a leading indicator of student success, according to *Beyond Test Score: Leading Indicators for Education* from the Annenberg Institute for Education Reform that was provided in the AZCSP resources. This finding parallels other research. Students in poverty who are not reading proficiently by 3rd grade are 13 times less likely to graduate from high school on time. In contrast, students who are reading proficiently by the end of third grade are five times more successful at achieving college and career readiness as their non-proficient peers, according to a study released by the Ohio Department of Education (1). A longitudinal study of children in Chicago from early childhood through age 35 provides even more compelling evidence of the impact that a strong K-2 program can have on achievement in high school, college, and beyond (2). It found the effect did not end with reduced need for remediation or retention and higher scores for reading and math performance in 3rd grade and upper elementary school, but continued to impact greater motivation to succeed, higher commitment to school, and increased socio-emotional learning. Quality programs in early childhood and elementary school correlated with a 48% increase in college graduation. According to the

author of the study, the specific elements key to the long-term impact of these programs that occur before a child completes 3rd grade are small class sizes, intensive focus on readiness skills in all domains of learning within a developmental philosophy, frequent monitoring and feedback, provision of family services, and a well-developed organizational support system (3).

As described in our logic model, these elements will be strongly present in our K-2 program, which will have a student: teacher ratio of 20:1. The curriculum described in Section F of this application reflects an intensive focus on readiness skills in all domains of learning within a developmental philosophy consistent with the research-based needs of students in grades K-2. The assessment system Empower has in place facilitates frequent monitoring and feedback for both the scholar and their family. The community partnerships referenced in our logic model increase our capacity to provide family services, and the leadership and management established in the organization provides well-developed organizational support.

Furthermore, Empower College Prep already operates grades 3-12 with opportunities in high school for dual enrollment courses offered through Maricopa Community Colleges and Grand Canyon University, which is less than a mile from the high school campus.

In all of these ways, the K-2 program will increase high school student academic achievement, participation in dual enrollment programs and early college access, and ultimately college graduation rates.

References:

1. <https://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Early-Learning/Third-Grade-Reading-Guarantee/TGRG-CCR.pdf.aspx>.
2. <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/fullarticle/2668645>
3. <https://cehdvision2020.umn.edu/blog/preschool-educational-success-through-college/>

D. Charter Entity Founders – Total points possible: 40 points

1. Provide a clear and concise mission statement aligned with the needs of educationally disadvantaged students - **Non-Scoring Section.** (Max 75 words)

Empower College Prep's mission is to prepare students from low-income communities to succeed in college, solve real-world problems, and maximize their impact in the world.

2. Describe the background of the applicant's founders/leaders and their past experience to support the successful planning and implementation of the school. 2 *CFR* §200.205 **Non-Scoring Section.**

Becky Jones, Elementary School Principal / Founding K-2 Principal

Becky Jones joined Empower College Prep as the School Director in 2017 following two years as the Assistant Dean at Graham Primary School in Columbus, Ohio where she dramatically changed the culture and climate of the school in kindergarten to fifth grades. Becky was a first grade teacher at the same school for one year, where her students achieved the highest reading growth in the school. Prior to this, she has served as a teacher from kindergarten to 6th grade in Texas, Arizona, and Massachusetts as well as two years in the nonprofit sector with The New Teacher Project. She was named Teacher of the Year in 2010, and in both 2011 and 2012.

During her three years at Empower College Prep, Becky has led the school to increase nearly 20 points in the A-F letter grade. She has created and led a variety of professional development sessions, participated in the creation of the Teacher Development Program and the Scholar Development Program, created and maintained a culture of excellence with scholars and staff, and led efforts to increase family engagement and communication.

Becky was raised in San Antonio, Texas and graduated in 2005 from Texas Lutheran University with a Bachelor's Degree in Multidisciplinary Studies and a focus in Early Childhood Education. She obtained her Master's of the Art in Teaching at Grand Canyon University in 2007. Becky believes that building relationships and creating a culture where scholars, families, and staff are respected and valued is the gateway to academic excellence. She is deeply committed to Empower College Prep and its mission to prepare scholars to go to college and change the world.

Brian Holman, Founder / Executive Director

Brian Holman serves as the Executive Director of Empower College Prep, which he founded in 2012. He served as the founding school principal during the first two years, earning A-ratings both years and scoring in the top 3% of the state on the state test. The school was also recognized as a National Reward school for its high achievement with children in poverty due to 95% of the school qualifying for free or reduced lunch.

As the school grew, Holman hired new school leaders and transitioned to organizational leadership as the Executive Director. He worked closely with the elementary school principal and instructional leadership team to develop the school's Teacher Development Program to cure the inconsistency in teaching practices and

student achievement that grew throughout the grades as the student body grew from 70 to 700 students and the teaching staff grew from 7 to 70. The result was a 16-point increase in the elementary school's accountability points this past year. The high school was one of only three high schools in the state last year with a 90% free/reduced lunch population to earn a B letter grade (none attained an A) and is poised to send 75% of its first graduating class to college, 25% greater than the state average.

In addition to strategic leadership of the school's academic program, the Executive Director has worked closely with the Director of Finance and Operations and community to secure bond financing and position the school to grow to 1200 students in grades K-12 in order to fulfill the school's mission of preparing scholars to succeed in college, solve real-world problems, and maximize their impact in the world.

Before founding Empower College Prep, Holman managed teachers in every grade and subject (K-12) while on staff at Teach for America from 2008-2012 and led them to meet and exceed the organization's goals for student achievement. Prior to that, he taught 8th grade social studies for six years in a Title 1 school in central Phoenix. He completed with a 4.0 GPA a Master of Arts Degree in Curriculum and Instruction from Arizona State University, and a Master of Arts Degree in Education Administration from the University of Phoenix.

Angela Eich, Director of Finance and Operations

Angela Eich serves as the Director of Finance and Operations for Empower College Prep's central office. In this capacity she leads the financial and operational systems planning and implementation for both school campuses to allow instructional staff to focus solely on fulfilling the mission of the organization.

Angela attended the University of Arizona where she received a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, graduating cum laude with honors with a major in Business Economics and a minor in Spanish. After graduating she worked briefly on staff for Teach For America planning the operations for the Delta and Phoenix region summer institute training for corps members. She eventually joined the corps in 2010, teaching middle school mathematics in a high-poverty area of Phoenix, Arizona.

While in the classroom Angela loved working with the middle school age group. She enjoyed teaching them real-life applications of mathematics in business, financial literacy, and science while helping them be reflective of what kind of person they wanted to be and the difference they wanted to make in their world. During this time Angela also completed a graduate school program at Arizona State University where she graduated with a Master of Secondary Education with an emphasis in mathematics. After completing her time as a corps member in Phoenix, Angela moved to Columbus, Ohio where she stayed one more year in the classroom before being promoted to an Instructional Coach. From there she was promoted to Vice Principal as part of a founding team opening a new public charter school. In this role she did a combination of instructional and operational tasks that included compliance with state agencies, Title I intervention program coordination, and teacher coaching and development.

In 2014 Angela moved back to Phoenix, Arizona and searched for a school setting to work in that served a similar population as when she had taught in the classroom. She realized that she felt very connected to the scholars in Phoenix, particularly those from low-income communities, and she was passionate to contribute to their academic success and further close the achievement gap. When she learned of Empower College Prep's

mission to prepare scholars to succeed in college, solve real-world problems, and maximize their impact on the world, and learned of their focus on low-income families she knew she wanted to be a part of it. Angela was hired as the Director of Academics for Mathematics and Science for Empower grades 3-8. In this role she coached and developed mathematics and science teachers through unit/lesson planning, assessment creation, and standards alignment. She supported classroom management and culture and synthesized academic data for key stakeholders, such as the Governing Board and donors.

In 2016 Empower opened its second campus serving high school scholars, and the need for a Director of Finance and Operations positions arose. Leading up to the opening of the high school, Angela supported the organization through the creation of many of the financial, technological, and operational systems it has in place today. Her experience as a classroom teacher helps her prioritize the needs of the organization, specifically those of the teachers and scholars. Since officially stepping into the role in the summer of 2016, Angela has developed streamlined processes for on- and off-boarding of employees and independent contractors, negotiates vendor contracts each year, and has created efficient systems for tracking departmentalized spending across both campuses and the central office. She has led both campuses through several years of successful monitoring and compliance visits from Arizona Department of Education, Arizona State Board for Charter Schools, and external auditors. She has streamlined the entire accounting department and facilities/operations team. Her focus as a leader at Empower College Prep is to manage the organization's fiscal, human, and other resources in such a way that the instructional team can focus solely on instruction and not concern themselves with the details of facilities, technology, or financial resources. To that end she has hired and

trained a team of human resources, grants management, accounts payables, and facilities/operations staff to manage the day-to-day operations at each campus. This increases the overall capacity of the central office and management team, allowing for senior leaders to focus on long-term strategic planning for the continued growth and success of the organization.

In 2018 Empower College Prep began its multi-year project of planning for a consolidated campus and expansion to kindergarten-2nd grade. Angela was a key player in helping the organization secure over \$17 million in tax-exempt bonds to refinance existing facility loans and fund the development and construction of a new school campus, growing the organization from approximately \$1 million in assets to over \$18 million in assets. Angela hopes to be with the organization for many years to come as she feels she has found an exceptionally fulfilling career managing operations and finance while serving scholars in central Phoenix who will one day go to college and change the world.

Kate Lezama, English Language Acquisition Director

After graduating with a Master's Degree in Bilingual Bicultural Education from Columbia University Teachers College, Kate began her teaching career in Brooklyn, NY teaching English Language Learners in high need areas. She worked for 8 years teaching in the New York City public schools training with and implementing the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project, balanced literacy curriculum. During that time, she served as a grade leader in 2nd and 3rd grades. For the last 6 years she has worked as a professor at Nyack College in NY providing supervision and support to student teachers obtaining a state license in ESL as well as teaching a variety of graduate level courses in

TESOL including TESOL Methods/SIOP and Second Language Acquisition. She also continues to work in ELL and Spanish Language Arts assessment design for the New York City public schools in addition to her work at Empower College Prep.

3. Participate in a Capacity Interview¹ to be scheduled by AZCSP. **(15 points)**
4. Using the most recent data available, select the appropriate table below to enter the percentage of disadvantaged students in a previous school or classroom managed by the applicant that passed the state assessment. (Choose one table and only one table). *2 CFR §200.331 (b)(1)* **(15 Points)**

Table 1

Academic Year ²	State	School Name	Position	State Assessment used	% of disadvantaged students passing	
					Math	Reading
2018-2019	AZ	Empower College Prep	Becky Jones, School Director	AzMerit	41%	21%

The information provided in Table 1 are the average state assessments results for 3rd- 6th grade economically disadvantaged students as reported in the AZMerit Online Reporting System for Spring 2019.

5. Define the geographical and demographic community the charter school will serve; provide the supporting data on how the applicant would address the needs of the defined community; name community partners and how they will assist the planning and implementation of the school. **(10 points)**

Overview

¹ A standardized interview conducted to gauge the applicant's actual or potential ability to perform.

² Submit the full academic year; i.e., FY 17-18.

Empower College Prep is uniquely positioned to meet critical needs in the community it serves. ECP will serve scholars in Central Phoenix between the I-17 and the AZ 51, north of Thomas Road and south of Bethany Home Rd. The specific zip codes of this area are: 85012, 85013, 85014, 85015, and 85017. This area is located in the Phoenix Union High School District. The majority of these families live within the Alhambra Elementary School District, which feed into the Phoenix Union High School District.

The community that Empower College Prep serves includes a racially diverse population that often speaks a language other than English at home, has low levels of educational attainment, high rates of poverty, high crime rates, and high incidents of health challenges.

English Proficiency and Educational Attainment

According to Statistical Atlas, in the Alhambra District, about 65% of the population is Hispanic or Latino, 9% is Black, 18% is White, 2% is American Indian, and 8% is comprised of various other ethnicities. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, about 60% of the population in this area speak a language other than English at home compared to 27% in Maricopa County. Close to half of this group speak English less than very well. Only about 14% of adults have received a Bachelor's degree or a graduate or professional degree. While the United States has had a positive average annual change in college graduates over the last five years, the Alhambra neighborhood has actually had a negative change over this time period. College attainment is not the only educational issue facing this district: 38.4% of adults 25 years of age and older do not have a high school diploma.

Poverty

This low educational attainment manifests itself in high rates of poverty. The per capita income of residents in Alhambra is 11% lower than the average per capita income in the United States. Poverty deeply affects children and 65.6% of children in the Alhambra neighborhood live below the federal poverty line according to Statistical Atlas. The median family income in the district is \$27,800. The median family income of Phoenix is \$49,330 and of Arizona is \$51,340. In addition, the Alhambra district has the highest percentage (35.7%) of households receiving food stamps compared to the state of Arizona (13.2%) and the United States (13%). The average free and reduced rate in the last five years has been more than 90%.

