

### **CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION SUMMARY**

This application summary will be used by the CSDE for a quick analysis and administrative processing of the applications received. The information provided must be an accurate representation of the application and must correspond to the information provided in the body of the application.

Proposed Charter School Name:	<b>PROUD Academy</b>
School Location (city, town):	<b>Ansonia, CT 06401</b>
Proposed Opening (month, year):	<b>September 2026</b>
Contact Person:	<b>Patricia Nicolari</b>
Organization:	<b>PROUD Academy, Inc.</b>
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<b>TYPE OF SCHOOL</b>	
Local charter school	
State charter school	<b>X</b>

<b>FACILITY</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Do you presently have access to a facility suitable for a school?	<b>X</b>	
If yes, when will you be able to take occupancy?		Date: August 2025

<b>PROJECTED STUDENT ENROLLMENT</b>															
	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
Year 1								<b>50</b>							<b>50</b>
Year 2								<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>						<b>100</b>
Year 3								<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>					<b>150</b>
Year 4								<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>					<b>150</b>
Year 5								<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>					<b>150</b>

*Patricia Nicolari*

11/02/2024

Signature (Charter Applicant Representative)

Date

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## **Introduction**

Imagine being able to ensure, not too far into the future, that all our nation's public schools are vibrant, intellectually and socially engaging learning communities where every student, family and staff member felt as though they belonged, and could be and become their authentic selves. The founders of PROUD Academy know that realizing this vision is not only possible, but necessary. PROUD Academy will create this environment as a new state public charter middle school, primarily serving the Lower Naugatuck Valley of Connecticut. It will be the first public charter school in the region.

### **I. School Vision & Design**

#### **1. Mission and Vision Statements**

##### **a. Describe the mission of the school.**

PROUD Academy educates and empowers LGBTQ+<sup>1</sup> students and their peers to thrive as evolving learners and as their most authentic selves within a safe, affirming and student-centered learning community.

The acronym **PROUD** stands for **Proudly Respecting Our Unique Differences**.

##### **b. Define the core purpose and key values of the school, including the school model, grades and total number of students it is estimated to serve.**

PROUD Academy is designed to celebrate and affirm the identities of all students. Recognizing that students have multiple and overlapping identities, PROUD Academy seeks to serve those who are most often minoritized and experiencing stigma, in our schools and the broader society. Our focus will be students who are minoritized for their sexual and gender identities [Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ+)] and racial and ethnic communities [Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC)]. Universally, PROUD Academy aims to ensure that every learner feels seen, supported, and valued.

PROUD Academy intends to serve students in grades six through eight, eager to be small enough to foster a safe community of belonging and large enough to serve the number of interested families and offer a rich, well-rounded academic program. Enrolling 50 students at each grade level, achieving, at full capacity, a total enrollment of 150. This deliberate phase-in will allow PROUD Academy to develop an intimate, supportive environment in a thoughtful, methodical manner. Growing one grade-level annually will afford teachers the time required to build the foundational academic skills and content necessary to ensure students achieve and exceed grade-level proficiency expectations and to foster a lifelong love of learning.

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<sup>1</sup> The acronym LGBTQ+ refers to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and/or gender expansive, queer and/or questioning. The plus sign (+) indicates that there are additional identity terms. The terms used to describe gender identities and sexual orientations are constantly changing and being updated to better represent people.

**c. The mission should be consistent with high academic standards, succinct and meaningful, and reflected throughout all sections of the application.**

PROUD Academy aspires to become a model middle school that serves as a beacon for many other schools in Connecticut and beyond. PROUD Academy will increase the academic achievement of its students, most of whom, we expect, will have experienced significant challenges in their previous and/or current learning environments. To ensure this, we will recruit, prepare, and support our educators to be supportive, comprehensively addressing academic as well as social-emotional needs and celebrating the uniqueness of each student. We will embrace and involve our students' families. We will employ and maintain inclusive school policies and adapt and evolve our curricular resources and instructional strategies to center relevant and rigorous student learning. Further, it is our hope to serve as a partner, resource and prototype for our surrounding districts and schools, as they work to improve their practices to become safer and more welcoming atmospheres for all their students.

PROUD Academy educators will center academic learning. Our high academic standards are reflected throughout this application. These are evident in the curriculum we choose our flexible and rigorous instructional methods and our integrated support of students who are identified with special needs and/or as English and multilingual learners. We will provide targeted, differentiated support to students who are struggling to achieve grade level proficiency and provide expanded learning opportunities to those who are advanced. Every student will be deeply engaged in learning, exercising critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration.

**d. Present the vision of the school and its specialized focus. Indicate a specialized focus and ways in which the school will positively impact its stakeholders and community.**

The vision of PROUD Academy is to ensure its students are academically prepared and psychosocially empowered to shape a positive and accepting world.

By creating a safe, inclusive and affirming school environment for LGBTQ+ students and their peers, we will allow students to thrive as evolving learners and as their most authentic selves. PROUD Academy will be a mosaic community in which students thrive academically in the truth and strength of their identities and expressions. We believe that through rigorous and engaging academic learning and comprehensive support, our students will become the leaders we need to shape our world.

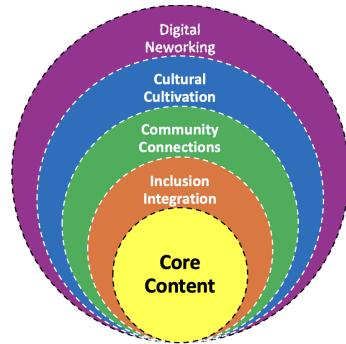
**e. The vision should align with the mission and provide an image of how the school will operate.**

Our mission and vision are closely aligned and are reflected in how the school will operate. A core example is highlighted below, with details provided in Curriculum (Section I.3).

***Cycles of Curriculum Enhancement***

To achieve the mission and realize the vision, PROUD Academy will advance teaching and learning by ensuring core content is accessible, relevant and expansive. As our teachers plan for instruction, they will routinely analyze curriculum materials through four lenses:

1. **Inclusion Integration:** How inclusive is this unit/lesson of LGBTQ+ people, history and events? How inclusive is it of other underrepresented identities, experiences and stories?
2. **Community Connections:** How can we extend learning in this unit/lesson to make it more meaningful and relevant for LGBTQ+ students? How can students pursue social justice as authentically engaged citizens in their communities?
3. **Cultural Cultivation:** How can we create “mirrors, windows and doors” in this unit/lesson for all our students’ cultures? How can we integrate diverse identities, developing pride in oneself and expanded understandings of others’ lived experiences?
4. **Digital Networking:** How can we expand access to information, exposure and experiences by leveraging digital tools and platforms? Are there additional avenues for students to pursue unique interests and connect with affinity groups?



## **2. Educational Philosophy**

The educational philosophy should address the diverse needs of the student population and should be founded on an understanding of effective, research-based educational practices and high standards for student learning. The educational philosophy should serve as the basis of the school’s pedagogical approach, curriculum, assessment, culture, and other elements that create a comprehensive educational program.

### a. Describe the founding group’s core beliefs and values about education.

PROUD Academy will be a nurturing and empowering educational environment where every student can thrive and where each of their complex and unique identities will be embraced. We believe that education should be an inclusive and holistic experience that prepares students to engage thoughtfully and compassionately in a diverse and ever-evolving world.

Our deep philosophical commitments to inclusivity, diversity, equity, and the holistic development of students underpin everything we will do. To create a culture of belonging, to ensure our community is safe and affirming, and to effectively serve the diverse needs of our students, PROUD Academy will be rooted in these four foundational **PILLARS:**

#### **PILLAR 1: Inclusivity**

- **Our culture** will embrace and affirm the identities of all students and reflect the beliefs that everyone belongs and all experiences and voices matter.
- **Our curriculum programs** were chosen because they are universally accessible, with options to modify, supplement and engage all learners.
- **Our instructional design** will be integrated and flexible.
- **Our leaders and teachers** will collaborate to create rigorous, supportive learning opportunities for every student.
- **Our families** will be welcomed in our building, involved in their children’s learning and valued contributors to the ongoing evolution of PROUD Academy.

### **PILLAR 2: Diversity**

- **Our culture** will celebrate the rich tapestry of cultures, histories, and perspectives within our school and our surrounding communities.
- **Our curriculum programs** will integrate diverse voices and experiences across all subjects, emphasizing and integrating those of minoritized and marginalized individuals and groups.
- **Our instructional design** will offer multiple pathways for students to engage in learning, including the arts, sciences, STEM, social studies and real-world community connections.
- **Our leaders and teachers** will weave windows, mirrors and doors through all content area learning.
- **Our families** will gain opportunities to develop relationships, trust and understanding across differences.

### **PILLAR 3: Equity**

- **Our culture** will be grounded in restorative practices to build a positive school environment, promote conflict resolution, and support growth. Our policies will be clearly articulated and consistently applied to instill a sense of collective fairness and safety for all.
- **Our curriculum programs** are comprehensive tools at the heart of learning, providing students with texts, tasks and topics that affirm identity and culture, build ownership and agency and encourage critical analysis of the world.
- **Our instructional design** is data-driven, guiding teachers to address trends and individual needs, reducing risks of subjectivity and bias, and maintaining rigorous academic standards.
- **Our leaders and teachers** will help students examine and understand the complex issues of social justice and human rights.
- **Our families** will be treated with dignity and honored for their collective and unique strengths.

### **PILLAR 4: Holistic Development**

- **Our culture** will foster an environment where students can develop resilience, self-awareness, and a deep sense of community.
- **Our curriculum programs** support academic as well as social emotional learning.
- **Our instructional practices** utilize an MTSS framework that assesses and tiers student academic and behavioral health functioning, guiding targeted supports, and will engage students in a daily advisory program that will prioritize social emotional development.
- **Our leaders and teachers** will closely coordinate with Counselors, special education and EL/ML teachers and the Manager of Student Supports to support the academic, social, emotional, and physical well-being of students.
- **Our families** will feel embraced as partners and engaged as leaders and learners.

#### **b. Demonstrate that the philosophy will serve the diverse needs of individual students.**

The four **PILLARS** of our educational philosophy ensure PROUD Academy will serve the diverse needs of individual students. Genuine **inclusivity** insists we know and engage every student in learning and value them as members of our school community. When students feel as though they belong, and their needs are recognized and met, they will achieve academically and thrive socially and emotionally. PROUD Academy views **diversity** as a collective superpower. Students who feel seen, accepted and celebrated are more likely to engage in learning with and from

others. Interlacing rigorous academic expectations for all students with tailored, personalized supports and enrichments for each student - informed by objective and relevant data - ensures **equity**. PROUD Academy's commitment to **holistic development** allows students to be more fully understood and supported and introduces multiple opportunities for achievement and growth.