Health

In terms of health of the region, high rates of uninsured individuals, teenage pregnancies, infant mortality, and causes of death that are directly linked to crime statistics are present in the Alhambra area. According to the Arizona Department of Health Services 2018 Statistical Profile, around 18.9% of people are uninsured, compared to around 12.2% of individuals in Arizona. Teenage pregnancy is another significant health issue in this geographic area. The rate of teenage pregnancy is 49.2 teen births out of 1000 females, compared to the state average of 28.5 teen births out of 1000 females. Infant mortality rates are also higher in the area at 6.4 compared to Maricopa County's rate of 5.8. The leading cause of death for individuals aged 15-44 is assault and unspecified firearm discharge.

Crime

The neighborhoods in the Alhambra District have higher crime rates than Phoenix, Arizona. The 2017 crime rate in Phoenix is 1.5 times greater than the U.S average and is higher than 91.3% of U.S. cities. The zip codes 85017 and 85015 are in the Alhambra District

and have the highest rate of violent crimes in the city -- zip code 85017 had 199 violent crimes and 85015 had 196 violent crimes. The violent crimes include homicide, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. The school's campus is located on the frontage road/intersection of the 1-17 freeway which puts it in the area of concentrated crime such as illicit drug use, drug deals, theft, and robbery.

Limited Educational Opportunity

As alarming as the crime, health, and present poverty statistics are for this community, its lack of educational opportunity is most alarming because it indicates the conditions will only worsen in the future. Third grade literacy rates are alarming in this area.

Extensive research of the academic data from all of the schools that are collectively responsible for educating this community's students reveals that students in this area do not have an equal opportunity to attain an excellent education that would equip them to compete academically with other children in this country. Out of the nine public district and charter elementary schools located in Empower College Prep's geographic area, none of these schools have an A-rating. There is only one school with a B-rating. Six of the schools have a C-rating. The other two schools do not have a rating.

Many students who are educationally disadvantaged also have limited academic support outside of school and fewer opportunities to participate in community sports leagues or engage in the development of other gifts and interests. This need results in a significant decline in academic proficiency during the summer months.

Transportation

Furthermore, children from low-income communities often have limited transportation options which further restricts their access to high-quality schools and prevents them from

staying in schools as their families' economic situations require them to move. Students from low-income communities often have low attendance and a high transience rate than their more affluent peers.

Addressing the Community Needs and Community Partners

Empower College Prep is uniquely positioned to meet the various needs of this educationally disadvantaged community directly and through partnerships it has developed with other community organizations. The Executive Director and founding K-2 Principal have lived in this community and built relationships with many families and multiple local organizations to contract and/or partner with the school to meet the needs of the community.

Limited English Proficiency

In terms of diversity and English proficiency, the limited English proficiency is often associated with poor educational outcomes among the children. To support the acquisition of English language proficiency among the youngest children, Empower College Prep has hired a Director of English Learners, Structured English Immersion (SEI) endorsed teachers and EL paraprofessionals. In addition, ECP partners with North Phoenix Baptist Church (NPHX) to provide English as a Second Language (ESL) classes to the families to better support their children with their academic achievement. The NPHX soccer league serves a refugee community and provides translators between the school and parents.

Limited Educational Attainment

Executive Director Brian Holman and Grand Canyon University's President, Brian Mueller, have built a strong partnership in the last few years. Both meet often to discuss ways to improve the academic achievement of students. One way is that Empower College Prep students attend the University's Learning Lounge to receive Math and Reading tutoring.

Students also have the opportunity to take Advanced Placement and dual enrollment courses to prepare them for college entrance exams and earn college credits. ECP will also work with the Maricopa Literacy Volunteers to help our families who did not finish high school to prepare for the GED and improve their reading, writing, and mathematical skills.

High Poverty & Poor Health

The limited educational attainment manifests itself in high rates of poverty and poor health. The school's average free and reduced rate in the last five years has been more than 90%. This rate has allowed Empower College Prep to move to a non-pricing meal service option called Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) which allows high poverty schools to serve breakfast and lunch at not cost to all enrolled students without collecting household applications. During the after school program, students also have the opportunity to receive another free meal provided in partnership with St.Mary's Food Bank Kids Cafe Program. The Arizona Recreation Center for the Handicapped (ARCH), the YMCA, and Grand Canyon University offer their facilities for Empower College Prep to host its Physical Education classes and for athletes to practice for their sports.

Additionally, the parents of educationally deprived students who live in poverty often are less involved in their children's education, partially due to limited time or awareness of how to meet these needs. North Phoenix Baptist Church offers financial literacy classes that teaches them the basics of money management such as budgeting, saving, and debt.

High Crime

Empower College Prep has hired a Culture Coordinator and a Safety and Security Officer to ensure students are in a safe learning environment. In addition, Empower College Prep has applied for the School Safety Grant to place a School Resource Officers (SRO) from the

Phoenix Police Department in the school. The SRO provides students with Law-Related Education (LRE) instruction to prepare students for responsible citizenship. In addition, the school partners with the Simpson and Westwood Neighborhood Associations as well as the City of Phoenix.

Limited Educational Opportunity

The most critical element in meeting the needs of this community is by hiring, developing, and retaining highly effective teachers who ensure children learn and are empowered to compete academically with students from any school in the country. Executive Director Brian Holman and Founding Principal Becky Jones both have tremendous experience in identifying, recruiting, training, and retaining these educators. Empower College Prep has strong connections to professional organizations such as Teach for America, whose diverse alumni are high quality educators who have experience working in communities similar to the one which Empower College Prep serves. Practicum teachers from Grand Canyon University complete their required hours at our school. The Center for the Future of Arizona (CFA) and the National Institute for School Leadership (NISL) provide executive leadership training to current and aspiring school leaders. These partnerships contribute to strengthening the school's diverse, highly effective teacher pipeline.

Additionally, many parents work past the end of the school day and are not available to assist or supervise students' homework. Empower College Prep partners with Grand Canyon University's Learning Lounge for this and has attained a five-year 21st Century Community Learning Center to provide tutoring and support for students before and after school. These opportunities are available on Saturday, also.

In addition, the school's commitment to continuous improvement and student achievement has resulted in receiving an AdvancEd accreditation. The school partners with Off Madison Ave to develop strategies to eliminate language and information barriers that could prevent enrollment for educationally disadvantaged students. These include distributing flyers in multiple languages throughout the community to inform English-speaking and non-English speaking residents about the educational opportunities the school provides.

Limited Transportation

The school provides transportation from 7 school busses with commutes ranging from half a city block to over 10 miles each way. If it is not feasible to add a bus stop on the route for a family, the school pays for city bus passes.

Ultimately, the expansion of Empower College Prep would provide an extraordinary impact in its community. Empower College Prep is aware of the struggles members in this community face and values the rich perspective they bring to the school community. With its expansion, Empower will be able to become the starting point for students' and families' educational pathway and ensure all students are on the pathway to college so they are empowered to full their personal mission in life.

Community Need	How Empower College Prep will address the needs?	
	Students	Families
Limited English Proficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hiring <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Director of English Learners ○ SEI Teachers ○ EL paraprofessionals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPHX <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Parent ESL classes ○ Translators between school and parents
Limited Educational Attainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GCU Learning Lounge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tutoring • Advanced Placement courses • Dual enrollment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maricopa Literacy Volunteers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ GED Classes

High Poverty & Poor Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free Meals & After School Snacks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ CEP status ○ St. Mary's Food Bank-Kids Cafe • Access to high quality amenities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ GCU gym ○ NPHX gym ○ ARCH soccer fields ○ YMCA gym 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future access to school gym • NPHX <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Financial literacy classes
High Crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hiring <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Culture Coordinator ○ Safety & Security Office • School Safety Grant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SRO • Partnerships with neighborhood associations 	
Limited Educational Opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualified educators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Teach for America ○ GCU ○ 21st Century Community Learning Center • Leadership training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Center for the Future of Arizona • Accreditation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ AdvancEd 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Off Madison Ave <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Community Outreach
Limited Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desert Choice Transportation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Buses • City of Phoenix <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bus passes 	

References:

1. <https://azdhs.gov/documents/prevention/health-systems-development/data-reports-maps/primary-care/maricopa/35.pdf>
2. <https://www.phoenix.gov/policesite/Documents/2016%20UCR%20Yearly%20Violent.pdf>
3. <https://statisticalatlas.com/school-district/Arizona/Alhambra-Elementary-District/Overview>

4. U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates:

https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_17_5_YR_S1601&prodType=table

5. <http://www.city-data.com/crime/crime-Phoenix-Arizona.html>

E. Governance – Total points possible: 25 points

1. Describe how the charter school will be governed and managed. An organizational structure chart shall be submitted.

Overview

Empower College Prep is governed by its Governing Board (“Board”) that is approved by the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools. The Board is governed according to its bylaws which stipulate the responsibilities and policies by which the Board is legally bound. The Board leads Empower College Prep through strategic planning for sustainability and long-term growth, in addition to providing guidance and expertise in different areas from education to law to marketing and business. The Governing body has developed an organizational structure with reporting that ensures the decisions and actions are in accordance with defined roles and responsibilities of the governing body. The Board has also developed a success plan to ensure sustainability of the organization.

Governing Board

According to the bylaws that govern Empower College Prep’s governing board, the Board has the following duties and responsibilities:

- Recruit, hire, and manage the Executive Director.

- Provide guidance and support to the Executive Director in the execution of the mission and vision of the school.
- Set all school policies.
- Delegate appropriate responsibility and authority to the Executive Director to lead Empower College Prep.
- Ensure the schools are meeting their intended objectives as evident in student test scores and academic achievement.
- Approve the annual budget.
- Approve job descriptions and responsibilities for the administrative and instructional staff.
- Determine compensation plans for the Executive Director.
- Approve compensation plans for the administrative and instructional staff.
- Authorize fund transfers of more than \$15,000 between categories in the annual budget.
- Review and approve curriculum.
- Ensure compliance with all state, federal, and grant laws and stipulations (e.g. Open Meeting Laws).
- Attend annual Board training.

The composition of the Governing Board consists of the Board of Directors of Empower College Prep and the Executive Director as a non-voting, ex officio member. The Board includes four officers who are established by the Board for one-year terms beginning each July. The four officers include Board Chair, Vice-Chair of the Board, Board Treasurer, and Board Secretary. A brief description of each of these roles is below.

- *Board Chair:* The Board Chair is the senior volunteer leader of the school who presides at all meetings of the Board of Directors and other meetings as required. The Chair is an ex officio member of all committees of the organization and oversees implementation of board and organizational policies and ensures that appropriate administrative practices are established and maintained.
- *Vice Chair of the Board:* The Vice Chair is the secondary volunteer leader of the Board and as such, discharges the duties of the Chair as required in the Chair's absence. The Vice Chair supports the activities of the Chair including sharing responsibilities, as appropriate.
- *Board Treasurer:* The Board Treasurer provides direction for the financial management of the organization and facilitates the Board in meeting its financial oversight responsibilities.
- *Board Secretary:* The Board Secretary provides direction for the keeping of legal documents including minutes of all meetings of the Board of the school.
- *Non-voting ex officio member:* The roles and responsibilities of the Executive Director as an ex officio, non-voting member of the Board are to serve as the liaison between the school and the Board, report to the Board to provide context regarding the culture and state of the school, and represent school staff to the Board.

There are currently four individuals serving as officers of the Board of Directors:

Sheila Breen serves as the Board Chair of the Board of Directors and is a freelance copywriter, travel writer and photographer. Ms. Breen has a background as an attorney, educator, financial advisor, fundraiser, and other areas of business. Prior to her current freelance work, she has worked for the American Red Cross as a Major Gifts Officer

working in marketing, fundraising, and recruiting volunteers using social media, webinars and written documents; the American International School-Vienna as Director working in marketing, fundraising and generating publicity documents and research reports; Grand Canyon Unified School District as Superintendent working in grant writing, recruiting, fundraising, marketing and writing both publicity and technical documents; Prudential Securities (now Wells Fargo Advisors) working as a Financial Advisor; Arizona Department of Education as a Director and preparing research, writing white papers, articles, and technical documents; and the City of Peoria, Arizona, Municipal Court as pro tem judge, including conducting legal research and writing. She earned Bachelor and Master of Science degrees from Utah State University, and a Juris Doctor degree from the J. Reuben Clark Law School at Brigham Young University.