**c. Explain how the proposed philosophy of the school will lead to student academic achievement.**

Research demonstrates that students with greater sense of belonging in school are likelier to earn higher grades and test scores and less likely to drop out irrespective of their socioeconomic statuses.<sup>2</sup> Over three decades ago, the Carnegie Corporation of New York released a report entitled "Turning Points: Preparing American Youth for the 21st Century,"<sup>3</sup> which recommended intentionally organizing schools to create greater personal connections for adolescents. Ensuring there is at least one adult "who has the time and takes the trouble to talk" with each student, creating structures for small group work to promote social relationships and fostering involvement in the local community were noted as strategies that would help students become more successful in school, and subsequently, later in life.

PROUD Academy understands how critical connections are for all students in the developmental years of middle school, and how they can become a matter of life or death for the students we aim to serve. Research findings derived from The Trevor Project's National Survey on LGBTQ Youth Mental Health data sets continues to indicate high rates of mental health and suicidality among LGBTQ+ youth, which are disproportionately even higher for Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color (BIPOC) LGBTQ+ youth, and the protective factors of adult support. In fact, LGBTQ youth who report having at least one accepting adult were 40% less likely to report a suicide attempt in the past year.<sup>4</sup>

### **3. Curriculum**

Charter schools have the freedom to choose and/or develop curriculum models that best reflect the mission and educational philosophy of the school, and that best serve the needs of the anticipated student population. Charter schools must comply with legislation and SBE approved standards and frameworks regarding curriculum, including graduation requirements. The curriculum must align with the Connecticut Core Standards (CCS) for English language arts, mathematics, Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) for science, and for all other areas of study.

**a. Explain the process utilized to identify or develop the curriculum and provide the criteria for selecting the curriculum.**

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<sup>2</sup> [Creating a Culture of Connectedness through Middle School Advisory Programs](#), by Sarah Brody Shulkind and Jack Foote, Association for Middle School Educators, previously published in Middle School Journal, September 2009 (Blum & Libbey, 2004; Jackson & Davis, 2000; Klem & Connell, 2004; Mac Iver & Epstein, 1991; McNeely & Falci, 2004; National Association of Secondary School Principals, 2006)

<sup>3</sup> [Turning Points: Preparing American Youth for the 21st Century](#), Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1989; [Changes Urged in Adolescent Education](#), by Edward R. Fiske, NYTimes, June 19, 1989

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/research-briefs/>; <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/research-briefs/fostering-the-mental-health-of-lgbtq-youth/>; <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/research-briefs/accepting-adults-reduce-suicide-attempts-among-lgbtq-youth/>

There is perhaps no more critical period in a child's development than their middle school years. According to Jay Giedd, director of child and adolescent psychiatry at the University of California, San Diego, and a leading expert in the teen brain development, a middle schooler's brain experiences rapid growth in skills, processes and complexity.<sup>5</sup> While students are learning new behaviors, they are creating neural pathways and networks that will operate throughout their lifetimes. Further research by the University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago Schools's Elaine Allensworth demonstrates the importance of student engagement and achievement in middle school for ensuring success in high school and beyond.<sup>6</sup> Attendance, habits of mind and habits of work, if established in middle school grades, will go on to serve students for the remainder of their lives. And given the effects of the prolonged COVID pandemic, students are entering middle school at least one-half school year behind, with those living in poverty entering at least one grade level below their peers.<sup>7</sup>

As the founding team of PROUD Academy reviewed various curriculum resources, our top priority was to ensure academic excellence so that students would be well-prepared for future academic and career success. Accordingly, we reviewed evidence of alignment with the rigorous Connecticut Core Standards as well as research-based evidence of effectiveness. We valued programs that provided teachers with guidance on how to deliver differentiated instruction and plan targeted interventions for students who are at risk and/or below grade level, such as small-group instruction and dedicated time with reading specialists, while remaining mindful of the need to provide more advanced students with enrichment activities, challenging coursework, and opportunities for independent projects. Specifically, any curriculum we adopt needs to be accessible for students with disabilities, providing multiple means of representation, expression, and engagement. Further, our resources must offer scaffolding strategies, visual aids, and language support to help English and multilingual learners (likely ~18%), build content knowledge and skills while they simultaneously develop language proficiency. Finally, we looked for programs that integrate diverse and relevant voices and perspectives, with a particular focus on LGBTQ+ and BIPOC contributions across all subjects.

The Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network (GLSEN) asserts that curriculum can "serve as a mirror when it reflects individuals and their experiences back to themselves" and "serve as a window when it introduces and provides the opportunity to understand the experiences and perspectives of those who possess different identities."<sup>8</sup> Although standard curriculum resources have demonstrated some progress in integrating more diverse identities and perspectives in recent years, our leaders and teachers will further advance this work individually and collectively.

PROUD Academy intends to utilize its planning year to review selected curriculum for each content area, identifying existing and exploring potential mirrors, windows and doors. The

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.naesp.org/sites/default/files/resources/2/Principal/2010/J-Fp46.pdf>; Johnson SB, Blum RW, Giedd JN. Adolescent maturity and the brain: the promise and pitfalls of neuroscience research in adolescent health policy. *J Adolesc Health*. 2009 Sep;45(3):216-21. doi: 10.1016/j.jadohealth.2009.05.016.

<sup>6</sup> <https://consortium.uchicago.edu/sites/default/files/2018-10/Middle%20Grades%20Report.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2024/01/31/us/pandemic-learning-loss-recovery.html>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.glsen.org/activity/inclusive-curriculum-guide>

founding Principal will begin this work during the planning year, joined by the Manager of Student Supports. Teachers, in turn, will learn to do this as well through interactive professional development sessions, with the goal of supporting teachers to integrate this necessary analysis to boost and “bake in” inclusionary learning experiences. GLSEN and several other organizations offer LGBTQ+ inclusive classroom resources, like prompts to encourage reflection during instructional planning, guidance around advocacy and references to integrate LGBTQ+ history.<sup>9</sup> For example, in ELA/humanities, we will emphasize diverse narratives, including LGBTQ+ figures, while in mathematics, science and technology, contributions of LGBTQ+ individuals and leaders of color will be elevated. The same will be true across the arts, highlighting influential LGBTQ+ performers, global cultures and diverse genres.

### **English Language Arts/Humanities**

PROUD has reviewed the curricula used in local schools as well as in high-performing schools across the country. We looked at Wit and Wisdom, Engage NY and McGraw Hill’s StudySync, My Perspective by Savvas, McGraw Hill’s Wonders, and Imagine Learning EL Education. Our approach is to select one main curriculum and to supplement it with complementary curricula to support additional foci as determined by the school's instructional leaders.

We selected **Wit and Wisdom** (W&W)<sup>10</sup> as our core ELA curriculum since it addressed most of our needs and addressed our key design elements for student engagement, namely, integration of science and social studies across the curriculum and differentiation. W&W also includes special education support and texts that are relevant to our projected student population. Research has shown that incorporating diverse texts and inclusive narratives in humanities curricula can improve engagement and academic outcomes for all students, particularly those from marginalized communities.<sup>11</sup> PROUD Academy will utilize **Imagine Learning EL Education**,<sup>12</sup> as a supplemental curriculum resource.

### **Mathematics**

Our review of math curricula focused on programs that would prepare our students for rigorous math in high school. We examined Core Curriculum’s Mid School Math, Envision by Savass, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt’s Into Math, Eureka Math and Illustrative Math. Our approach is to select one main curriculum and supplement it with complementary curricula to support additional foci as determined by the school's instructional leaders.

Our selection for the core math curriculum is **Illustrative Math (IM)**.<sup>13</sup> This curriculum will support student centered learning and innovative teaching practices, while focusing on rigor and mathematical practices in addition to practicing mathematical language. IM is a problem-based curriculum that supports teachers’ shifting from direct instruction to helping students work

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.glsen.org/activity/inclusive-curriculum-guide>; <https://www.glsen.org/lgbtq-history>.

<sup>10</sup> <https://greatminds.org/english/witwisdom>

<sup>11</sup> Sleeter, C. E. (2011). "The Academic and Social Value of Ethnic Studies: A Research Review." Demonstrates that inclusive curricula can significantly enhance student engagement and achievement; Bishop, R. S. (1990). "Mirrors, Windows, and Sliding Glass Doors." Perspectives on increasing diversity in literature to engage students and promote literacy.

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.imaginelearning.com/products/ela/el-education/>

<sup>13</sup> <https://illustrativemathematics.org/math-curriculum/6-8-math/>; <https://www.imaginelearning.com/pdf-viewer/?file=https://www.imaginelearning.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/MAT-Grades-39-National-Quantile-Report-2022-2023.pdf#zoom=auto&pagemode=none>

independently and use mathematical discourse as they work to solve real world problems.<sup>14</sup>

We have selected **enVision Mathematics Common Core**,<sup>15</sup> published by Savvas Learning Company, as our supplementary curriculum. EnVision Common Core is also student centered and organized around projects that connect mathematical thinking to real scenarios. It includes assessment tools like MathXL which supports practice and enrichment and will tailor assignments and content to students' learning levels and interests. The planning materials allow teachers to edit content presentations and is rated highly for teacher usability. Teachers will be able to use the data provided in Math XL to differentiate instruction and to make decisions about intervention strategies through the schools RtI system.

### **Science**

Science consists of a way of thinking and investigating, as well as a growing body of knowledge about the natural world. To be literate in science, students need to possess sufficient understanding of fundamental science content knowledge, the ability to engage in the science and engineering practices, and to use scientific and technological information correctly. Science content will be explored and learned in standard science classes, in weekly science labs and integrated into humanities, mathematics and STEM instructional time.

**Amplify Science**, grades 6-8, will be our foundational science curriculum. Amplify Science is problem based and presents core ideas through units that cover physical science, life science, engineering, technology in addition to earth and space science. This curriculum aligns to our student-centered approach, innovative teaching and differentiation features. Its inclusion of writing assignments (with sentence starters) supports our vision for student centered learning and the science seminars will dovetail with our other discourse tools to deepen learning and increase student engagement. We intend to supplement the Amplify Science curriculum with the **FOSS Next Generation Curriculum**<sup>16</sup> for grades 6-8.

### **STEM Academic Enrichment**

A focus on 21st century skills through STEM ensures that students are poised to compete in a complex and interdependent global economy. STEM academic enrichment provides an inquiry- and project-based complement to core math and science courses. Students will be exploring STEM and design thinking through bi-weekly dedicated blocks. At the culmination of each quarter, students will prepare and present a STEM focused group project.

### **Social Studies**

PROUD Academy will use the social studies curriculum **History Alive Ancient World and The United States**<sup>17</sup> from Teachers' Curriculum Institute (TCI) as a foundational resource. TCI is written by classroom teachers and curriculum specialists who understand the complexities of the middle school classroom and the importance of supporting learners with diverse learning needs. It is currently used in all 50 states and currently serves 2.6 million students. TCI blends print and digital materials and centers each lesson in hand-on activities or blended learning

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<sup>14</sup> [https://www.nctm.org/uploadedFiles/Standards\\_and\\_Positions/PtAExecutiveSummary.pdf](https://www.nctm.org/uploadedFiles/Standards_and_Positions/PtAExecutiveSummary.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.edreports.org/reports/overview/envision-mathematics-common-core-2020-2021/grades-6-8>

<sup>16</sup> <https://fossnextgeneration.com/>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.teachtci.com/social-studies/middle-school/>

activities. The curriculum includes video activities, which include archeological tours, dramatization of historical thinkers and actors over the course of history and inquiry projects with primary source documents and diverse perspectives.

The school will supplement the History Alive curriculum with the **History UnErased Intersections and Connections Curriculum (HUIC)**,<sup>18</sup> in an approach that is less of a simple “add-on” and more strategically integrated, as teachers become familiar with its resources and make connections to or address gaps within the History Alive units. History UnErased is the nation's premier provider of K-12 LGBTQ-inclusive and intersectional US history curriculum to enrich and expand mainstream courses and improve the history, civics, and social studies education all students receive. HUIC is anchored in primary sources curated from digital and print collections from libraries and archives across the nation, as well as the Library of Congress, National Archives, National Park Service, Smithsonian Institution, and more. The expertise of historians, archivists, classroom teachers, and education policy leaders is woven into every aspect of the curriculum and the organization’s work with K-12 schools.

A better-informed citizenry is essential to advance the ideals of American democracy. Young people are surrounded by LGBTQ topics everywhere in their lives - in the media, pop culture, and current legislation. HUIC broadens the mainstream curriculum, from colonial America to the 21st Century, to ensure students learn and understand the historical path and progression of these topics as part of their history, civics, and social studies education.

The HUIC curriculum is LGBTQ-inclusive through an intersectional, contextualized approach to history, civics, and social studies education. Students can engage with relatable content as they approach their learning, whether it be race, gender, ethnicity, and/or nationality. This ensures dignity and equitable representation for all students in the story of "We the People." With some growing indications that LGBTQ+ students have been prevented from writing, talking about or doing projects that relate to LGBTQ+ issues in schools,<sup>19</sup> we believe that the integration of these resources will have a trickle-down effect across other content areas.

**History UnErased** offers original, high-quality digital content with 80+ content connections:

- Academically rigorous thematic units and case studies
- Teacher's guides and interactive student guides
- Digital flipbooks and stand-alone, printer-friendly pullouts
- Videos and podcasts (samples below)
- Interactive games, posters, and more!
- Much of the curriculum is also available in Spanish.

We will also leverage the curriculum materials developed by **Self-Evident Education**,<sup>20</sup> a digital humanities resource and community of educators of American history. To support our teachers in authentically engaging our students on the histories of race and resistance in America

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<sup>18</sup> <https://unerased.org/resource/curriculum>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.glsen.org/research/2021-national-school-climate-survey>: 16.6% of LGBTQ+ students reported that they were prevented from writing or talking about LGBTQ+ issues in extracurricular activities, 15.6% from writing about or doing school projects about LGBTQ+ issues.

<sup>20</sup> <https://selfevidenteducation.com/>

Self-Evident Education offers multimedia, educational tools that educators, students, and communities can use to critically engage in conversations to understand the histories and the legacies of systemic racism in the United States. By honestly and rigorously studying the history of race in America, students will more fully understand who we are as a country, and how to build a more just society.

### **Spanish Language**

The school will also offer all students the opportunity to learn and build proficiency in Spanish. PROUD Academy is distinctly aware of the rapidly growing Latino/a communities within many of the Naugatuck Valley towns and understands that featuring a Spanish language program will contribute to a sense of belonging and help to forge connections with and between students and families.

PROUD Academy will invest in the **Somos Curriculum**<sup>21</sup> a comprehensive, proficiency-oriented curriculum for novice and intermediate learners of Spanish. It is used in over 100,000 classrooms and districts worldwide by 6-12 grade students. With detailed, daily lesson plans and step-by-step instructions, the Somos curriculum is a pathway to learning about teaching for acquisition. Teachers will find everything that they need to lead class with a communicative approach and in alignment with ACTFL's World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages. The Somos Curriculum teaches language and culture simultaneously, allowing Spanish students the opportunity to develop cultural understanding at a depth rarely achieved in beginning language courses. Learning will be further enhanced by exploring LGBTQ+ history and contributions within various Spanish-speaking cultures.

### **Health and Physical Education**

PROUD Academy will be guided by the **Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) 2021 Healthy and Balanced Living Curriculum Framework for Health Education and Physical Education.**<sup>22</sup> This infuses the core content of the eight National Health Education Standards (alcohol, nicotine and other drugs, healthy relationships, violence prevention, healthy eating and physical activity, sexual health, optimal wellness and disease prevention, sexual assault and abuse prevention, mental and emotional health, safety and injury prevention) into seven skill-based standards. Developmentally appropriate subtopics for the middle grades (6-8) are presented for each core content area.<sup>23</sup>

The **CSDE 2021 Physical Education Curriculum Framework** provides districts with a foundation for implementing standards-based, age- appropriate instruction for each student. It reflects the 5 National Standards for Physical Education adopted by SHAPE America (the Society of Health and Physical Educators) in 2014.

- Standard 1: The physically literate individual demonstrates competency in a variety of motor skills and movement patterns.
- Standard 2: The physically literate individual applies knowledge of concepts, principles, strategies and tactics related to movement and performance.

<sup>21</sup> <https://comprehensibleclassroom.com/somos>; [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1KbdXUz3f\\_rFYoE-i5JQ0-b3YhZR9uMippLw\\_t00UoYQ/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1KbdXUz3f_rFYoE-i5JQ0-b3YhZR9uMippLw_t00UoYQ/edit)

<sup>22</sup> [https://www.casciac.org/pdfs/2021\\_CT\\_Healthy\\_and\\_Balanced\\_Living\\_Curriculum\\_Framework.pdf](https://www.casciac.org/pdfs/2021_CT_Healthy_and_Balanced_Living_Curriculum_Framework.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> [https://www.casciac.org/pdfs/2021\\_CT\\_Healthy\\_and\\_Balanced\\_Living\\_Curriculum\\_Framework.pdf](https://www.casciac.org/pdfs/2021_CT_Healthy_and_Balanced_Living_Curriculum_Framework.pdf) p.12-23

- Standard 3: The physically literate individual demonstrates the knowledge and skills to achieve and maintain a health-enhancing level of physical activity and fitness.
- Standard 4: The physically literate individual exhibits responsible personal and social behavior that respects self and others.
- Standard 5: The physically literate individual recognizes the value of physical activity for health, enjoyment, challenge, self-expression, and/or social interaction.

By the end of grade 8, the Framework's outcomes grades 6, 7, and 8<sup>24</sup> are designed to prepare students to be competent by the end of grade 8 with the following:

- Demonstrating fundamental movement skills
- Applying tactics and strategies to modified game play.
- Designing and implementing a health-enhancing fitness program
- Participating in self-selected physical activity
- Accepting individual differences and demonstrate inclusive behaviors.
- Cooperating with and encourage classmates.
- Engaging in physical activity for enjoyment and self-expression

Further, to address the National Health Education Standards, PROUD Academy will identify high-quality instructional resources that will be incorporated into formal health education and learning within advisory groups (see description of advisory program in student discipline section).

- Standard 1: Alcohol, Nicotine and Other Drugs (ANOD), Healthy Relationships (HR), Violence Prevention (VP), Healthy Eating and Physical Activity (HEPA), Sexual Health (SH), Optimal Wellness and Disease Prevention (OWDP), Sexual Assault and Abuse Prevention (SAAP), Mental and Emotional Health (MEH), Safety and Injury Prevention (SIP)
- Standard 2 Analyzing Influences
- Standard 3 Accessing Information
- Standard 4 Interpersonal Communication
- Standard 5 Decision Making
- Standard 6 Goal Setting
- Standard 7 Self-Management
- Standard 8 Advocacy

For example, PROUD Academy is exploring the **Get Real** curriculum,<sup>25</sup> which is designed to guide comprehensive sex education for middle and high schools. Resources include 27 sequential lessons taught across the middle school years—9 lessons each in Grades 6, 7 and 8, as well as family activities. Get Real offers factual, medically accurate, age-appropriate information, communicates about the benefits of abstinence, teaches effective communication and negotiation skills to strengthen sexual health decision-making throughout life and provides accurate information about safe and effective protection methods that prevent STIs and pregnancy. PROUD Academy will also leverage other developmentally appropriate programs,

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<sup>24</sup> [https://www.casciac.org/pdfs/2021\\_CT\\_Healthy\\_and\\_Balanced\\_Living\\_Curriculum\\_Framework.pdf](https://www.casciac.org/pdfs/2021_CT_Healthy_and_Balanced_Living_Curriculum_Framework.pdf) p.73-89

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.getrealeducation.org/>

such as Rights, Respect, Responsibility: A K-12 Sexuality Education Curriculum,<sup>26</sup> an LGBTQ-inclusive sexual health curriculum created by Advocates for Youth,<sup>27</sup> and additional resources recommended by GLSEN.<sup>28</sup>

### **The Arts**

Engagement in the arts significantly contributes to students' cognitive, emotional, and social growth.<sup>29</sup> Teachers of the arts at PROUD Academy will be overarchingly guided by the eleven anchor standards of National Arts Standards,<sup>30</sup> which are organized within creating, performing/ presenting/producing, responding and connecting, and were adopted by Connecticut in 2016. Helpful resources, such as the **2017 Guide to K-12 Program Development in the Arts, Model District Curriculum Documents** and webinars on the ct.gov website<sup>31</sup> will launch the creative vision for artistic learning and expression through visual arts, music and drama.

b. Use appropriate legislation to demonstrate that the curriculum is aligned to the CCS for English language arts and mathematics, and the NGSS for science.