Genaro Perez serves on the Board as its Vice Chair and is currently employed as Vice President of Global Marketing for P.F. Chang's, where he leads the Brand Marketing and Innovation for P.F. Chang's international, P.F. Chang's Home Menu (retail) and Pei Wei international. Prior to P.F. Chang's, Mr. Perez was at Brinker International where in 2007, he started as a Senior Marketing Manager leading the brand efforts for the Latin American Region driving positive restaurant traffic and sales. In March 2009, Mr. Perez was promoted to Director of International Marketing where he led marketing efforts for the Middle East, Asia and Latin America regions. During this period, Mr. Perez also oversaw the Hispanic Marketing efforts for Chili's U.S. Genaro's career includes over 20 years of marketing, strategy, advertising and public relations. Prior to Brinker International, Mr. Perez worked for Nokia Mobile Phones as a Global Marketing Campaign Manager. Prior to that time, Mr. Perez worked in Mexico City for Nextel Communications. He earned a Bachelor of

Economic degree from the Universidad Anahuac in Mexico City and a Master of Business Administration in Marketing from the Southern Methodist University, Cox School of Business in Dallas, Texas.

Kevin Erickson is Empower College Prep's co-founder and initial Board Chairperson. Mr. Erickson currently serves as the Board Treasurer and continues to provide expertise in business operations and financial management. Mr. Erickson is an experienced management consultant specializing in organizational design, early-stage operational and financial management, process engineering, post-merger integration, and large-scale systems implementations. Mr. Erickson spent 10 years at Accenture in the Resources Operating Group focusing on Fortune 500 chemical, mining, steel, and professional service firms. While at Accenture, Mr. Erickson was a founding resource of two successful Internet marketplaces, managed the post-merger integration of the North American distribution facilities for the global number two and three chemical companies, and led the SAP technology deployment in 59 countries for a professional services firm. In 2006, Mr. Erickson left Accenture to become President of Maintenance Made Simple, an early-stage maintenance and remodeling franchisor, where he stabilized operations from near bankruptcy, increased average unit sales volume 30% year-over-year resulting in \$3.5MM in system-wide revenue, and successfully managed the sale of the business. Most recently, Mr. Erickson was a principal at an early-stage private equity firm conducting due diligence and deal analysis, acting as the interim chief operating officer / chief financial officer for a hedge fund startup (a portfolio company), and providing strategic consulting for affiliated companies. Mr. Erickson has a Master of Business Administration in Strategic Management

& Entrepreneurship from The University of Chicago, Booth School of Business and an undergraduate degree in Accounting and Business Administration from Taylor University.

Patricia Welborn serves as the Board Secretary of the Board of Directors. Ms. Welborn has devoted a significant portion of her life working on educational reform and advancing educational excellence for low-income children. Ms. Welborn is also a board member for the Arizona Charter School Association and was recently appointed to the Arizona Board of Education, by Arizona Governor Ducey. Ms. Welborn has also served her community by serving on the board of Genesis, an alternative high school that works to re-enroll those students that have dropped out of high school, as well as the United Way, the Self Employment Loan Fund, the Heard Museum, and the International Baccalaureate Parents Association at Desert Mountain High School. Before starting her own consulting firm to provide guidance to start-up and emerging growth companies in strategic planning, marketing and financial planning, Ms. Welborn spent more than 15 years working in the corporate world with Wells Fargo Bank, MedAir and MicroAge. In 2001, she moved into the non-profit sector to join the YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago as project leader for the development of a charter school and later as the interim Executive Director for an inner city performing arts center. Returning to Arizona in 2005, Ms. Welborn spent six years with Powers Young & Company, providing consulting, strategic planning and fundraising services to Arizona not-for-profit organizations, such as Valley of the Sun YMCA, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Banner Healthcare, Phoenix Children's Museum and the Cactus Pine Council of Girls Scouts. Ms. Welborn received a Bachelor of Arts from Pomona College and a Master of Business Administration from the University of California, Los Angeles.

Management

Empower College Prep has a management team in place that leads the central office and school-specific staff for each of its schools. The positions on the management team include the Executive Director, Director of Finance and Operations, and School Directors. A brief description of each of these roles is below. See the response to application section D. question 2. for additional qualifications of these leaders. Other key leaders that contribute to Empower College Prep's organizational success are the Deans of Curriculum and Instruction, Director of English Language Acquisition, and Manager of Facilities and Operations.

Executive Director, Brian Holman: The Executive Director is responsible for the overall planning, coordinating, supervising of Empower College Prep schools. He oversees the day-to-day operations and, in collaboration with the board, sets strategic direction for the organization. The Executive Director works closely with the Board of Directors and is accountable for meeting all goals and objectives set by the Board related to academic and financial outcomes, community partnerships, and compliance with all stakeholders. The Executive Director is the chief spokesperson for the organization and serves as the primary lead in building strong, positive ties to the external community including families, donors, neighborhood, local service organizations and civic leaders.

Director of Finance and Operations, Angela Eich: The Director of Finance and Operations is responsible for developing and monitoring systems to ensure the organization operates in a manner that allows the instructional staff to focus solely on fulfilling the mission of the organization, that is fiscally sound, and that is in compliance with all authorizing and regulatory agencies and funder requirements. This role oversees all Empower College Prep schools and builds highly collaborative teams at multiple sites while ensuring seamless communication and information sharing occurs among operations staff in the

organization, the instructional staff, the Executive Director, and with families, businesses, and other key stakeholders in the community.

Elementary School Director, Becky Jones: The Elementary School Director is a visionary leader committed to the mission and values of Empower College Prep. They foster a culture of excellence and collaboration among all staff at the school in order to ensure its scholars are prepared to compete academically with children from any school in the country, and to combine their knowledge and skills with their unique gifts and interests to excel in college and positively impact their world. The School Director builds strong partnerships among all departments at the school, with the Executive Director, and with families, businesses, and other key stakeholders in the community.

Succession Plans

Part of being a successful organization and expanding charter school is thinking strategically about long-term sustainability of the governing board and its management team. Below are the plans that Empower College Prep has in place to ensure that there is continuity in the Board's and management's duties being executed and careful consideration and preparation is given to those who would follow in roles to carry out Empower College Prep's mission.

Governing Board Succession: The Empower College Prep Governance Committee is a sub-committee of the Board who is responsible to the Board to assume the primary responsibility for matters pertaining to Board recruitment, nominations, orientation, training, and evaluation in accordance with the ECP bylaws as well as established policies and practices approved by the Board. This committee is working to increase board membership with community members, educators, and business leaders who are committed to Empower

College Prep's mission and comply with all requirements of the governing board members, including open meeting laws. Of the current officers of the Board the succession plan stipulates that the Vice Chair acts on behalf of the Board Chair in the Board Chair's absence, and that the governing board votes to approve new officers at the end of each term, or as the need arises from a mid-term vacancy.

Management Succession: It should be noted that all of Empower College Prep's senior management team have plans to return to the team in their current or similar capacity for future years of the K-2 expansion and beyond. Below details succession plans for vacancies in these roles for the purposes of demonstrating the process should an opening occur.

The Governing Board has developed the following succession plan for the Senior Management Team. The plan and strategy for implementing this plan acknowledge Empower College Prep has many qualified staff members in all departments of the organization who are interested in future career paths to leadership. Senior leaders within the organization are intentional about creating career paths that provide professional development and learning opportunities that cater to staff's growth interest and potential, and also to the benefit of the organization by having a pipeline of instructional and operational employees ready and eager to step into a leadership role within the organization. Empower embraces hiring from within whenever possible but recognizes that there are times when hiring externally will bring the necessary experience or expertise needed for a role. The general hiring practice for Empower College Prep is to open any vacant position to its internal staff as well as post externally in order to yield the highest quality candidates for the position.

The only employee who reports directly to the Governing Board is the Executive Director. The current Executive Director is in good standing and intends to lead the organization

indefinitely. The succession plan for the Executive Director is that they will be chosen by the governing board, per the responsibilities outlined in the Board bylaws. The Board will do this with consideration from the management team to get context of the current culture and needs of the organization before selecting its new leader. Currently, the Director of Finance and Operations is best positioned to succeed the Executive Director if this need were to arise.

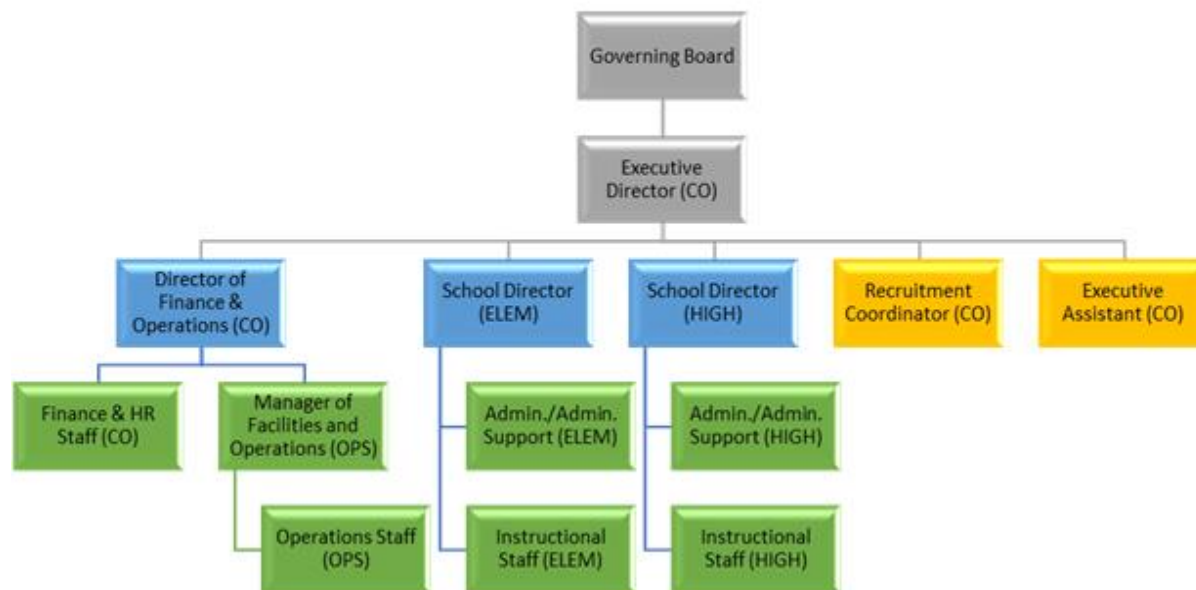
The succession plan for the Director of Finance and Operations (DFO) is determined by the Executive Director. As mentioned above, there are positions in the organization that are being developed to step up and fill the needs caused by a vacancy in the DFO role, namely the Grants and Finance Manager and Manager of Facilities and Operations. These two positions currently carry out many of the processes put in place for the finance and operations departments, respectively. Whether this position was filled internally or the Executive Director believed the needs of the organization would best be met by an external hire, the new DFO would be on-boarded using the fiscal policies, Human Resources Handbook, and other operational handbooks created by the current DFO and approved by the Board to guide the Director of Finance and Operation's practices.

In the sudden absence of a School Director, there are two primary pipelines for this role internally. Deans of Curriculum and Instruction are the second-most senior roles at the school site and are responsible for the coaching and development of teachers. They oversee curriculum and assessment and monitor scholar performance. They are a natural next in line for the School Director, either in the event of a vacancy or an expansion of the organization. Team Leaders are also being trained and developed for school leadership. They support teachers and curriculum planning, similar to Deans of Curriculum and Instruction, but for

their specific grade level or subject area. This group of individuals is also a likely pool of quality candidates for a School Director position.

Finally, there is a substantial level of support from Teach for America, including multiple alumni who work in the organization, or who are considering joining its Governing Board. Several of these staff members have advanced degrees or training in educational leadership and would be able to lead Empower College Prep in the absence of educational leadership.