### **English Language Arts/Humanities**

Wit and Wisdom's correlations to Connecticut's Core Standards are provided for each grade level (**Appendix A1**).<sup>32</sup> Shelton, CT, one of the Naugatuck Valley districts, recently recognized by the state a School of Distinction for its success in improving student growth and academic performance, cited W&W as a key ingredient to their progress, particularly with students identified with disabilities.<sup>33</sup>

### **Mathematics**

**Illustrative Math (IM)** is fully aligned to the Common Core State Standards and provides the proper focus, rigor, and coherence required to achieve grade-level mathematics. Its design is also aligned to the Principle to Actions: Ensuring Mathematical Success for All<sup>34</sup> NCTM 2014) as well as to the Five Practices for Orchestrating Productive Mathematical discussions (Smith & Stein 2011) and Intentional Talk: How to Structure and Lead Productive Mathematical Discussions (Kazemi & Hinz, 2014). GoOpenCT.org offers curriculum guidance documents, including scope and sequence at each grade level to implement the state model curriculum<sup>35</sup> and evidence of common-core alignment is included in **Appendix A2**.

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<sup>26</sup> <https://www.3rs.org/>

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.advocatesforyouth.org/>

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.glsen.org/sexed>

<sup>29</sup> Winner, E., et al. (2013). "The benefits of arts education: Academic, social, and emotional outcomes." *Journal of Educational Psychology*.

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.nationalartsstandards.org/>

<sup>31</sup> <https://portal.ct.gov/sde/arts/connecticut-arts-and-standards/documents>

<sup>32</sup> Curiosity, Inquiry, Knowledge Connecticut Core Standards Correlation to Wit & Wisdom for [Grade 6](#), [Grade 7](#), and [Grade 8](#) (January 2024)

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.ctpost.com/news/article/four-shelton-schools-earn-distinctive-honor-17807827.php?src=rdctplocal>;

<https://exceptionalchildren.org/blog/how-focus-high-quality-curriculum-boosted-inclusion-our-schools>

<sup>34</sup> NCTM, 2014, Principles to Actions: Ensuring Mathematical Success for All; <https://www.nctm.org/PtA/>

<sup>35</sup> CT Mathematics Model Curriculum Alignment Resource, Imagine Learning Illustrative Mathematics [Grade 6](#), [Grade 7](#), [Grade 8](#)

## **Science**

**Amplify Science** includes science and engineering practices that are aligned to Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS),<sup>36</sup> which have been adopted by Connecticut. What makes this curriculum especially appropriate is its focus on cross cutting concepts, to support our commitment to integrating the sciences into our instructional program.

## **Social Studies**

PROUD Academy will align the teaching of social studies to the October 4, 2023, draft of the CT Social Studies Standards.<sup>37</sup> The state's standards are centered around six content themes: justice, representation, inclusivity, agency, global content and local connections, and maintain critical components of the C3 Framework<sup>38</sup> that were embedded in the 2015 Connecticut Elementary and Secondary Social Studies Frameworks. This includes:

- Grade 6, World Regional Studies. Students study the culture and geography of world regions. Students investigate human-environment interactions including issues of climate, population density, access to natural resources, and land use using disciplinary tools and resources that support planning and developing inquiries, evaluating historical sources, and communication of knowledge and ideas about world geography.
- Grade 7, World Regional Studies II. Students study how government and economic systems shape societies within world regions. Students explore cultural diffusion and migration, governance, and the economics of global markets. Students investigate how ideas spread, economic decision making, globalization and human rights using disciplinary tools and resources that support planning and developing inquiries, evaluating historical sources, and communication of knowledge and ideas about world geography.
- Grade 8, United States History II Colonial America - Reconstruction. Students study United States history from Colonial America until Reconstruction. Students investigate conflict and compromise in a growing nation, the emergence of American identity, and the struggle for freedom, equality, and justice over time using disciplinary tools and resources that support planning and developing inquiries, evaluating historical sources, and communication of knowledge and ideas about the nation's history.

c. Provide evidence demonstrating that the curriculum is likely to improve students' academic performance. Provide research on the curriculum, including citations, that demonstrates the potential of the curriculum to result in high student achievement. Provide examples of curricula documentation (i.e., curriculum map, scope and sequence, and lesson plan for course of study).

## **English Language Arts/Humanities**

According to EdReports,<sup>39</sup> Wit and Wisdom is highly rated (36 out of 36) for text complexity and alignment to grade level standards, highly rated (36 out of 36) for building knowledge with texts, vocabulary and tasks and highly rated (34 out of 34) for use, design, teacher planning, assessment, differentiation, and technology.

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<sup>36</sup> <https://amplify.com/ngss/>

<sup>37</sup> [https://ctsocialstudies.org/images/downloads/Connecticut\\_Elementary\\_and\\_Secondary\\_Social\\_Studies\\_Frameworks/ct\\_socia\\_l\\_studies\\_standards\\_approved10.4.2023.pdf](https://ctsocialstudies.org/images/downloads/Connecticut_Elementary_and_Secondary_Social_Studies_Frameworks/ct_socia_l_studies_standards_approved10.4.2023.pdf)

<sup>38</sup> National council for the social studies, <https://www.socialstudies.org/standards/c3>

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.edreports.org/reports/overview/wit-wisdom-2016-3-8/grades-6-8>

EL's ELA curriculum rates highly on EdReports for alignment to their standards, and usability. According to EdReports, the curricula selected is highly rated (35/36) for text complexity and alignment to grade level standards, highly rated (30/32) for building knowledge with texts, vocabulary and tasks and highly rated (23/25) for use, design, teacher planning, assessment, differentiation and technology.

EL's ELA curriculum boasts two times the gains compared to students who used other curriculum on the Texas administered STARR reading assessment in 2018 compared to 2017.<sup>40</sup> Further, EL/ML students who were taught with this curriculum in 9 elementary schools in Georgia outperform their peers on the WIDA Access exam by 38%.<sup>41</sup> Closer to home, in Farmington, CT, a district north of the Naugatuck Valley that has adopted EL, 77% of the town's middle school students demonstrate proficiency.

### **Mathematics**

According to EdReports,<sup>42</sup> the IM curriculum received top scores across its three areas of ratings - 14 out of 14 on focus and coherence, 18 out of 18 on rigor and mathematical practices and 38 out of 38 for use, design, teacher planning, assessment, differentiation and technology.

EdReports rates enVision Mathematics Common Core, our supplementary curriculum, at the highest level (14 out of 14) for focus and coherence and 38 out of 38 for usability which includes teacher planning, assessment, differentiation and technology. It is also rated 17 out of 18 points for rigor and mathematical practice. According to Savvas Learning Company, enVision Mathematics demonstrated effectiveness through its ESSA level 2 study of its newly released curriculum. The proficiency rates for students using enVision Mathematics were 4.34 percentage points higher than students who did not utilize the curriculum. The samples used in the study encompassed a wide range of students. Pacing documents aligned to CT standards are also available at each grade level.<sup>43</sup>

### **Science**

EdReports rates this curriculum as follows: 25 out of 26 points for its alignment with NGSS, 49 out of 56 for its coherence and scope, and 50 out of 54 for usability. It was rated 12 out of 12 for its facilitated teacher learning and assessment and 13 out of 14 for its design.<sup>44</sup> According to a study conducted by WestED in 2022, students who used this curriculum scored 14 percentile points above those students using different instructional materials. These results were similar across racial and gender groups and with varying levels of math and literacy proficiency.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>40</sup><https://www.imaginelearning.com/pdf-viewer/?file=https://www.imaginelearning.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/LNL-STAAR-Growth-Research-Paper.pdf#zoom=auto&pagemode=none>

<sup>41</sup>[https://www.imaginelearning.com/pdf-viewer/?file=https://www.imaginelearning.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/LL-Georgia-Case-Report\\_0.pdf#zoom=auto&pagemode=none](https://www.imaginelearning.com/pdf-viewer/?file=https://www.imaginelearning.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/LL-Georgia-Case-Report_0.pdf#zoom=auto&pagemode=none)

<sup>42</sup><https://www.edreports.org/reports/overview/learnzillion-illustrative-mathematics-6-8-math-2019>

<sup>43</sup> Envision Mathematics CT Model for Curricula Alignment, [Grade 6](#), [Grade 7](#), [Grade 8](#)

<sup>44</sup><https://www.edreports.org/reports/overview/amplify-science-2018/grades-6-8>

<sup>45</sup><https://amplify.com/news/independent-study-finds-that-amplify-science-has-significant-positive-impact-on-student-learning/#:~:text=The%20estimated%20impact%20was%20statistically,peers%20who%20used%20other%20materials.>

## **Spanish**

PROUD Academy taps into the research that highlights the benefits of students learning more than one language. Research has found that students gain:

- Intellectual: Uninterrupted intellectual development requires that students not yet fluent in English continue to use their native language to learn as they acquire English. Knowing more than one language increases a person's ability to think.
- Educational: Students who continue to develop their native language while learning English tend to learn English better than students who learn English at the expense of their own language.
- Personal: A student's native language is critical to identity, and helps the child value his or her culture, bolstering a positive self-concept.
- Social: Family and community links, both locally and globally, are preserved and enhanced when a student retains his or her native language, contributing to more global perspectives.
- Economic: Knowing two or more languages translates into economic preparedness in today's job market.

d. Explain why the curriculum is appropriate for the students the school intends to serve as well as students with disabilities, English Learners/Multilingual Learners (EL/ML), students below or above grade level, and other at-risk students.

## **English Language Arts/Humanities**

**Wit & Wisdom** texts are rigorous and include multimedia options in addition to printed materials. Instructional tasks are designed to incorporate reading and writing and speaking and listening skills. Students build knowledge and vocabulary when they are introduced to new texts and asked about their previous skills and knowledge. Socratic seminars will help students with their speaking and listening skills as they respond to text-based questions and thought-provoking prompts. The skill practice and vocabulary focus were important to us, given the need to ensure that students will address their learning gaps through time spent on foundational skills.

All lessons in W&W embed support for students who receive special education services within their lessons and provides additional guidance for students who are struggling with the material. These supports can easily be aligned to the PROUD Academy MTSS RtI structure and helps teachers and leaders to monitor student progress. In addition, the teacher's edition includes suggestions for small group instruction that target specific instructional goals so that students can get more support in deep mastery of important literacy goals. W&W also includes fluency passages for additional targeted instruction for students who are not yet reading at grade level. There is an aligned EL/ML curriculum to support English language development, aimed at improving reading, writing, speaking and listening skills.<sup>46</sup>

EL's ELA curriculum includes a supplemental suite of personalized activities that will accelerate literacy skills and English language development, ensuring that all our 6th graders will quickly be brought up to grade level so that the remainder of their middle school years can be spent in

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<sup>46</sup> <https://greatminds.org/english/blog/witwisdom/addressing-students-needs-access-and-equity-for-students-with-learning-disabilities>

appropriately rigorous materials in preparation for high school. In addition to its personalized pathways, EL's ELA program provides entry points for all levels in each unit in addition to a skills prioritizer that identifies the high leverage skills per learning standard to ensure this direct instructional focus. Lastly EL's ELA curriculum includes a library of exemplary texts to deepen comprehension and conversational skills.