Organization Chart

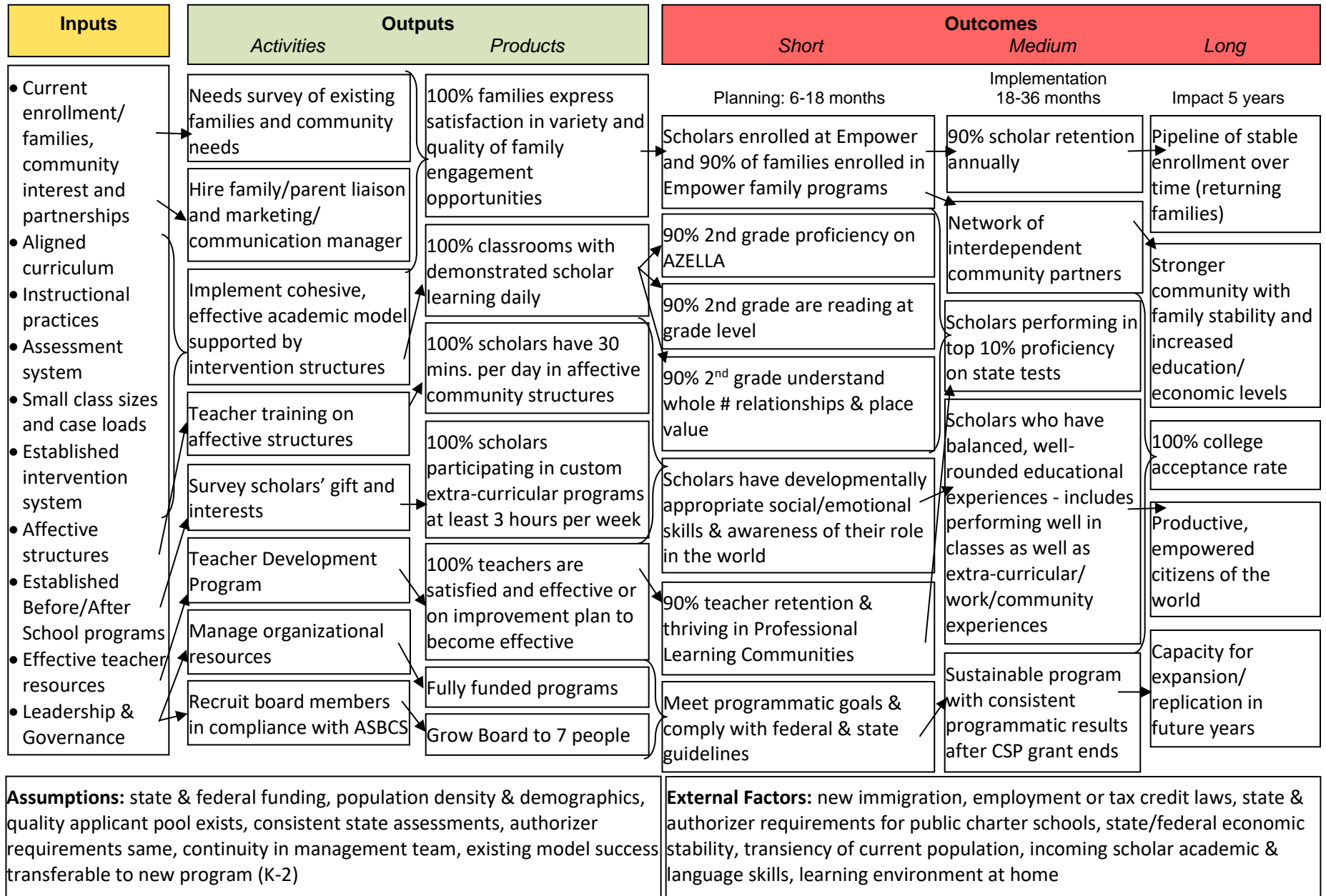


2. Describe how the governing authority will create and monitor the strategic planning and implementation of the school using the logic model template provided. See the Logic Model Components Definitions in “Terms to Know”

<https://cms.azed.gov/home/GetDocumentFile?id=5bbd2fff1dcb250b9035198c>

Arizona Charter Schools Program Logic Model

Project's Objectives: Develop K-2 program to begin with students and families at the beginning of their educational pathway in order to prevent achievement gap and ensure all students are on pathway to college so that they are empowered to fulfill their personal mission in life.



Empower College Prep's Governing Board developed a 4-year strategic plan in 2016 and has begun revising it to create a five-year strategic plan through 2025 that incorporates the K-2 Program, using the logic model as the guiding template. The Board meets monthly and will use the products and outcomes in the logic model to monitor the strategic planning and implementation of the school. The Governing Board holds the Executive Director accountable for implementing the strategic plan, including the provision of the stated products and meeting of the stated outcomes. The Executive Director achieves this by leveraging the existing inputs in collaboration with the remainder of the Senior Management Team, and by using data and standing bi-weekly meetings to monitor and strategically revise the organization's Curriculum - Instruction - Assessment framework, support structures, and general operations in pursuit of the mission of all students being prepared to succeed in college, solve real-world problems, and maximize their impact in the world. .

Inputs

Empower College Prep currently has many assets to leverage in pursuit of its planning and implementation of an extraordinary K-2 program.

Highly stable current scholars and families with siblings who plan to attend: While surrounding schools typically have more than a third of their students move during the school year, Empower College Prep has 86% stability in its student population throughout the year. Our existing families have expressed eagerness to be the first to enroll the younger siblings of our current students in our K-2 program.

Recruitment coordinator/team who will grow enrollment: Our recruitment coordinator lives in the community and is committed to ensuring families know about the increased educational opportunities Empower College Prep seeks to provide.

Community partnerships: As described in Section D5, our community partnerships dramatically increase our capacity to meet the unique, critical needs of our community. These include partnerships with Grand Canyon University, North Phoenix Baptist Church, the Arizona Charter Schools Association, the Simpson and Westwood Neighborhood Associations, the City of Phoenix, Teach For America, the Center for the Future of Arizona and National Institute for School Leadership, AdvancEd, Literacy Volunteers of Maricopa County, St. Mary's Food Bank, L&M Catering, Valleywide Transportation, and Off Madison Avenue.

Curriculum alignment for academics and advisory: The curriculum is standards-aligned and evidence-based, as described in Section F.1, and members of the school's instructional leadership team have been trained to become trainers for teachers. This curriculum also aligns to the curriculum being used in older grades to provide continuity in children's educational experiences.

Assessment system: The school has an existing assessment system that includes a question bank for K-2 and reports that the instructional leadership team already trains teachers to use for data-driven decision-making and to facilitate differentiated instruction in students' zones of proximal development.

Affective structures: The school has developed robust affective structures in other grades that can be transferable to K-2, including counseling; advisory lesson to foster

socio-emotional health and analysis of current events; and lessons on core values that build community, self-sufficiency, and empowerment.

Stable core of highly effective teachers: Multiple staff members have exceeded the state average of proficiency with their students and attained exemplary growth.

Leadership and governance: The management team has a history of strong results in complying with the authorizer and state and federal grants, and also attained bond financing as a result of its strong history of achievement, enrollment, and financial health. The school's senior management team and Board have built strong HR, financial, and teacher evaluation systems during their many years together, as well as strategic plans that have positioned the school to expand to serve grades K-2.

Outcomes

Empower College Prep will take strategic actions and its Board will monitor established benchmarks to reach the following outcomes:

1. The school will hire a Family/Parent Liaison and Marketing/Communication manager. It will survey existing families and community members with the goal of 100% of families expressing satisfaction in the variety and quality of programs offered. The intent is for this to lead to families engaging with the programs offered and deepening their partnership with the school to which they are sending their children. The resulting outcome is 90% scholar retention annually, reported to the Board via monthly enrollment updates and yearly enrollment summary over time with analysis.
2. From the school's increased presence in the community led by the Family/Parent Liaison, Marketing/Communication Manager, and Recruitment

Coordinator being guided with information from the community needs survey, the school intends to amplify its existing community partnerships to address the family needs identified in the survey. For example, adult literacy needs may be met through Literacy Volunteers of Maricopa County. Additionally, Empower College Prep intends to meet community needs in partnership with their parents, including volunteering at local non-profits like Homeward Bound and connecting parents in need of jobs with existing openings our vendors share. The resulting outcome is a network of interdependent community partners, which the Board will monitor via a standing item on Board agendas in which Empower's management team reports out on status and utilizes this opportunity to leverage connections through Board members.

3. With its current inputs related to curriculum, instruction, and assessment, and with those planned to be added as described in Section F of this application, Empower College Prep will implement an effective academic model, implement an intervention system being effectively used in older grades, and utilize small class sizes led by highly effective teachers to obtain 100% classrooms with demonstrated scholar learning daily. In the short-term, 90% of second graders will be proficient on AZELLA, read at grade level, and understand whole number relationships and place value in mathematics. This will position students for greater success throughout their academic careers. The resulting outcome is for scholars to perform in top 10% proficiency on state tests, which will be reported to the Board via an academic dashboard that

is submitted monthly for progress monitoring and yearly after state test data becomes available.

4. Given the research about the increased frequency that children in poverty experience trauma, and our school's experiences witnessing this, having dedicated time to build healthy relationships and community with peers and teacher is critical. This provides opportunities for modeling healthy relationships and core values. The school will train teachers how to structure their time to foster meaningful affective activities in both Advisory and classrooms. The school will also survey scholars for their gifts and interests to build relationships and help guide their future educational path to align to these innate abilities and passions. The intent is to have 100% of scholars participating in these community-building structures each week in addition to extra-curricular programs tailored to their gifts and interests. This will lead to young elementary scholars who have developmentally appropriate social/emotional skills and awareness of their role in the world. The resulting outcome will be scholars who have balanced, well-rounded educational experiences. The Board will monitor progress to these outcomes via qualitative reports from the School Director about core value internalization, participation in extracurricular programs offered by Empower, schedule of advisory lessons, and disciplinary statistics.
5. Empower College Prep plans to expand its leadership capacity by recruiting board members with different areas of specialty to enhance its capacity to govern effectively and engage in robust strategic planning. Specific areas of

focus include early childhood education, community relationships, organizational management, and Curriculum/Instruction. The goal is to grow the Board to 7 members before implementation of the K-2 program next year. The resulting outcomes will be a sustainable program with consistent programmatic results after the CSP grant ends, monitored by continued yearly academic and financial performance reported to the Board and progress on deliverables and outcomes from the strategic plan reported to the Board monthly.

In partnership with the Senior Management Team, the Governing Board will oversee the effective implementation of the strategic plan resulting from the logic model included in this application. This planning and oversight, enhanced by the resources coming from the CSP grant, will lead to the long-term impact Empower College Prep is pursuing--to prepare scholars to go to and succeed in college, and then be transformational to their communities. Accomplishing the outcomes described above will culminate in a stable and growing number of families in the community whose children are graduating high school and returning four years later with a college degree. This will increase families' social, economic, and emotional stability. Poverty will decrease with the increased educational achievement levels throughout the community yielding higher economic status, and an Empower alumni base of productive, empowered citizens changing their world for the better. The school will also have the capacity to expand and replicate in future years, thereby impacting more scholars who will transform more communities.

3. What is the succession plan for governing body members and key school leadership to sustain the school's mission?

Empower College Prep is developed to be a sustainable organization, which requires a succession plan and on-going development for governing board members and key school leadership.

To fill vacancies on the Governing Board, the officers and Executive Director will comprise the Governance Committee, which is responsible for recruiting, vetting and recommending potential Trustees to the Governing Board for approval. To become Governing Board members, individuals must be committed to the school's mission and comply with all requirements of Governing Board members, including Open Meeting Laws. The Board has developed an on-boarding plan for new Board members to have adequate context of the organization and its policies and procedures in order to fulfill their governance responsibilities. The organization also partners with the Arizona Charter Schools Association for additional trainings.

The organization has also developed a succession plan for key senior leadership positions in order to ensure the sustainability of the school's mission. As noted before, all of Empower College Prep's senior management team are in good standing and have plans to return to the team in their current or similar capacity for future years of the K-2 expansion and beyond. Below details succession plans for vacancies in these roles for the purposes of ensuring sustainability of the school's mission should an unexpected vacancy arise.

The person who would succeed the Executive Director is the Director of Finance and Operations. To provide strong leadership in the unforeseen absence of the Executive

Director or any senior leadership position, the organization practices continual leadership development through which those one manages are constantly being prepared for more advanced roles in the organization. Consistent with this practice, the Director of Finance and Operations has assumed responsibilities for all financial and operational aspects of the school except fundraising. She has, however, represented the school in various forums. Upon succeeding the Executive Director, the Director of Finance and Operations would receive additional coaching from the Board Secretary who has extensive experience in fundraising, and additional staff would be hired for administrative support. The current School Director would become a Director of Academics and be responsible for the academic outcomes of the school.

The person who would succeed the Director of Finance and Operations would either be the Grants and Finance Manager or the Manager of Facilities and Operations. These two positions currently carry out many of the processes put in place for the finance and operations departments, respectively. Both individuals are presently being developed using the written fiscal policies, Human Resources Handbook, and other operational handbooks created by the current DFO and approved by the Board to guide the Director of Finance and Operation's practices.

The person who would succeed the School Principal is the Senior Dean of Curriculum and Instruction. Additionally, there are two primary pipelines for this role internally. Deans of Curriculum and Instruction are the second-most senior roles at the school site and are responsible for the coaching and development of teachers. The school currently has two individuals in these positions. They oversee curriculum and assessment and monitor scholar performance. They are a natural next in line for the School Director,

either in the event of a vacancy or an expansion of the organization. The second pipeline is team leaders. Team Leaders are also being trained and developed for school leadership. They support teachers and curriculum planning, similar to Deans of Curriculum and Instruction, but for their specific grade level or subject area. This group of individuals is also a likely pool of quality candidates for a School Director position.

Finally, there is a substantial level of support from Teach For America, including multiple alumni who work in the organization or who are on its Governing Board. Several of these individuals have advanced degrees or training and are part of a strong alumni network who could provide leadership capacity in the absence of a key leadership position. These individuals would also be trained by using the Curriculum and Instruction handbook for instructional leadership, Systems and Procedures handbook for operations leadership, and the fiscal policies and HR handbook for financial leadership.

Additional examples of professional growth and development include training facilitated by Board on Track for the Governing Board and local consultants for increasing fundraising performance. For staff, the Senior Management Team engages in team projects that builds skill and common knowledge every two weeks. Team leaders also meet bi-weekly with the School Director to reflect on the progress toward their team goals and engage in consultation regarding the leadership of these leaders with their grade-level teams. These lessons are applicable to school leadership positions as well. To build additional content knowledge and prepare individuals for future leadership roles, the school will also invest in conferences for problem-based learning, teaching Advanced Placement courses, and additional leadership training led by the Arizona Charter School Association. Finally, the school plans to enroll three of its staff members in the Center for

the Future of Arizona's school leadership program developed in partnership with the National Institute for School Leadership.

4. Describe how the charter school that is considered a local educational agency under ARS§15-181 will comply with sections 613(a)(5) and 613(e)(1)(B) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. *ESEA, Title IV, Part C, Sec. 4303(f)(1)(A)(iii)(III)*

The purpose of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is to protect the rights of children with disabilities, and to ensure that they receive a free, appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment. Empower College Prep will comply with all sections of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act to enroll and meet the educational needs of these children, including sections 613(a)(5) and 613 (e)(1)(B). Empower College Prep's marketing plan, outreach activities, and lottery process will ensure students with disabilities have an equal opportunity to enroll in the school. Empower College Prep will request records from schools upon enrollment of the child in order to ensure compliance with the child's current Individualized Education Plan and will engage in an evaluation process regarding the needs and abilities of each student within the first 45 days of their arrival. Special education services will be provided to the student as outlined in the IEP. In order to serve these children, including providing supplementary and related services on site, Empower College Prep has budgeted and prioritizes hiring appropriately certified Special Education staff. Additionally, Empower College Prep has budgeted for psychological evaluations, speech therapy, and occupational therapy.

Child Find

The intent of Child Find is that schools identify, locate, and evaluate all children from birth through age 21 in order for the children to receive the supports and services they need. Child Find procedures include identification (screening), referral, and evaluation procedures. The Child Find process includes the Forty-Five Day Screener, the Scholar Success Team (SST), and review of enrollment data and educational performance for transferring scholars.

For children suspected of having a disability, the SST will recommend that a multidisciplinary evaluation team conduct a full and individual evaluation to determine eligibility and need for special education.

Forty-Five Day Screeners

The Forty-Five Day Screener is part of the Child Find process. The school completes the Forty-Five Day Screener within 45 calendar days after entry of each preschool or kindergarten scholar and any scholar enrolling without appropriate records of screening, evaluation, and progress in school. Screening procedures shall include vision and hearing status and consideration of the following areas: cognitive or academic, communication, motor, social or behavioral, and adaptive development. Screening does not include detailed individualized comprehensive evaluation procedures. The school maintains the results in the scholar's permanent records in a location designated by the administrator. In the case of a scholar not enrolled, the school will maintain the results in a location designated by the administrator. If the identification (screening) process indicates a possible disability, the screener will submit the name of the scholar to the Scholar Success Team for consideration of the need for a referral for a full and individual evaluation or other services.

If a scholar is struggling academically, emotionally, or behaviorally, he or she can be referred to an intervention process. Referrals to the intervention process are based on assessment data and are made after a scholar has received additional in-class support based on a three-tiered model. Referrals are made when a scholar has been provided with all three-tiers of intervention (whole-class interventions (1), small group interventions (2), and one-on-one interventions (3)) without success.

The Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team Process

There are two stages of the MET process: MET I and MET II.

At the MET I stage, the team (special education teacher, general education teacher, psychologist, parents, person to interpret implications, etc.) meets to discuss all of the information collected and the results of the interventions attempted with the scholar. Based on this information, the team determines what tests would provide the most information about the child's levels of performance in all areas and solicits informed consent from the parent to test the scholar. If the parent gives consent to evaluate the scholar, the team has 60 calendar days to complete the evaluation and reconvene. At the conclusion of the MET I meeting, the team should schedule the MET II meeting in order to ensure compliance.

At the MET II stage, the MET team meets to go over the results of the evaluation and determine next steps. The team seeks to answer two questions: (1) Based on data and results from testing, is a scholar eligible for special education? (2) If the scholar is eligible, is there a need for special education services? If the team determines that the answer to both questions is yes, parents sign an Initial Placement Statement. The team then develops an Individualized Education Plan and the scholar becomes eligible for

special education services. If the team determines that the scholar is not eligible or does not need special education services, all members are better equipped with data to further support that scholar in the least restrictive environment.

The Individual Education Plan (IEP)

Special education and related services are provided to eligible children in accordance with the child's individualized education program (IEP). An IEP is defined as a written statement for a child with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised in accordance with the specific guidelines set forth in the IDEA. Members of the IEP team include but are not limited to general education teachers, special education teachers, administrators, and parents. An IEP lasts for one calendar year, upon which it must be reviewed and rewritten.

Re-Evaluation

Scholars with IEPs must be re-evaluated at least once every three years. At this time, the MET team convenes, and the scholar goes through the MET process starting with MET I.

F. Leadership – Total points possible: 25 points

1. What process is in place or will be in place to develop challenging curriculum including supplemental curriculum aligned with the state standards that meets the unique needs of disadvantaged students?

Mission and Measurable Expectations for Scholar Achievement

Empower College Prep's mission is to ensure that children from educationally underserved and disadvantaged communities succeed in college, solve real-world

problems, and maximize their impact in the world. Empower College Prep aims to close the word gap as well as prepare scholars from an early age to go to college. In order to ensure that scholars are able to compete academically with scholars from any school in the country, we commit to the following measurable scholar expectations:

- 100% scholars have developmentally appropriate social emotional skills
- 100% scholars have developmentally appropriate awareness of their role in the world
- 90% 2nd grade proficiency on AZELLA
- 90% 2nd read at grade level ready for 3rd grade
- 90% solid understanding of whole number relationships & place value

Our potential impact includes:

- A better community with family stability
- Productive, empowered citizens of the world
- 100% college acceptance rate

For scholars in kindergarten, first, and second grades, this is often their first opportunity with a school structure and developing the literacy and language necessary to be successful in school and beyond. According to an nea.org article called “Why We Care about the K in K-12,” kindergarten “represents the first year of formal schooling for 98 percent of the children in the United States, and it marks the bridge between early childhood education and the primary grades of school.” These formative years are imperative to later success.

The liability of our mission not being fulfilled begins with children from a zip code in Phoenix with the highest crime rate lacking opportunities for a better life. The negative

effects of a poor primary education stretch far and wide beyond low test scores later in the middle or high school years. Raj Chetty’s research focused on “adult outcomes” (Leonhardt, 2010) and found that when these students become adults, they are less likely to go to college, more likely to become a single parent, and more likely to earn less money. Leonhardt also shares that “A student who went from average to the 60th percentile — a typical jump for a 5-year-old with a good teacher — could expect to make about \$1,000 more a year at age 27 than a student who remained at the average.” (2010). And if we continue to begin with third grade rather than kindergarten, we have already lost three years of formal education that is imperative to academic success. Sara Mead states in a US News piece, that “by the time states look at how well schools are serving children, it's much too late. By third grade, low-performing schools have left many children so far behind they never catch up”

Selecting Curriculum to Meet the Unique Needs of Disadvantaged Scholars

Given all of the research and how important primary years are to fulfill our mission, Empower College Prep has selected reading, writing, and math curriculum for K-2 that are research-based and align to the Arizona Mathematics, English Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies Standards. The curriculum allows and supports teachers to plan and prepare the richest learning experiences for our youngest scholars to date.

In 2018, a team made up of the School Director, two Deans of Curriculum and Instruction, and four teachers researched and selected curriculum for grades 3-6. We used a similar process to analyze the various curriculum available to K-2 scholars. The curriculum we selected were chosen based on the following criteria:

- Research: Are How People Learn strategies prevalent?

- Rigor: What are students asked to do? Does it align to the Arizona standards?
- Engagement: Is the content relevant? Is it connected to the real world (mission-aligned)?
- Coherence and order: Does it make sense?
- Resources: What materials are needed to support this curriculum?
- Alignment (for K-2 only): Does it align to the curriculum we use in grades 3-8?

We believe that the curriculum we chose will ensure that our scholars will meet the expectations of 90% passing AZELLA by second grade, 90% on grade level reading and ready for third grade, and 90% understanding of whole number relationships and place value. A detailed description of the curriculum can be found below.

Curriculum Description and Research

Empower College Prep will use Wilson’s Foundations for phonics instruction. This program is recommended by the Teaching Reading Effectively sessions created by The Arizona Department of Education, which both of our Deans of Curriculum and Instruction have attended. Additionally, Foundations is ESSA evidence based. Wilson Language has also conducted several research studies, and their Program Effectiveness webpage states that, “when implemented properly, students using Foundations in Tiers 1 and 2 achieve **greater gains in foundational literacy skills** compared to students using programs previously implemented by the schools. These results held with English language learners (ELL) as well. Studies of **kindergarten students** who received Foundations instruction in Florida, New York, and Massachusetts demonstrated:

- Better learning of letter knowledge.
- Larger gains in phonological and phonemic awareness.

- Greater gains in phonological decoding.
- Reduction in risk of later reading difficulties.

First-grade students who received Foundations instruction demonstrated:

- Larger gains in oral reading fluency.
- Improvement in phonemic awareness (phoneme segmentation).
- Improvement in phonological decoding (reading nonsense words).
- Significant gains in basic reading skills.
- Reduction in risk of later reading difficulties.

English language learners (Grade 1) who received Foundations instruction demonstrated:

- Greater gains in phonemic awareness.
- Greater gains in oral reading fluency.

This is very promising for Empower College Prep’s scholars because we are currently using Foundations in grade 3 and Wilson’s intervention program called Just Words in grades 4 and 5. This will align directly to the work we are doing with our older scholars. Additionally, these studies were done in Massachusetts which is the top performing state in the country. Empower College Prep strives to be a top performing school in the country, so modeling our instruction after the elite is an important aspect in our decision making.

Wilson’s Foundations will provide scholars with opportunities to develop the crucial foundational skill of the alphabetic principle, which ReadingRockets.org refers to as “the idea that letters and letter patterns represent the sounds of spoken language.” Specifically,

according to Scholastic.com, the alphabetic principle means scholars must understand that:

- letters represent speech sounds
- letters go together to make words
- changing the letters changes the sounds and words

Wilson's Foundations also pairs this learning with writing so that scholars are learning to read and write letters and words simultaneously. To expand their learning to sentences and paragraphs, Empower College Prep will use Lucy Calkins' Units of Study to develop writing pieces that have followed the writing process. Scholars will develop opinion, information, and narrative pieces throughout the course of the school year.

Empower College Prep will use Fountas and Pinnell's Reading Mini lessons for whole group reading comprehension instruction. Simultaneously while scholars are learning how words work (through Foundations), they will learn how texts are structured and the thinking required to read and understand literature and informational texts. Fountas and Pinnell's Reading Mini-lessons are standards-aligned and will provide scholars with the opportunities to develop the 7 main reading strategies of what all effective readers do: predict, visualize, question, connect, identify, infer, and evaluate. During this time, the teacher selects texts that are developmentally appropriate and generally above grade-level. This provides scholars the opportunity to hear Tier 3 vocabulary words and to listen to the teacher (a "good reader") model what effective reading looks and sounds like. Teachers also select texts that are aligned to Social Studies and Science standards. Scholars will then practice these skills independently with books that are at their independent reading level.

Finally, Fountas and Pinnell’s Guided Reading will be used for small group, intensive reading instruction. Groups of 3-5 scholars who have similar reading skills and knowledge will meet with the teacher for 10-20 minutes daily. This time will be dedicated to the scholars instructional reading level, which means since scholars are being “guided to read” through the teacher’s support, they will experience texts that are just above their independent reading level so that they continue to develop more robust vocabulary and practice more rigorous skills than what they will see in their independent leveled texts.

By the time the ELA block is complete, scholars will have participated in reading at least three separate texts. This is important for reading and writing development in the primary years so that they build all tiers of vocabulary as well as stamina for reading and an understanding of the world around them, which is part of fulfilling our mission.

Empower College Prep will use Eureka Math (formerly Engage NY) as the math curriculum for grades K-2. Eureka Math has been used in grades 3-8 with great results .

Most recently, our 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th grade scholars experienced instruction with Eureka Math in school year 2018-2019 and both our growth and proficiency scores increased. According to our most recent data from ADE, we scored the following on AzMerit in math:

Grade	Percent Proficient
3	24%
4	54%
5	50%
6	34%

A Hechinger Report written by Jessica Williams (2015) states that, “Eureka Math, a Common Core-aligned curriculum published by the non-profit Great Minds Inc., equates mathematical concepts to stories, with the aim of developing conceptual understanding. Like Common Core, it encourages students to use various mental strategies to solve problems, and to focus on the process instead of the answer.” Arizona's Academic Standards align closely to Common Core, the Eureka Math Kits will provide the supplemental materials needed to dive even more deeply into the math curriculum. This directly aligns to our mission of scholars developing the skills to solve real-world problems.