As literacy is foundational for learning across all content areas and our students, we will also invest in supplementary resources that offer direct exposure to and practice of skills for students who are behind or who may have reading challenges like dyslexia. The list below is not exhaustive but represents well-regarded methods and materials.

- **Orton-Gillingham Approach:** An evidence-based, multisensory reading instruction method particularly effective for students with dyslexia.
- **Lexia Learning:** A technology-based reading program that provides personalized learning paths and tracks student progress.
- **Reading A-Z:** Offers a wide range of leveled reading materials and resources for differentiated instruction.
- **Read180:** Evidence-based literacy intervention materials designed to integrate effectively with NWEA MAP assessments.

## **Mathematics**

The **Illustrative Math** program supports special education students through its structured sequence, deepening students' understanding of concepts through gradually increased complexity within the concept in addition to application to real world situations. Real-world applications and equity-focused mathematics education can help students see the relevance of math in their lives and improve their problem-solving skills (Boaler, 2016).<sup>47</sup> The curriculum features individual, pair and small group activities which supports students working at their own pace and through social interaction. Requiring students to discuss their work in addition to writing assignments allows special education teachers to have real time data to gauge their students' level of understanding and to delve deeper in small groups or one on one sessions. IM supports language development in several ways that support EL/ML students as well as students who receive special education services. Each unit and lesson articulate language goals to be targeted and contain language usage routines to support conceptual understanding for students who may not be functioning on grade level. The program also requires students to discuss and describe their learning in addition to written assignments. This provides teachers the opportunity to teach language in addition to math. There are also curricular materials for parents/caregivers that are translated into Spanish.

The **enVision Common Core**'s assessment suite includes diagnostic, formative and summative assessment which will help teachers differentiate instruction, especially for students receiving special education services as well as English language learners. It includes language development modules to support students in developing academic vocabulary and provides opportunities for practice. Through its assessment system, teachers will also be able to help identify learning targets and student learning gaps which will support PROUD Academy's MTSS to assist struggling

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<sup>47</sup> Boaler, J. (2016). "Mathematical Mindsets: Unleashing Students' Potential through Creative Math, Inspiring Messages and Innovative Teaching." Demonstrates the importance of mindset and creative problem-solving in mathematics education.

students. The curriculum also includes pathways for acceleration to respond to the needs of students who are at or above grade level.

**Math 180**, evidence-based math intervention materials designed to integrate effectively with NWEA MAP assessments and other supplementary resources will be leveraged with the students that need additional or alternative means of support.

### **Science**

**Amplify Science** supports students who receive special education services by providing accommodations and modifications as well as opportunities for students to share their thinking and apply their understanding in a variety of ways. The materials provide opportunities and strategies for small group instruction and scaffolding instruction for students reading below grade level. The curriculum provides a variety of differentiation strategies, including writing support for EL/MLs, multilingual glossaries and an audio option for key texts.

**FOSS** is well known for its hands-on approach and its support for differentiation for students who receive special education services, EL/ML students and accelerated learners. While not receiving high marks in EdReports, we believe that using Amplify as our main curriculum, while incorporating FOSS experiences during our lab periods, will ensure that our science curriculum is robust and rigorous, engaging all students in addition to being student centered. Inquiry-based and hands-on learning approaches in science education are linked to improved student understanding and retention of scientific concepts.<sup>48</sup>

### **Social Studies**

The **History Alive Ancient World and The United States** curriculum includes support for reading and vocabulary building and embeds checks of understanding in its units. There are differentiated lessons to support EL/MLs, and students who are receiving special education services or who may be below grade level in reading and writing. There are also differentiated instructional materials for accelerated learners.

**e. Describe a plan that will facilitate ongoing development, improvement, and refinement of the curriculum.**

PROUD Academy will ensure that its curriculum remains dynamic, responsive, and effective in promoting high student achievement and meeting the diverse needs of its student population by routinely interrogating materials. We believe this not only benefits our students but critically engages our teachers in content and instruction as professional learners and designers.

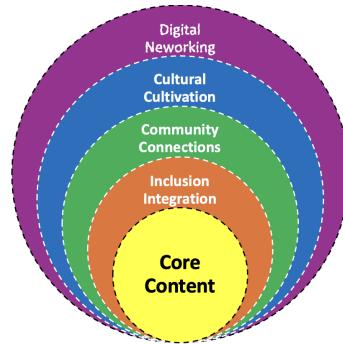
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<sup>48</sup> National Research Council, 2000; NGSS Lead States, 2013

### ***Cycles of Curriculum Analysis and Enhancement***

To achieve the mission and realize the vision, PROUD Academy will advance teaching and learning by ensuring core content is accessible, relevant and expansive. As our teachers plan for instruction, they will routinely analyze curriculum materials through four lenses:

- 1. Inclusion Integration:** *How inclusive is this unit/lesson of LGBTQ+ people, history and events? How inclusive is it of other underrepresented identities, experiences and stories?* LGBTQ+ students whose schools had inclusive curricula reported feeling safer and more accepted in their community (GLSEN, 2019). Similar patterns have been found for Black LGBTQ+ youth (GLSEN, 2020); further, Black LGBTQ+ youth who attend schools with LGBTQ+ inclusive curriculum also felt their race or ethnicity was more supported at school (GLSEN, 2020).



- 2. Community Connections:** *How can we extend learning in this unit/lesson to make it more meaningful and relevant for LGBTQ+ students? How can students pursue social justice as authentically engaged citizens in their communities?* Students are active investigators, applying the research tools, techniques of inquiry, and standards of presentation used by professionals in the community. Community Connections have a clear purpose that furthers the work of an expedition (e.g., collect data, conduct interviews, do observations). Students travel to places that are integral to what they are studying and return to the classroom with a charge to use new data and information to deepen understanding.

In addition to having students conduct research outside the school, teachers bring experts from the community into the classroom who collaborate with students on projects, teach them skills from their field, and critique their work using professional standards. These extension experiences will bring learning to life by enriching and extending science, STEM and social studies content and exploring overlapping issues across these areas. Community Connections will also bridge social studies and history content to the communities in which our students and families live. As students learn about history and discover the societal and political repercussions of the events that shape it, they can use their critical thinking skills to examine things from a historical perspective, but also to think about how those events might apply to our current world and communities. For example, when setting the context for the study of Reconstruction, a teacher may assign “Unforgotten: Connecticut's Hidden History of Slavery,” a CT Public Radio series.<sup>49</sup>

- 3. Cultural Cultivation:** *How can we create “mirrors, windows and doors” in this unit/lesson for all our students’ cultures? How can we integrate diverse identities, developing pride in oneself and expanded understandings of others’ lived experiences?* Mirrors reflect students and their experiences back to themselves. Windows introduce and provide opportunities to understand the experiences and perspectives of those who possess different identities. Doors, notes Rudine Sims Bishop, allow learners to “walk through in

<sup>49</sup> <https://www.ctpublic.org/connecticuts-hidden-history-of-slavery>

imagination to become part of whatever world has been created" (1990). Applied to LGBTQ-inclusive curricular content, these opportunities offer a more positive environment and healthy self-concept for LGBTQ students while also raising the awareness of all students. Inclusive curriculum supports students' abilities to empathize, connect, and collaborate with a diverse group of peers, skills that are of increasing importance in our multicultural, global society.<sup>50</sup>

4. **Digital Networking: *How can we expand access to information, exposure and experiences by leveraging digital tools and platforms? Are there additional avenues for students to pursue unique interests and connect with affinity groups?*** The rapidly growing landscape of artificial intelligence, inclusive of digital and social media, opens multiple new student-centered pathways of learning. New tools can greatly expand access to information, expression and experiences and affirming relationships within affinity networks for students with diverse interests, backgrounds and experiences.<sup>51</sup>

The Commission adopted the ISTE Standards<sup>52</sup> at its December 2016 meeting, with full State Board of Education adoption in June 2018. These national standards indicate that each student should become an empowered learner, digital citizen and knowledge constructor, as well as an innovative designer, computational thinker, creative communicator and global collaborator. Greatly advanced beyond earlier computer courses, technology in all its forms is now integrated across all content areas and integrated into students' day to day life experiences. PROUD Academy founders understand that to most effectively support student digital learning, leaders and teachers must develop the competencies they need for effective teaching and professional growth in the digital age. ISTE describes educators as learners, leaders, citizens, collaborators, designers, facilitators and analysts<sup>53</sup> and leaders as equity and citizenship advocates, visionary planners, empowering leaders, system designers and connected learners.<sup>54</sup>

This work will be initiated by the Principal during the planning year, with contributions from the Manager of Student Supports. During summer institute, the Principal will engage teachers in this process, then gradually release it to teachers during scheduled PD sessions and grade and content team meetings. The Principal and other leaders, as they are hired in years 2 and 3, will provide differentiated support and coaching to individual teachers and teacher teams as needed.

Leaders, evolving into a team of leaders and teachers over time, will engage in the following actions:

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<sup>50</sup> Sims Bishop, Rudine. (1990). Mirrors, Windows and Sliding Glass Doors, in Perspectives: Choosing and Using Books for the Classroom. 6(3); <https://scenicregional.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Mirrors-Windows-and-Sliding-Glass-Doors.pdf>

<sup>51</sup> Ito, Mizuko, Richard Arum, Dalton Conley, Kris Gutiérrez, Ben Kirshner, Sonia Livingstone, Vera Michalchik, William Penuel, Kylie Peppler, Nichole Pinkard, Jean Rhodes, Katie Salen Tekinbaş, Juliet Schor, Julian Sefton-Green, and S. Craig Watkins. 2020. *The Connected Learning Research Network: Reflections on a Decade of Engaged Scholarship*. Irvine, CA: Connected Learning Alliance.

<sup>52</sup> <https://iste.org/standards/students>

<sup>53</sup> <https://iste.org/standards/educators>

<sup>54</sup> <https://iste.org/standards/education-leaders>

1. **Regular Curriculum Review:** Annual curriculum reviews will ensure alignment with state standards and responsiveness to student needs. This includes gathering feedback from teachers, students, and parents.
2. **Curriculum Alignment Audits:** Periodic curriculum alignment audits will ensure consistency with Connecticut Core Standards, NGSS, and other relevant frameworks.
3. **Data-Driven Decision Making:** Formative and summative assessment data will be utilized to evaluate student progress and identify areas for curriculum improvement. This includes analyzing standardized test scores, classroom assessments, and student work samples.
4. **Continuous Feedback Loop:** A continuous feedback loop where teachers regularly share insights and suggestions for curriculum enhancement will be established. This includes structured opportunities for reflection during and after collaborative planning and lesson/unit implementation.
5. **Professional Development:** Professional development for educators on inclusion, community, culture and digital literacies, as well as the effective use of assessment data to inform instruction will be ongoing.
6. **Student and Parent/Caregiver Input:** Students and parents/caregivers will be engaged in the curriculum development process through surveys, focus groups, and advisory committees to ensure the curriculum remains relevant and responsive.
7. **Pilot Testing:** New curriculum resources and instructional strategies will be piloted in select classrooms, gathering data on their effectiveness before full-scale implementation.
8. **External Evaluation:** PROUD Academy will explore partnering with educational consultants or organizations to conduct external evaluations of the curriculum's alignment, rigor, and impact on student outcomes.

#### **4. Instruction**

- a. Describe the instructional methods or techniques that will be used in the proposed school, including any specific requirements for implementing a particular pedagogical approach (i.e., co-teaching or instructional assistants, technology, physical space, class size, etc.).

PROUD Academy will develop and foster a culture of inclusion that promotes student engagement and high expectations for academic achievement. In our classrooms, students will work in a combination of instructional modalities including whole-group, small-group, and individual. The curricula chosen for the school are aligned to the student-centered approaches we believe will best engage students. The inclusiveness of these curricular materials will be reinforced through instructional practices designed to promote learning opportunities that both meet the needs of diverse students and efficiently address learning gaps.

Teachers will be trained in common instructional delivery methods and techniques as well as in classroom community-building and management strategies aligned to restorative practice approaches. In that way, all Proud Academy students will become habituated to the same behavioral and academic expectations regardless of grade, content, or teacher.

## **Common Lesson Framework**

Teachers will develop clearly defined, measurable learning objectives for all lessons, and share them with students. Objectives are typically bite-sized segments of a broader sequence of lessons that, depending on the content area, form a module or unit of learning. At the end of each lesson, group discussion of work processes and products within the context of the learning objective will be followed by assessment of learning and mastery. The heart of each lesson will actively engage students in learning experiences that holistically consider the content and skills being taught and their strengths, needs and interests. Some lessons may involve modeling by and guided practice with the teacher to establish the appropriate environment for effective and accessible independent practice, (often referenced as a gradual release of responsibility for learning<sup>55</sup>), while other lessons may engage students in problem-based learning, leveraging thoughtfully constructed experiences of productive struggle for students to find meaning in and ownership of their own learning. Teachers will receive differentiated training and ongoing professional development, through instructional coaching and peer collaboration, to determine the most effective, engaging and evidence-based teaching strategies within each content area.

## **School-Wide Academic Systems and Common Expectations:**

We recognize that many other research-based instructional methods must be used in every classroom to ensure that strong instructional practices become habits. We highlight two here, but methods will continue to evolve and expand as we identify what students need. These and other best practices will help to ensure that the implementation of the curriculum is done with fidelity and with close attention to the needs of our students.

### **Common Annotation:**

Reading comprehension is dramatically increased through the habit and skills of “interactive reading,” or the active process of annotating or “marking up” the text as students read.

Annotation of text enables scholars to:

1. personalize the text (e.g., noting connections, points of confusion, reactions).
2. apply for spiraled review (e.g., identifying specific skills before reading by the teacher (as you read, I need you to think about what his motivation was)); and
3. synthesize the main idea [e.g., allowing students to efficiently refer to the text in preparation for class discussion, Socratic seminars and literary analysis (i.e., evidence used when writing a response to a prompt)].

Using this method, we can push students to independence while reading, give them a deeper understanding of the author's purpose, and provide access to all genres for students performing at all levels. Annotation of text is a practiced skill that applies to all reading in all content areas.

### **Emphasis on Content Vocabulary:**

Vocabulary development is central to our educational strategy as we recognize its critical role in enhancing reading comprehension and overall academic success. Our curriculum design

<sup>55</sup> Pearson, P.D., & Gallagher, M.C. (1983). The instruction of reading comprehension. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 8(3), 317–344. doi:10.1016/0361- 476X (83)90019-X; [https://keystoliteracy.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/frey\\_douglas\\_and\\_nancy\\_frey\\_-gradual\\_release\\_of\\_responsibility\\_instructional\\_framework.pdf](https://keystoliteracy.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/frey_douglas_and_nancy_frey_-gradual_release_of_responsibility_instructional_framework.pdf)

incorporates vocabulary acquisition across all disciplines, employing innovative strategies like small-group discussions and interventions to deepen student understanding of new words. Writing is integrated into every aspect of our learning environment, ensuring students articulate their thoughts and reflections, thereby solidifying their comprehension and ability to apply concepts.

**b. Describe how these instructional methods support high standards of achievement and are accessible and appropriate for all students at all levels, including English Learners/Multilingual Learners, special education students, students who enter below grade level, and other at-risk students.**

#### **Interventions for Students of All Levels (below grade level, at-risk, advanced, etc.)**

##### **Flexible Grouping:**

We believe that flexible grouping is the most effective way to differentiate instruction for students since there are many ways to differentiate to address learning needs.<sup>56</sup> For example, sometimes it is ideal to group students into homogeneous groups based on academic ability in a content area or standard. This allows teachers to dive deeply into a specific deficit to remediate. Sometimes though, differentiation might be based on something entirely different; for example, a teacher may form groups based on learning styles. Some students might be in a group where creating a hands-on model is the ideal learning style for the group, while another group might create a video describing what they have learned, and another group might create a poster or drawing. This type of differentiation requires teachers to know their students very well and requires them to create a meaningful curriculum in an inclusive school environment.

##### **Flexible Structures and Locations:**

Intervention groups formed for the intervention block will run in 6–8-week cycles, consistent with our MTSS RtI model and best practices for most short-term evidence-based intervention programs. When appropriate, we will use diagnostic assessments (e.g., NWEA MAP) to identify the academic ability of students and create small groups of students based on areas of need (and in some cases areas for enrichment). This does not mean that we wait 6-8 weeks to intervene, rather we look for ways to do so in other settings, including the mainstream classroom setting, during advisory, morning meetings, and during independent work time when applicable. Our program is designed to allow additional opportunities for high-dosage tutoring and differentiated material for students who have varied learning needs.

##### **Use of Technology:**

When appropriate, personalized instruction will utilize technology to support areas of need. Digital platforms will be an important way to address needs but will never replace the support of a qualified teacher. PROUD Academy will offer mastery-based adaptive learning tools through tablets and computers, such as Woot Math, iReady, Prodigy, and Khan Academy. When appropriate, technology can support remediation and enrichment throughout the school day.

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<sup>56</sup> Forward Together: A School Leader's Guide to Creating Inclusive Schools (2020);  
<https://www.sipinclusion.org/resources/forward-together-a-school-leaders-guide-to-creating-inclusive-schools-2020/>

## **Integrated Collaborative Teaching (ICT) Model**

Instructional leaders, in close partnership with special education and EL/ML teachers, will design an appropriate support system that will adhere to all regulations while prioritizing collaborative co-teaching and push-in services so that students experience the entirety of the school's instructional program while minimizing the amount of time they are separated from their peers.

Co-teaching stands as a cornerstone of our instructional model, effectively reducing student-to-teacher ratios, enhancing engagement, and fostering academic excellence across all student demographics. This approach is integral not only for adhering to the Integrated Collaborative Teaching (ICT) model as mandated for students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) but also for enriching the learning experience in general education settings for EL/ML students and a diverse group of learners more generally. Our commitment to co-teaching extends beyond compliance, serving as a strategy to broaden instructional opportunities, promote universal access to curriculum, and cultivate an explicitly inclusive school.

Effective co-teaching will take many forms to achieve the needs of the classroom and the specific lesson that is being taught.<sup>57</sup> We commit fully to supporting teachers to learn each model of co-teaching and select, through thorough planning, which approaches to use and when. Below we provide general guidelines that will be used to determine the most appropriate instructional method for the classroom. It is important to note that these co-teaching strategies will be used in both the Integrated Co-Teaching classrooms (in which we service students with an ICT placement on his/her IEP) and in any other classroom setting where there is more than one teacher.

- **Team Teaching (30-50% - often, daily):** The teachers BOTH deliver the same lesson. Team Teaching can affect student learning by maximizing the effectiveness of strong teacher moves, such as shortening the feedback loop between checking for understanding and responding to the data collected. Team teaching can allow both teachers to deliver the content, while also modeling learning it.
- **Station Teaching (25-50% - often, daily):** Students are divided into groups (both heterogeneous and/or homogenous) and work at classroom stations with each teacher. Then the students switch to the other station. In this model, both teachers individually develop the content of their stations. This model could also be referred to as centers.
- **Parallel Teaching (10-20%, weekly, as needed):** The teachers split the class into two groups and teach the same lesson to both groups. This reduces the group size and increases the ratio (time spent on student heavy lifting). With fewer students in the “class”, all students have double the opportunity to answer questions, justify thinking, etc. It also allows students who benefit from a small class size to be in a smaller group while still learning next to their higher-achieving peers.
- **Alternative Teaching (10-20%, weekly, as needed):** Using recent data, one teacher pulls a subset of students within the general class. Depending on the student's needs, the teacher of the small group teaches the same lesson as the big group in a different way (offering

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<sup>57</sup> Stumpf, Jennifer A., "A Case Study of Co-Teaching Practices in Minnesota" (2015). Culminating Projects in Education Administration and Leadership. 9. [https://repository.stcloudstate.edu/edad\\_etds/9](https://repository.stcloudstate.edu/edad_etds/9).

more scaffolding, more modeling, more time, varying the process) or re-teaches material that these scholars have not mastered. This allows both teachers to differentiate for a small subset of students who could not receive this level of individualization if they stayed in the whole group.