The Social Studies and Science standards will be taught in two ways: through text selection in the ELA block and through lessons during a dedicated Social Studies and Science block. During the summer planning - as part of the collaborative planning - will use the topics from social studies or science standards to drive the reading units. In other words, the first unit of reading skills might be about predicting, and the topic of texts they use are all social studies based on geography. The purpose is to lead to a cross-categorical approach to planning where scholars are learning all subjects that are interconnected within one day.

In addition to core content areas, Empower College Prep believes in developing scholars in their gifts and interests. We would like to expand our art, technology, dance, and physical education programs in K-2, and we will add a STEM Lab. Materials selection is determined by the fine arts experts specifically hired to provide their respective subject instruction to Empower scholars. Our current physical education teacher has researched bringing tumbling and gymnastics, hurdles and tunnels for agility

and strength, and a plethora of hand-eye coordination and team building games and materials to build a robust early childhood physical education program. The STEM Lab will encourage critical thinking, building, design, and 21st century skills that are vital to the success of a future that is technologically advanced, and we do not quite comprehend! Fine arts classes will culminate with an exhibit or performance of scholar work at Expo Night each semester.

Implementation, Evaluation, and Revision of the Curriculum

We have also developed a comprehensive system to implement, evaluate, and revise the K-2 curriculum in an ongoing manner. The implementation of our curriculum starts with professional development. Because this is an expansion and Empower College Prep has not yet had K-2, we will attend summer 2020 conferences together to plan and further develop and align our curriculum. Specifically, we will attend Staff Development for Educators I Teach K/1st/2nd and the Model Schools Conference. We will also bring experts for Fountas and Pinnell and Wilson's Foundations during summer 2020 for continuity, common expectations, and to begin to ensure that teachers implement with fidelity.

Any purchased curriculum requires expert teachers to refine unit plans, unit assessments, daily lessons, and to create a list of texts required. Empower College Prep will use the conferences as time to collaborate to create or refine the plans for all 186 days of instruction. The particular focus will be spent on text selection as it is one of the single most important aspects of planning for reading instruction. According to an article on teachlikeachampion.org, "What students read shapes **how** and **how well** they learn to read." (Lemov, 2019).

The detailed plans will be saved in a shared folder prior to instruction. Since they are created in collaboration with the school leader, they will be reviewed ongoing and updated as necessary to ensure they are rigorous and aligned to the Arizona Standards as well as provide appropriate connection to real-world problem solving which is integral to Empower's mission.

Additional professional development is taught to all teachers based on our Teacher Development Program. This program focuses on teachers having the opportunity to become masters at their craft and training includes the following topics:

- Building relationships with students and parents.
- Classroom routines and procedures.
- Classroom management techniques ("rules").
- Reading data reports from assessments
- Develop personal schedule and routine for sustainability
- Advanced classroom management to maximize thinking and learning.
- Advanced classroom management based on socio-emotional development and trust-based relational intervention
- Content Expertise and Planning
- Data-driven Decision making
- Advanced Content Expertise and Planning
- Advanced differentiation

In addition to lesson creation and review and training, Empower College Prep supports teachers with implementation through observations and feedback. The academic leadership team (School Directors, Deans, Executive Director) completes walk-through

classrooms weekly together to norm language and expectations together, to see success in action, and to provide feedback to teachers for improvement. Additionally, the School Director and Deans of Curriculum and Instruction observe and provide feedback to teachers on an ongoing basis, depending on their development. New or inexperienced teachers generally receive more frequent observations, sometimes as often as 3-4 times per week. Master teachers receive weekly or even bi-weekly observations and feedback. The observer and teacher also meet regularly to debrief the observation and feedback and often to watch video or role play improvement areas.

Empower College Prep also evaluates our curriculum and the implementation of it in an ongoing manner through bi-weekly data check-ins between teacher and academic coach. The purpose of this is to identify standards where proficiency is low and to make adjustments to instruction in the moment. Quarterly benchmarks, end of year assessments, and teacher feedback are reviewed at the end of the year to identify standards where proficiency is low and review the curriculum for gaps in these standards. School leaders alongside expert teachers then make revisions to the curriculum for the upcoming school year.

References:

1. <https://www.usnews.com/opinion/articles/2016-10-06/early-elementary-education-years-are-important-for-public-policy>
2. <https://www.wilsonlanguage.com/programs/foundations/overview/program-effectiveness/>

2. What process is in place or will be in place to design and implement instructional practices aligned with the curriculum to meet the unique needs of disadvantaged students?

In order for Empower College Prep’s mission of empowering students from low-income communities to succeed in college, solve real-world problems, and maximize their impact in the world to be fulfilled, the instructional practices of the school must be transformational. Therefore, the school will put in place a comprehensive process to design, implement, evaluate, and adjust instructional practices aligned with the curriculum to meet the unique needs of disadvantaged students.

Design

As a result of the school’s commitment to providing instructional excellence in every classroom that is research-based, the school designed its instructional methodology based on research from Carol Davis and Roxann Kriete’s Morning Meeting (from Responsive Classroom), Doug Lemov’s Teach Like a Champion, Steven Farr’s Teaching as Leadership framework, and The National Research Councils’ *How People Learn*. This methodology is defined in the organization’s evaluation rubric and elaborated on in the Curriculum and Instruction Handbook.

One essential component to Empower College Prep’s instructional practices is our Core Values. Scholars in K-2 will be expected to learn about and develop in respect, integrity, compassion, optimism, stewardship, wisdom, and perseverance at their developmentally appropriate level. Direct instruction during Morning Meeting about our Core Values will take place. According to ResponsivClassroom.org, “Morning Meeting is an engaging way to start each day, build a strong sense of community, and set children

up for success socially and academically” (What is Morning Meeting?, 2016). Morning Meeting will be the first 30 minutes of the day and will be structured as written with a morning message, greeting, reading, and group activity. The purpose is to develop relationships with scholars, develop the Core Values, and set and track goals. Additionally, Morning Meeting creates the space and time to teach about diversity, current events, and other developmentally appropriate issues that naturally arise as scholars work with their peers and the various content areas. The Morning Meeting time is synonymous with Advisory blocks and therefore aligned with the older grades at Empower College Prep. During Morning Meeting, specifically scholars will be developing age-appropriate social emotional skills as well as developing an appropriate awareness of their role in the world, which are two of our long-term outputs in the logic model.

Another component to Empower College Prep’s instructional practices is the techniques found in *Teach Like a Champion* by Doug Lemov. Teach Like a Champion provides research-based techniques from Uncommon Schools that “[enable] all students, particularly those not born to privilege, to achieve at dramatically higher levels” (teachlikeachampion.org, About Us page). Specifically, this is a set of normed vocabulary and a framework for teachers to provide consistency and high expectations for teachers and scholars across the school. At Empower College Prep, we will complete a book study of the techniques described in *Teach Like a Champion* as they align to our Teacher Development Program.

The third component to Empower College Prep’s instructional strategies is *How People Learn* created by the National Research Council. There are three big ideas: that

people learn through metacognition, conceptual understanding, and building a conceptual framework. As teachers become masters of their craft, they will begin to analyze this text and how they can build metacognition, conceptual understanding, and a conceptual framework in their scholars to dramatically increase scholar learning.

Finally, Empower College Prep also has specific school-wide practices that provide normed expectations for behavior, interactions, and quality of work. This year, we have implemented school-wide system for the following (some of which are a technique from *Teach Like a Champion*):

- Morning Arrival Threshold
- Classroom Threshold
- Advisory
- Pep Assembly
- Grade Color
- ECP Chant
- University Names
- Classroom Norms
- Scholar Response
- Hallway
- Bathroom
- Lines
- STAR
- Hand Signals

- Voice Levels
- Uniforms
- Permission to Enter
- RICOSWP Agenda
- Books
- Every Moment Counts
- ClassDojo
- Entry Procedure
- Homework
- Technology

Implementation

The School Director Becky Jones facilitates implementation of the instructional methods through a bi-weekly series of trainings scheduled over a two-year period for all teachers in the organization to become highly proficient in their use. This series of trainings, aligned coaching supports, and evaluation cycle is incorporated in the school's written Teacher Development Program. The School Director and academic coaches monitors the implementation of the school's instructional methodology through reviewing lesson plans for incorporation of the instructional methods and through visiting classrooms weekly to observe the instructional methods in practice. The evidence gathered from lesson plan review and classroom visits are housed in a single location called Whetstone, which was developed in partnership with Uncommon Schools to facilitate top-quality instructional coaching and development. This is done to ensure

consistency across the organization and to identify needs for professional development, for which time is held on Thursday afternoons.

Evaluation

In addition to running records and daily formative assessments, the school uses quarterly benchmarks to ensure students are mastering content. This data also provides information for teachers to reflect with their coaches during bi-weekly check-ins about teacher actions and instructional methods that align with objectives students met and those they did not. This informs topics for professional development and other meaningful learning opportunities for teachers to increase their proficiency in the school's instructional methods.

We also use Steven Farr's Teaching as Leadership framework as a way of informing the school director and academic coaches of specific rubric rows that most strongly correlate with student achievement. This evaluation provides information that coaches can use to build professional learning communities as well as vital information for differentiated coaching for individual teachers to improve their performance and proficiency.

Revision

Finally, the school revises its instructional methods through a scheduled process at the end of each school year. All instructional staff complete a survey reflecting on the instructional practices described in the rubric and Curriculum and Instruction handbook and the learning that occurred in their classroom throughout the year. Over the summer, this feedback informs minor revisions to the rubric and handbook and topics for the

summer in-service professional development and development throughout the upcoming year.

Through the systematic design, implementation, evaluation, and revision of research-based instructional methods, the school seeks to fulfill its mission of empowering scholars from low-income communities to succeed in college, solve real-world problems, and maximize their impact in the world and in the next three years to establish a strong foundation for this pursuit in Kindergarten through 2nd grade.

3. What process is in place or will be in place to develop a comprehensive academic assessment system to measure the performance of disadvantaged students?

In order for Empower College Prep's mission of empowering students from low-income communities to succeed in college, solve real-world problems, and maximize their impact in the world to be fulfilled, it is imperative we have reliable, valid, bias-free information to assess scholar performance on expectations for learning. Therefore, Empower College Prep has developed a comprehensive academic assessment system based on clearly defined performance measures aligned with the curriculum and instructional methodology to monitor scholar progress, analyze instructional effectiveness, and adjust curriculum and instruction to continuously increase effectiveness.

Comprehensive Academic Assessment System

In order to assess scholars' progress toward our academic goals, outcomes, and achievement standards, we will use readiness and placement assessments, formative assessments, benchmark assessments, summative assessments, and normed tests. This

robust system of assessments provides a comprehensive picture of scholar achievement and growth over time.

Readiness Assessments

For kindergarten specifically, scholars will also participate in a readiness assessment before school begins to determine current levels of understanding. A readiness assessment is one-on-one between teacher and scholar, but parent/guardian can be present for support and comfort. It includes developmentally appropriate and engaging activities such as:

1. Counting
2. Rhyming
3. Reciting
4. Sorting
5. Naming shapes
6. Naming letter sounds
7. Identifying letters in writing
8. Writing name
9. Reading sight words
10. Reading words in a developmentally appropriate text

First and second grade scholars will also participate in numbers 6-10 of the readiness assessment. No scholar will be denied enrollment based on assessment data. The assessment data is used by teachers to differentiate and tailor instruction appropriately. Teachers can begin teaching in small groups and providing interventions earlier in the school year with readiness assessment data.

Finally, readiness assessments may also inform the creation of class lists in order to balance classes and assign teachers to the most appropriate group of scholars for instruction.

AZELLA Placement Test

All scholars in kindergarten as well as all other scholars in first and second grades who qualify will participate in the AZELLA placement test to ensure scholars are appropriately placed in classes to meet their English language needs. This assessment is required by the state of Arizona and the data provided will support the goal of all scholars being English-proficient by the time they reach third grade. As appropriate, scholars will be placed in Structured English Immersion (SEI) classrooms based on the AZELLA placement data.

Formative Assessments

Daily formative assessments take place in many ways, including but not limited to observations, exit tickets, and assignments. Teachers will monitor scholar work each lesson by providing feedback to scholars in the moment and making adjustments to lessons, as appropriate, the next day. This type of assessment will also inform the teachers if a scholar needs remediation through small groups or extension activities to delve more deeply into the standard.

Eureka Math uses daily exit tickets to measure progress toward standards.

Fountas and Pinnell requires teachers to meet with scholars in small groups and listen as they read and acquire the skills to read. The teacher takes notes and uses curriculum-created checklists as progress checks each day.