- **One Teach/One Observe (Less than 5% - only as necessary):** One teacher leads, and another teacher observes students for mastery. The observing teacher can closely focus on a subgroup of students and record their misunderstandings. This is effective in deeply understanding the needs of the students. This observational data must be recorded and shared with the co-teacher.
- **One Teach/One Assist (Less than 5%):** One teacher leads, and another offers assistance and support to individual students. In this role, planning must occur by both teachers, but typically one teacher plans for the lesson content, while the other does specific planning for students' individual learning or behavioral needs.

EL/ML teachers will work closely with content area teachers to provide Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE), a strategy for English-only classrooms. PROUD Academy emphasizes inclusive, integrated support, which will primarily be operationalized by a push-in, co-teaching approach. The EL/ML teacher may determine that explicit instruction, in pull-out small groups or individually, more like a sheltered approach, is what would serve a student best. Content area and EL/ML teachers will design and adjust instruction collaboratively, guided by assessment data and coached by the Manager of Student Supports and the Principal. As for any student, the WIN (What.I. Need.) period can also be utilized for targeted EL/ML instruction.

**c. Describe how the proposed school will create a data-driven culture to meet a wide range of students' needs using differentiated tiered instruction.**

Academic learning data is gathered daily in several formal and informal ways; regardless of the modality for collecting data, we believe that teachers that know and understand their student's strengths and weaknesses will be more effective. Instead of spending planning time creating a curriculum, teachers will use data to tailor the curriculum to meet the needs of their students. For example, if a teacher sees that across her classroom most students are struggling with the remainder in a division problem, that teacher would use the scope and sequence for the unit and either build in a re-teach for remainders or find the next lesson using division and tailor several problems in the classwork to allow opportunities to review the skill. Teachers will circulate with purpose, monitoring student responses, and purposefully looking for exemplary student responses that can be shared with classmates. Student "shares" allow the teacher to solidify an understanding from that day's lesson while also uplifting student voice and autonomy over learning. Teachers will tailor their lessons in real time. Students will be encouraged to reflect on their own data and set personal learning goals, fostering a sense of ownership and motivation.

Diagnostic tools such as NWEA MAP will help identify specific learning needs and monitor growth. Regular use of formative assessments (e.g., quizzes, exit tickets) and summative assessments (e.g., standardized tests, end-of-unit exams) will provide ongoing insights into student progress. PROUD Academy will engage in robust data-collection cycles that will drive

strong decisions about instructional practices that will guide the school. Teachers will collaborate on quarterly data days to analyze assessment results, identify trends, and develop action plans for addressing student needs. Ongoing training in data analysis and interpretation will equip teachers with the skills to use data effectively in their instructional planning.

Instructional leaders will rely on data from assessments and observations to guide teacher professional development, coach our educators and have meaningful and effective dialogue to better support student outcomes. Leaders will engage in a process that provides continued assessment of how its academic program supports all students. Our academic program will be assessed on an ongoing basis at all levels using disaggregated student performance data. School leaders will use this information to determine the progress of students against individualized goals and the school's overall goals and will modify programs and services as necessary. School-wide, disaggregated student learning data will directly inform our MTSS RtI process and decision-making, which is described in detail below.

**d. Explain how the proposed school will support staff to be proficient in delivering high quality instructional methods to their students (i.e., professional development, instructional coaching, administrative support, etc.).**

PROUD Academy will foster a supportive environment that encourages reflection and growth by establishing clearly articulated systems and structures, providing consistent opportunities for learning and development and creating a collegial, diverse community of educators.

Ensuring teacher effectiveness begins during recruitment and hiring. PROUD will seek teachers who are skilled, knowledgeable, and mission-aligned, but perhaps even more importantly, are eager to learn, reflect and grow as educators. Once hired, teachers will acclimate to the PROUD community by participating in a comprehensive onboarding process and centering a vision of academic excellence grounded in the PROUD Academy key values (PRIDE) and the four pillars of our educational philosophy. Our summer institute will engage teachers in interactive sessions on our instructional methods and models, inclusive of our multi-level approach to data-informed instruction. Collaborative meetings at each grade level, for each content area, and to establish co-teaching partnerships between content and specialist teachers (special education, EL/ML) will be launched.

Throughout the school year, professional development will be ongoing, relevant and differentiated to best meet the learning needs of both our teachers and students. Whole-staff, grade-level and content-area meetings will be scheduled, inclusive of peer collaboration and the development of professional learning communities, integrated into weekly schedules, which will expand as the school grows. As indicated on the draft assessment calendar included in Student Assessment, Section I.5, PROUD Academy will schedule four quarterly data days, each following school-wide diagnostic and benchmark test administration. Data days will offer protected time for teachers to review student academic progress at the whole class, subgroup and individual levels and develop evidence-informed instructional plans.

All teachers will receive ongoing, individualized facilitative coaching from instructional leaders, designed to encourage active reflection and growth over time. This will include classroom

observations, modeling best practices, co-teaching, and support with instructional planning and implementation.

Regular performance evaluations will include observations, feedback, and goal setting to support continuous improvement in instructional practices. Teachers will be evaluated based on their ability to improve student outcomes, with a focus on using data to drive instruction and support diverse learners. Leaders and teachers will be formally evaluated in alignment with the Connecticut Guidelines for Educator and Leader Evaluation and Support, which is described in more detail in the Human Resource Policies section.

e. Using a coherent systems approach, explain how your school will provide high fidelity interventions, efficient and sustained intervention implementation, and continuous regeneration of effective, efficient, and relevant practices.

Within PROUD Academy's multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) framework (described within our educational philosophy and in response to serving high need populations) our Response to Intervention (RtI) process is designed to shore up the skills and content knowledge of students at risk and help them avoid learning struggles in the future. This approach is reflective of the PROUD's core belief that every student can achieve grade-level learning standards. Alternatively, the more traditional deficit model functions as a pre-referral strategy for students who have not responded to instruction, and who are likely to be referred for special education support. Our goal is to focus on moving students "up" the tiers towards not needing additional intervention as opposed to shifting them "down" into more intense tiers over time. Embracing this vision for the RtI framework represents the collective growth mindset we will value.

A meta-analysis of RtI research found both systemic effects at schools, such as reductions in special education referrals, and positive effects on student outcomes.<sup>58</sup> This meta-analysis, as well evidence from additional research<sup>59</sup> suggests that RtI is an effective practice.

Experts recommend that screening tools should be evidence-based, reliable and valid and that the core curriculums utilized with all students are high quality and standards-aligned. For students who are categorized in Tier II, researchers have determined that using explicit and systematic instruction in small groups of no more than 5 students is the most effective approach.<sup>60 61</sup> Focusing on foundational reading and underlying skills and structures for both math and reading, versus simply providing extra reading time or general skill practice, is key for

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<sup>58</sup> Burns, M. K., Appleton, J. J., & Stehouwer, J. D. (2005). Meta-analysis of response-to-intervention research: Examining field-based and research-implemented models. *Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment*, 23, 381–394.

<sup>59</sup> Marston, D., Muyskens, P., Lau, M., & Canter, A. (2003). Problem-solving model for decision making with high-incidence disabilities: The Minneapolis experience. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice*, 18(3), 187–200. McNamara, K., & Hollinger, C. (2003). Intervention-based assessment: Evaluation rates and eligibility findings. *Exceptional Children*, 69, 181–194.

VanDerHeyden, A. M., Witt, J. C., & Gilbertson, D. A. (2007). Multi-year evaluation of the effects of a response to intervention (RTI) model on identification of children for special education. *Journal of School Psychology*, 45, 225–256.

<sup>60</sup> Gersten, R., Compton, D., Connor, C. M., Dimino, J., Santoro, L., Linan-Thompson, S., et al. (2009a). *Assisting students struggling with reading: Response to intervention and multi-tier intervention in primary grades*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education Institute of Educational Sciences.

<sup>61</sup> Elbaum, B., Vaughn, S., Hughes, M., & Moody, S. (2000). How effective are one-to-one tutoring programs in reading for elementary students at risk for reading failure? A meta-analysis of the intervention research. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 92, 605–619.

both Tier II and III. Finally, Burns and colleagues indicated that Tier III interventions should be “(a) highly targeted, (b) provide an appropriate level of challenge for the individual student, (c) explicitly teach a specific skill, (d) allow many opportunities to respond, and (e) provide immediate corrective feedback for an individual student.”<sup>62</sup>

### **Academic Response to Intervention**

A three-tier RtI pyramid model is used as a framework to determine the intervention services needed to support all struggling students, which may include students with disabilities and English Language Learners. Within this model the entire student body is provided with a foundationally strong curriculum, effective instruction and positive behavioral supports. Leaders and teachers, upon review of early year diagnostic assessment data (e.g. NWEA MAP), along with other relevant academic evidence, determine the placement of all students within appropriate tiers for ELA and mathematics. Following each cycle of assessment during the school year (aligned to quarters), the MTSS team routinely reviews student progress and makes informed placement adjustments, in partnership with teachers.

#### ***Tier I: Universal: Majority of the student population.***

This tier is the core program that is afforded to all students, with modified and differentiated instruction provided to address student variability. Students who are demonstrating any difficulties mastering the skills, concepts and strategies taught will receive additional support within the classroom, directly from teachers. These efforts may include:

- Pre-teaching or re-teaching on an individual or small group basis, during independent work
- Modifying student lesson materials or the providing supplementary supports (e.g. manipulatives)
- Conferring
- Scaffolding
- Using alternative curriculum materials and/ or teaching methods
- Using curriculum adaptations (e.g., rephrase or rewrite directions)
- Differentiated lessons (group, pair or independent instruction, assignments, scaffolds)
- Flexible grouping, focused on specific skills or standards.
- Changing the physical environment (e.g., seat near teacher, peer, whiteboard, reducing visual barriers and distractions, establishing boundaries or travel patterns with tape, etc.)
- Adjusting questions to ensure understanding, segmenting concept into smaller chunks.
- Use of integrated sensory approaches to address different learning styles, etc.
- Targeted use of related technology programs
- Stations, centers and kits
- Implementing behavior management techniques (e.g., menu of alternative tasks, limiting choices to reduce frustration, utilizing kinesthetic reminders, providing opportunities for success, scheduling private "teacher talk" times, etc.)
- Differentiated homework.
- Partnering with parents/caregivers to suggest techniques for working with the child at home, or to discuss health concerns (e.g., hearing, vision, medical)

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<sup>62</sup> Burns, M. K., VanDerHeyden, A. M., & Boice, C. H. (2008). *Best practices in delivery intensive academic interventions*. In A. Thomas & J. Grimes (Eds.) *Best practices in school psychology* (5th ed.). Bethesda, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.