Similarly, Lucy Calkins' lessons provide specific things to look for as scholars are drafting each day. Teachers will attend to the progress that scholars make on a daily basis through the use of checklists and notes as well as direct feedback to scholars as they work.

Additionally, Empower College Prep has a Core Values rubric that the school will use to monitor the progress of scholars toward developing the Core Values at their developmental level. This rubric was designed by a team of Empower expert teachers as well as the current School Director and Executive Director to provide observable, actionable knowledge and skills that align to developing "soft skills" that scholars need to be successful in college and beyond. During Morning Meeting time, teachers will provide scholars with ongoing feedback regarding their progress toward the knowledge and skills listed in the rubric.

Supplemental Formative Assessments

Empower College Prep will also use Reading A-Z running records, as appropriate, for scholars who have developed appropriate reading skills to read full texts. Each running record is intended to be a "cold read" therefore having many texts beyond what Fountas and Pinnell provides for the summative assessments is imperative to checking scholar progress.

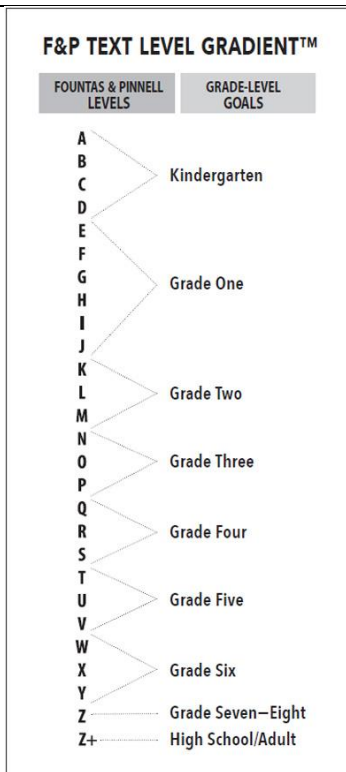
The school will also continue to use the readiness assessment which is a phonics screener in an ongoing manner to check scholars' acquisition of letter sounds and other literacy skills.

Summative Assessments

Summative assessments will be given on a quarterly basis, and will include math, reading, and writing benchmark assessments similar to those in upper elementary grades as well as a reading level assessment, rote counting in kindergarten, and math fluency (mental math) in all grades based on the standards. The latter two will be administered one-on-one.

Quarterly benchmark assessments in reading, math, and writing will be a culmination of all knowledge and skills within those particular units of study. If appropriate, Galileo will be used as the assessment tool to maintain consistency across the organization; however, Empower has researched and knows that Galileo provides a smaller item bank in K-2 so this will be part of the curriculum writing that experts do over the summer. These will be created in conjunction with the units to ensure appropriate rigor and alignment. They will be reviewed by the School Director and/or the Deans of Curriculum and Instruction prior to instruction beginning. Teachers will not have access to them during the quarter in order to maintain validity and testing security.

Also, quarterly, scholars' independent reading level will be assessed using the Fountas and Pinnell Guided Reading assessment system. This assessment will provide scholars, families, and teachers with progress data toward end of year reading level goals. We will set benchmark goals in each grade to track this progress. For example, using Fountas and Pinnell's text gradient (from fountasandpinnell.com), the Kindergarten benchmark goals will be reading level A in quarter 1, B in quarter 2, C in quarter 3, and D in quarter 4. This will mean scholars are ready for first grade reading before exiting kindergarten.



The grade-level goals on the F&P Text Level Gradient™ are intended to provide general guidelines, which should be adjusted based on school/district requirements and professional teacher judgement.

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Evaluate and Revise

Our assessments must be rigorous and aligned to the knowledge and cognitive skills that scholars must possess in order to be successful at the end of the grade. In order to ensure that this is happening, we will frequently evaluate our assessments to ensure that they are rigorous, carefully aligned to instruction, and authentic. Summative assessments will be reviewed by the School Director during the first year. For the following years, the team of curriculum experts will review the data from the assessments and make revisions to the curriculum over the summer. As they make these revisions, they will also adjust the summative assessments. They may also consider creating a variety of assessments such as performance tasks, especially for kindergarten, or authentic, cross-curricular projects. In terms of national assessments, the School Director will stay updated on

changes made to the requirements for state testing. Based on any changes to this testing, the school will revisit goals and school testing requirements.

4. What process is in place or will be in place to recruit, select, and hire quality educators?

Empower College Prep believes that the single greatest factor in a child's education can be the teacher. Since many of our scholars are lacking appropriate resources in their communities and homes, the teachers become the most important influencers in education. Since opening its first school in 2012 Empower has utilized various networks to recruit, select, and hire quality educators to join our team. Empower will continue to leverage these partnerships and connections as it expands to K-2.

In order to have a diverse and talented school, Empower College Prep will draw from a variety of areas to recruit our staff. The School Director and other administrators from the elementary school team take part in the hiring process and attend teaching and job fairs throughout geographically and racially diverse communities. Empower will attend job fairs and post its staff openings at universities that have diverse student populations such as Arizona State University, The University of Arizona, Northern Arizona University, and Grand Canyon University. Empower also partners with Teacher for America to recruit and select new corps members and to recruit and hire alumni. Lastly, Empower posts all open positions on both its organizational website and online job posting sites such as Indeed.com to open up the job candidate pool to qualified applicants around the country.

The current selection process at Empower College Prep includes multiple stakeholders and a hiring rubric that has consistently yielded high quality candidates. Involved in the

selection process are the School Director, other administrators, other lead teachers, and current Empower scholars. The selection process consists of a phone screen, a phone interview, and a cover letter to gauge a candidate's background serving and working with educationally disadvantaged populations, and their mindsets regarding educational philosophy. Following this there is an in-person interview where candidates either complete a data analysis case study or are asked to bring in their own current data to analyze and discuss. They prepare a demonstration lesson and present it in front of our scholars. The purpose of this in-person time is to gauge the effectiveness of teaching, content knowledge, data-driven decision-making skills, and fit with the organization. A rubric exists that the evaluators use to score the candidates as developing, proficient, or master in each step of the selection process. Feedback is also elicited from scholars based on their interactions with the candidate during their demonstration lesson.

Upon being hired, a teacher or staff other staff member goes through an on-boarding process that Empower College Prep's central office has established to ensure consistency of introduction to the organization and a welcoming environment. They receive all materials necessary for their role (building access, technology, access to relevant databases, etc.) and receive information about school calendars, employee benefits, and payroll. They are introduced to other staff members and begin their role in support of Empower's mission. Once they have been fully on-boarded, their formalized training as teachers begins. Hiring and training quality educators is essential to ensuring that the adopted curriculum and instructional practices are carried out with effectiveness and fidelity. To that end the formalized training includes a teacher's participation in the

Teacher Development Program's bi-weekly professional development, Professional Learning Communities, formative observations, and coach/mentor meetings.

5. What process is in place or will be in place to monitor and measure educator effectiveness?

Research for decades has consistently shown the effectiveness of educators is the most influential schooling factor related to student achievement. Therefore, Empower College Prep has developed systemic, sustainable processes to monitor and measure educator effectiveness to establish a framework that is fair, flexible, and research-based incorporating multiple measurements of achievement with clearly defined expectations.

First, the school has developed a metric called **movement points** to monitor and measure effectiveness. Each time a student moves from one level of proficiency to another, a movement point is generated. Negative progress generates negative movement points. The total number of points is divided by the total number of students in the class to generate a number that typically is between 0 and 1. Our highest quartile of teachers have typically scored .7 and higher. Movement points are tracked from end of year state assessments, from quarterly benchmark assessments, and from gradebook assessments to provide multiple data points. Those from external assessments carry the greatest weight when assessing teacher effectiveness, but the multiple data points provides increased flexibility for teachers teaching non-tested subjects and a more complete picture of the teacher's effectiveness and indicates where teachers' gradebooks are and are not indicative of student achievement on state tests, which is also monitored through bi-weekly check-ins and walk-throughs.

In addition to this quantitative data, the school also collects qualitative data on the effectiveness of its educators through semi-annual evaluations and bi-weekly walk-through's. The school has developed a framework of 28 rubric rows to assess effectiveness that was derived from the *Teaching as Leadership* used by Teach for America and corresponding book written by Steven Farr. This rubric measures teachers in the areas of Setting Goals, Investing Students, Planning Purposefully, Executing Effectively, Continuously Increasing Effectiveness, and Working Relentlessly. Within the rubric, these categories are broken down into observable actions such as, "Directs questions to a representative subset of students and can identify individual responses." Additional details in the descriptors were derived from Doug Lemov's *Teach Like a Champion*, and The National Research Councils' *How People Learn*. In addition to the resulting rubric, the school has developed a 25-page Curriculum and Instruction handbook elaborating on these teacher actions that research shows correlates with educators being effective.

The clearly defined expectation shared with teachers during in-service is for first-year teachers to obtain movement points of .2 or greater and score in the top three of four categories in each of the rubric rows by the end of their first year. By Year 3, the expectations are to obtain movement points of .4 or greater and score in the top two of four categories.

In addition to setting these expectations, School Directors cultivate a culture of collaboration, high expectations, and maintaining a growth mindset while demonstrating fairness in interactions with educators. Information from monitoring walk-throughs are shared transparently with teachers, the first evaluation in October is considered

formative, and teachers receive training and coaching every two weeks aligned to the needs of them and their students as indicated from the rubric-based walk-throughs and student achievement data. In addition to this support from instructional coaches, the School Director will also spend at least 20 minutes in each teacher's classroom every other week and will provide specific feedback for continuation of what's working and for growth of what needs to be improved.

The purpose of the second evaluation at the end of the year is to assess the current level of effectiveness of a teacher using the Teaching as Leadership rubric and movement points generated. Educators have the opportunity to promote on a career pathway based on evaluations without having to leave the classroom. All information related to the evaluations is outlined in the Teacher Development Program referenced in the HR Handbook that is communicated clearly upon hire and repeated throughout the school year.

6. What process is in place or will be in place to engage leaders and instructional staff members in reflective self-assessment and school-wide assessment to identify areas for continuous improvement that aligns with the school's mission?

According to Steven Farr's *Teaching as Leadership* that provided the foundation for our evaluation framework, "Strong teachers increase their effectiveness by reflecting on student performance data. They seek, in their own actions, the root causes of students' successes and failures. They devise and search for solutions and learning opportunities that align with their data-revealed needs." Given the essential role that reflective self-assessment and school-wide assessment plays in teachers becoming the teachers and providing the quality of instruction our students need, Empower College Prep has

developed a collaborative and ongoing processes to engage leaders and instructional staff in reflective self-assessment and school-wide assessment. Accountability efforts are informed by the results of earlier efforts through reflection and assessment that are sustained and aligned with the school's mission.

Teachers and instructional leaders review data quarterly after benchmark assessments for school-wide trends. Additionally, teachers meet with their coaches every two weeks to review formative classroom data to inform subgroups of students to remediate on specific standards. Teachers and their coaches also watch video of the teacher. The teacher is required to analyze their own teaching and reflect on improvement areas.

In preparation for their first observation in October, teachers complete a reflective guide that facilitates their self-assessment beginning with student data, progressing to student actions of subgroups of students, and then moving to their own actions with these students and underlying knowledge, skills, and mindsets that contribute to these actions. Teachers are trained on this process after the first benchmarks are completed and use this as the basis for their evaluation pre-conference and post-conference.

The result is that leaders and instructional staff members collectively commit to 2-3 areas to develop from the Teaching as Leadership rubric and monitor progress on these goals in the bi-weekly check-ins. The school also commits to a school-wide area of focus that aligns to the greatest area of need for staff and informs the bi-weekly professional development. Professional learning communities are also formed around teachers' individual areas of development that are not already being addressed through the school-wide goal.

Accountability during the end-of-year evaluation is informed by the results of the formative evaluation in October and progress observed in the bi-weekly check-ins throughout the year, which informs the area for development at the beginning of the next year for returning teachers. The end-of-year evaluations also inform the Comprehensive Needs Assessment and School Improvement Plan completed by May of each year.

In order to foster this attitude of continued learning, the staff will have access to frequent professional development opportunities and the professional learning communities. Thursdays are early release days where teachers have time to meet with other individuals in their content areas to share resources, create or refine assessments, analyze data, plan projects, or participate in outside professional development aligned to individual goals.

This cycle of self-assessment and continuous improvement is essential to our teachers, leaders, and school becoming the educators our students need, and to reach our mission of all students being prepared to succeed in college, solve real-world problems, and maximize their impact in the world.

G. Budget Form and Narrative – Total points possible: 10 points

A description of the eligible applicant's planned activities and expenditures of subgrant funds to support the activities of opening and preparing for the operation of new charter schools, or replicated high-quality charter schools, or expanding high-quality charter schools. If the applicant plans to open its school on August 1, 2019, Planning and Implementation expenditures must be identified as such in the Budget Narrative. If the applicant plans to open its school on August 1, 2020, all expenditures are Planning and need not be identified as such. *ESEA Title IV, Part C, Sec. 4303(f)(1)(C)(i)(V)*

General expenditure guidance (See AZCSP website for a more guidance on allowable expenditures): costs must be reasonable, necessary, and allocable to meet the objectives of the grant. Activities: Preparing teachers, school leaders, and specialized instructional support personnel, including through paying the costs associated with— (A) providing professional development; and (B) hiring and compensating, during the eligible applicant’s Planning period specified in the application for subgrant funds that is required under this section, one or more of the following: (i) Teachers. (ii) School leaders. (iii) Specialized instructional support personnel. (2) Acquiring supplies, training, equipment (including technology), and educational materials (including developing and acquiring instructional materials). (3) Carrying out necessary renovations to ensure that a new school building complies with applicable statutes and regulations, and minor facilities repairs (excluding construction). (4) Providing one-time, startup costs associated with providing transportation to students to and from the charter school. (5) Carrying out community engagement activities, which may include paying the cost of student and staff recruitment. (6) Providing for other appropriate, non-sustained costs related to the activities described in subsection (b)(1) when such costs cannot be met from other sources. Also, salaries are covered only during the Planning period.

Planning Expenditures

During the six-month planning period of the AZCSP grant, Empower College Prep (ECP) plans to purchase the following items:

- Planning principal: A planning principal will use the six months prior to the start of the first school year to recruit and hire teachers, plan curriculum and professional development, and oversee the recruitment of K-2 scholars. They will attend professional development in preparation for leading these new grade levels and engage the community to assess needs and recruit scholars.
- Professional development: Prior to the start of the school year teachers who will be using the Wilson’s Foundations curriculum will be trained in its program. The

planning principal will also take part in the Model Schools Conference and Staff Development for Educators “I Teach K/1/2” conference to help them be a more effective leader of these lower grade levels.

- Student, teacher, and administrator technology: ECP’s technology team has done extensive research in its history of being open on the most durable, effective computer devices for each of these positions and will purchase during the planning period in preparation for the start of school. Because we are primarily a Google-based organization, the student and teacher computers are Chromebooks, and the administrator computer is a Dell Ultrabook (with the capacity for Microsoft Office and other advanced features). The K-2 grades will also have a small number of student tablets for students to use during stations in their core content classes.
- Marketing to scholars and community: These funds will cover the costs of developing fliers and brochures, marketing events, web/social media campaigns, and other communication with families and community leaders near Empower College Prep to increase the awareness of the educational opportunities the school provides. This will also cover the costs of distributing materials informing families about the educational opportunities available to their children at Empower College Prep. Empower often spends more than this amount on annual marketing but will supplement the AZCSP funds with other sources of revenue that will exist after AZCSP funds are expended.
- Student information systems: Since recruitment of K-2 scholars will start during the planning period of the grant, the student information system, Synergy, will

need to be activated for the new grade levels. DeansList is the program used by other ECP grade levels for the National School Lunch Program point of sale, and that will be set up in conjunction with the Synergy database as scholars enroll.

- Classroom furniture: The specific furniture needed to furnish the K-2 classrooms will be purchased during the planning timeframe. The plan in the first school year is to have 6 classrooms of K-2, 3 of which are being furnished as reading classrooms (additional book displays, etc.). Included in the set-up of these classrooms are tables, bookshelves, white boards, cork boards, and Sharp interactive Aquos Boards.
- Office furniture: These funds will furnish the office of one administrator with a desk, task chair, and bookshelf so the planning principal has a space to plan and prepare for the opening of its first year in fall 2020.

Implementation Expenditures

As part of the first year of implementation, Empower College Prep will spend the remainder of project year 1 AZCSP funds on student and teacher instructional supplies that will aide in classroom instruction and student learning:

- Instructional materials for reading: Empower College Prep will purchase supplies to aide reading instruction including a language and guided reading curriculum, a set of classroom library books to enhance the reading curriculum and sets of Big Books to aide with instruction and engagement. The reading curriculum includes student materials and assessments.
- Instructional materials for math: ECP is using Eureka Math, which is a free curriculum that includes teacher guides, student outlines, and aligned assessments.

To support implementation of this ECP will purchase the Eureka Math kits for grades K-2, as well as other manipulatives to help scholars grasp number theory, learn to tell time, etc.

- Instructional materials for writing: In K-2 students are learning how to hold a pencil for the first time, write their name, and compose full sentences. Supplies will be purchased to support writing instruction and assessments for this young age group, including easels for anchor charts, *Ticonderoga My First Pencils*, and sentence strips.
- Instructional materials for specials classes: One of the specials ECP would like to build with its K-2 is a STEM lab that builds critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Materials for this include robotics kits, safety goggles, earthquake maker kits, and more. Additionally, ECP will purchase supplies for physical education and art classes that are appropriate for K-2 and help build a robust specials program for scholars to begin discovering their passions, gifts, and interests.
- Other instructional materials: ECP will use these funds to purchase other student supplies that will support their learning across all classrooms and help build habits that will be useful throughout their educational career. Items include individual whiteboards for guided learning, folders for homework organization, and supplies/books that support behavior management and internalization of the core values and their social-emotional health.
- Teacher professional development supplies: Books will be purchased for the teachers that support helping scholars become college and career ready, execute effective morning meetings, and share brain research on how scholars learn best.

There will also be books to support teachers with the writing curriculum (Lucy Calkins).

- Classroom supplies: Additional items for the classroom will be purchased to support the teacher in setting up classroom spaces that are conducive to learning. These materials include pocket charts used for creating classroom centers, bulletin boards to display scholar work and instructional posters, area rugs to increase engagement during whole group time, and bins to organize classroom books.

Financial Sustainability after grant funds

Empower College Prep plans to utilize AZCSP monies to fund the start-up costs to opening grade levels K-2. In order to ensure sustainability of the program after the start-up funds end, ECP has already prepared 5-year projections that support the ongoing expenses of running the K-2 program using its general funds and other anticipated revenue. Included in those assumptions are transportation costs for scholars as we know not having that can be prohibitive to consistent attendance and enrollment, monies for hiring and recruiting additional teaching staff and administrative support staff, marketing and recruiting monies to increase community awareness of our school, facility/janitorial costs for the K-2 classrooms, and central office support from Empower College Prep's existing central office administration. Empower can financially sustain the ongoing K-2 program and is seeking AZCSP funds to ensure a strong start to the program.

Empower College Prep also has experience managing other federal funds, such as IDEA, Title I, Title III, NSLP, E-rate, and others, to support the unique needs of the scholars it serves. ECP will strategically use these funds in future years in addition to state per pupil funding to ensure the needs of scholars living in poverty, English learners,

and special education scholars are met. ECP will use its Title II monies to support the continued professional development of its instructional staff and Title IV monies to enhance its programs that support college readiness, extra-curricular educational experiences, safe school environment, and increased use of technology by scholars.

By allocating our resources in this way Empower College Prep is confident the school will be best positioned to fulfill its mission of all scholars being prepared to succeed in college, solve real-world problems, and maximize their impact in the world.

LINE ITEMS DESCRIPTION			
Function Code	Object Code	Description	Budgeted Amount
Instruction 1000			
Salaries	6100		0.00
Employee Benefits	6200		0.00
Purchased Professional Services	6300		0.00
Purchased Property Services	6400		0.00
Other Purchased Services	6500		0.00
Supplies	6600	<u>Reading instruction supplies</u> Wilson's Foundations Classroom Sets for K-2 (6 classrooms): \$11,243.00 Fountas & Pinnell Guided Reading Collection (\$6,500 x 6 classrooms): \$39,000.00 Fountas & Pinnell Reading Mini-lessons books, 2 per grade: \$600.00 Classroom library books: \$30,000.00 Big Book sets: \$6,000.00 Reading instruction supplies (alphabet sounds teaching tubs, magnetic letters, book totes): \$2,250.00 <u>Math instruction supplies</u> Eureka Math kits (grade-level kits designed to effectively implement Eureka Math curriculum) (\$430 x 6 kits): \$2,580.00 Judy clocks (\$2.50 x 90 scholars): \$225.00 Calendar math set: \$600.00 Math manipulatives (dice, linking cubes, counters, unifix cubes): \$1,260.00 <u>Writing instruction supplies</u> Student writing materials (writing claws, <i>Ticonderoga My First Pencil</i> , sentence strips): \$1,008.00 Magnetic chart paper easel for anchor charts (\$400 * 6 classrooms): \$2,400.00 <u>Specials supplies</u> STEM lab materials (lab materials and manipulatives to support construction of critical thinking skills, such as blocks, K'NEX, KEVA structures, snap circuit kits, Arduino nano boards, etc.): \$10,000.00 Physical education supplies (gymnastics mats, circle spots, balance beam, bowling pins, hurdles and tunnels, etc.): \$3,000.00 Art supplies (easels, markers, crayons, canvases, paint, paintbrushes, construction paper, glue, etc.): \$3,000.00 <u>Student supplies</u> Student whiteboards: \$500.00 Student folders: \$478.00 Behavior management clip system set (\$9 x 6 classrooms): \$54.00	129,748.00

		Student books for core values and social-emotional learning (\$50 x 90 books): \$4,500.00 <u>Student Technology</u> Lenovo Chromebook Tablets with protective case and asset tagging (\$320 per unit x 15, plus 1 cart @ \$500): \$5,300.00 Lenovo Chromebook laptop computers with protective case and asset tagging (\$350 per unit x 15, plus 1 cart @ \$500): \$5,750.00	
Other Expenses	6800		0.00
Support Services 2100, 2200, 2600, 2700			
Salaries	6100		0.00
Employee Benefits	6200		0.00
Purchased Professional Services	6300	<u>Teacher professional development</u> Wilson's Foundations Professional Learning Workshops & Coaching: \$13,000.00 <u>Student information system/point of sale</u> Synergy: \$500.00 DeansList: \$500.00	14,000.00
Purchased Property Services	6400		0.00
Other Purchased Services	6500		0.00
Supplies	6600	<u>Teacher professional development supplies</u> Teach Like a Champion 2.0 book x15: \$345.00 Morning Meeting books x15: \$360.00 How People Learn books x15: \$600.00 Lucy Calkins Units of Study teachers' guides (\$239 x 6 sets): \$1,434.00 <u>Classroom supplies</u> Pocket charts for classroom centers: \$552.00 Bulletin boards: \$942.00 Area rugs (\$479 x 6 classrooms): \$2,874.00 Bins to organize classroom books (\$150 per set x 3 classrooms): \$450.00 <u>Classroom furniture</u> Horseshoe tables (\$400 x 6 classrooms): \$2,400.00 Bookshelves with wheels (\$600 x 6 classrooms): \$3,600.00 Book display & big book compartment (\$750 x 3 classrooms): \$2,250.00 White boards (\$500 x 2 per classroom x 6 classrooms): \$6,000.00 Cork boards (\$250 x 2 per classroom x 6 classrooms): \$3,000.00 <u>Teacher technology</u> HP Chromebook Pro with asset tagging (\$420 per unit x 6 teachers): \$2,520.00 Sharp Aquos Board (\$5,000 x 6 classrooms): \$30,000.00	57,327.00
Other Expenses	6800		0.00
Support Services - Admin 2300, 2400, 2500, 2900			
Salaries	6100	Planning period - Planning principal: \$40,000.00	40,000.00
Employee Benefits	6200		0.00

Purchased Professional Services	6300	<u>Administrator professional development</u> Model Schools Conference for 1 administrator (\$645 x 1 administrators): \$645.00 Staff Development for Educators "I Teach K/1/2" conferences (\$700 x 1 administrator): \$700.00	1,345.00
Purchased Property Services	6400		0.00
Other Purchased Services	6500	<u>Administrator professional development related travel</u> Plane tickets and hotel stay for Model Schools Conference (\$1,580 x 1 administrators): \$1,580.00 Plane tickets and hotel stay for "I Teach K/1/2" conference (\$1,000 x 1 administrator): \$1,000.00	2,580.00
Supplies	6600	<u>Marketing</u> Marketing to Scholars and Community (Scholars, Teachers, Donors): \$3,000.00 <u>Administrator technology</u> Dell Ultrabook with asset tagging (\$1,000 x 1 administrator): \$1,000.00 <u>Office furniture</u> Office furniture (desk, task chair, and bookshelf for 1 office): \$1,000 x 1 office): \$1,000.00	5,000.00
Other Expenses	6800		0.00
Operation of Non-Instructional Services 3000			
Salaries	6100		0.00
Employee Benefits	6200		0.00
Purchased Professional Services	6300		0.00
Purchased Property Services	6400		0.00
Other Purchased Services	6500		0.00
Supplies	6600		0.00
Other Expenses	6800		0.00
Capital Outlay			
Capital Assets	190		0.00

Max points possible: 100 points + 5 optional preference points