***Tier II: Supplemental and Targeted: Small portion of the student population.***

Students categorized in Tier II are typically less than six months behind their grade level proficient peers. This tier includes more intensive and targeted interventions, which supplement the general education curriculum, and may be designed as small group instruction, targeted tutoring, Title I Reading, etc. Students can be grouped for an intervention if the deficit area for all in the group is similar, and the intervention is appropriately targeted. Students who progress well at this level may return to Tier I while those who do not demonstrate sufficient progress may be recommended for a new intervention. If a more intensive intervention is needed, they may be referred to Tier III. Examples of supplemental supports for students who are categorized within Tier II are listed below:

- Small group, targeted skill instruction, at least twice a week, facilitated by content, special education, and EL/ML teachers who are strategically assigned to students.
- After-school small group instruction, provided by teachers.

***Tier III: Intensive: Smallest portion of the student population.***

This tier is designed for students in need of intensive, and often personalized, interventions. Students categorized in Tier III are typically more than six months behind their grade level proficient peers and may have not been responsive to Tier I and Tier II intervention efforts. Examples of intensive supports for students who are categorized within Tier III are listed below:

- Individual, targeted skill instruction, provided by certified special education teachers.
- Individual, targeted services such as counseling, speech, occupational or physical therapy

***WIN (What I Need)***

PROUD Academy will schedule one period each day for WIN, an acronym for “**What I Need**.” This will ensure dedicated, structured time for targeted, tiered and ongoing interventions as well as timely, limited academic support (focused squarely on one math concept, writing assignment, etc.). Students may also engage in enrichment activities or personalized learning experiences. This time will be flexible yet facilitated by teachers and planned for or selected in advance.

***Continuous Regeneration (Progress Monitoring)***

PROUD will closely track struggling students over time to monitor their learning and progress. The school’s data platform (e.g., PowerSchool) will allow for tracking the efficacy of interventions over time. This data is analyzed at teacher coaching sessions, grade level meetings, and instructional leadership team meetings to ensure that all students are making progress. If growth is slow or non-existent, interventions will be further modified to better meet the needs of the students. On a yearly basis, members of the instructional leadership team, will conduct an analysis of all intervention programs used in the school to determine which interventions programs were most effective and should be continued in the following year.

## **5. Student Assessment**

a. Describe the proposed school's comprehensive assessment system, diagnostic, formative, benchmark, interim and summative assessments. Please ensure that the assessment system is aligned to the curriculum and educational philosophy.

Insofar as they are predictive of proficiency levels determined by the CT Better Balanced Assessment program, PROUD Academy will use closely coordinated and aligned approaches to collecting evidence of student academic learning. Data gleaned from a range of assessment types will inform programmatic and intervention strategies at the individual, class, and grade level and to set grade-level expectations for each content area.

Our assessment system will provide sufficient information in student achievement so that:

- Students and families can be aware of individual student growth and achievement,
- Teachers can track student progress and make decisions on targeted instruction, student grouping, and interventions in classrooms and in alignment with MTSS RtI tiers.
- Leaders can prioritize resources for allocation, make shifts in programming, budget or personnel.
- The board can monitor academic progress and make appropriate decisions to support meeting our school's academic and progress goals.
- The school's progress and achievement can be contextualized among its peers in surrounding districts and across the state.

Of chief importance is starting each school year with sufficient data on students to plan instructional priorities, marshall supports for students who need them as quickly as possible and establish learning targets. Additionally important is for teachers to quickly get to know their students well to create a coherent plan of instruction for the school year. Given that student reading affects all content area learning, and foundational math skills are essential for higher order middle school math and science work, administering NWEA MAP Growth Reading and Math as baseline assessments at the beginning of the school year will help teachers assemble appropriate academic supports for each and every student; those far below, below, on and above expected grade level, integrating the specific needs of those with identified or suspected disabilities and those learning the English language. Throughout the school year, and especially because of quarterly data days, the school may add either internally developed or commercially available supplemental assessments. These decisions will be driven by clear questions about student learning and how the assessments chosen will illuminate degrees of student learning in a given subject or skill area.

PROUD Academy will utilize formative, benchmark and summative learning assessments:

- **Formative Assessments** inform instruction, identify student strengths and areas for improvement and provide real-time feedback to students and teachers. Methods such as quizzes, exit tickets, student reflections, observational checklists, and informal questioning are integrated into daily instruction and are designed to be aligned with Connecticut Core Standards (CCS) and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS).
- **Performance-Based Assessments** are developed to assess students' ability to apply knowledge and skills in real-world contexts. Examples may include capstone projects, research papers, presentations, and portfolios and are typically accompanied by standards-

based rubrics. These are integrated into the curriculum and give students opportunities to demonstrate higher order thinking and problem-solving skills and can provide a comprehensive evaluation of their capabilities.

- **Benchmark/Diagnostic Assessments** help to identify students' strengths and weaknesses and inform individualized instruction. Tools like the NWEA MAP Growth are aligned with grade level literacy and math standards and provide detailed information on individual student performance. In classrooms, teachers utilize individual and group reports to develop plans for instruction targeting learning gaps and to create growth goals to monitor progress throughout the school year. The MTSS team also uses diagnostic and benchmark to determine each student's RtI tier placement and intervention. The LAS Links Placement Test determines if students are English or multilingual learners, and if so, provides guidance on their proficiency levels and appropriate amount of and approach to formal support, while the LAS Links: English Language Proficiency Assessment determines the level of English proficiency development, and the extent to which the level of formal English as a Second Language support needs to be continued, discontinued or adjusted.
- **Interim Assessments** are utilized to monitor student progress throughout the year and help to forecast performance on summative assessments. Interim assessments are aligned with state standards and curriculum objectives, providing a snapshot of student progress at various points in the academic year and designed to provide reliable data on student learning trends and inform instructional planning.
- **Summative Assessments** serve to evaluate mastery of learning at the end of an instructional period. These typically include end-of-unit tests, final exams, projects, presentations, and state standardized assessments (e.g., Connecticut Smarter Balanced Assessments, Next Generation Science Standards Assessment, Connecticut Physical Fitness Assessment). Curriculum program assessments also assess mastery of learning objectives (provided by Wit and Wisdom, enVision Mathematics, etc.) and may or may not be categorized as summative.

Each spring/summer, the instructional leadership will establish clear testing windows for the upcoming school year and coordinate with the testing companies to ensure that the assessments are implemented effectively. Teachers will be trained in test administration prior to launching assessments. The high-level administration schedule below does not include layered formative and performance-based assessments within each curriculum program and/or developed by teachers.

**Proposed Assessment Calendar**

Testing Window (approx.)	Assessment	Content	Grade
September	Home Language Survey - screen LAS Links Placement Test 2nd Edition English - diagnostic	English Language Proficiency	6-8
September	NWEA MAP Reading - diagnostic	ELA	6-8
September	NWEA MAP Math - diagnostic	Math	6-8
September	DESSA-mini screener Detailed DESSA for targeted students	Mental well-being	6-8
September/October	<i>Collaborative Data Day</i>	<i>ELA/Math</i>	6-8
November	Progress Reports		
November	NWEA MAP Reading - benchmark	ELA	6-8
November	NWEA MAP Math - benchmark	Math	6-8
November/December	<i>Collaborative Data Day</i>	<i>ELA/Math</i>	6-8
January	Progress Reports		
January - March	LAS Links	English Language Proficiency: Speaking, Listening, Reading, Writing	6-8*
January - March	<i>CT Alternate Assessment of English Language Proficiency (CAEELP)</i>		6-8*
February	NWEA MAP Reading - benchmark	ELA	6-8
February	NWEA MAP Math - benchmark	Math	6-8
February/March	<i>Collaborative Data Day</i>	<i>ELA/Math</i>	6-8
March	Progress Reports		
April (March-May)	<i>CT Smarter Balanced Assessment</i>	ELA	6-8
April (March-May)	<i>CT Alternate Assessment (CTAA)</i>	ELA	6-8*
April (March-May)	<i>CT Smarter Balanced Assessment</i>	Math	6-8
April (March-May)	<i>CT Alternate Assessment (CTAA)</i>	Math	6-8*
May (March-May)	<u>Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) assessment</u>	Science	8
May (March-May)	<u>Connecticut Alternate Science Assessment (CTAS)</u>	Science	8*
September - May	CT Physical Fitness Assessment	Physical Fitness	8
June	NWEA MAP Reading - benchmark	ELA	6-8
June	NWEA MAP Math - benchmark	Math	6-8
June	<i>Collaborative Data Day</i>	<i>ELA/Math</i>	6-8
June	Progress Reports		

\*For eligible students only

**b. Explain how the proposed school will ensure the participation of all general education students, students with disabilities and students identified as English Learners/Multilingual Learners in the applicable Connecticut Smarter Balanced Assessment, Next Generation Science Standard Assessment, Connecticut SAT School Day, LAS Links Assessment, Kindergarten Entrance Inventory, Connecticut Physical Fitness Assessment and/or Connecticut Alternate Assessment System.**

PROUD Academy will ensure the participation of all students in all applicable assessments. As indicated by our mission and school design, we center inclusion and equity, and will be intentional to ensure access to all aspects of learning, including assessments. We understand this goes far beyond offering opportunities for participation, and understand it requires a commitment to meet the individual needs of each student. This starts by knowing every student, academically and otherwise, through frequent, comprehensive reviews of academic learning data and, of course, through sustained efforts to know them deeply as learners. We will have clearly articulated systems and protocols to support access and participation.

Every PROUD Academy student will participate fully in the state assessment system, including the Smarter Balanced Assessments, Next Generation Science Assessment, Connecticut Physical Fitness Assessment, and alternative assessments for students with disabilities and English learners when applicable. Students formally identified with disabilities or as English learners, and/or those with 504 plans, will take assessments in accordance with the accommodations or modifications they require, including those outlined in IEPs or 504 plans. Students will be supported using strategies that may include extended time, native reader directions, word-to-word dictionary, or alternative settings. A set of universal accessibility tools, such as assistive technology, scratch paper, and permission for breaks will be provided to students as required. Teachers will be trained to administer these and other assessments, inclusive of accommodations and modifications, by the Principal and Manager of Student Supports.

**c. Explain how assessments will be used to determine, monitor, and report individual student, cohort, and school progress over time. Please describe a purposeful approach for measuring student progress toward achieving academic and non-academic goals tied to the school's mission and educational priorities.**

PROUD Academy embraces assessment as an integral aspect of the learning process, and we will approach it as such with students, staff and families. Quality assessments administered with fidelity serve as a valuable form of feedback to students, teachers and leaders about what has been learned and what is needed next in the ongoing individual and collective educational journey.

As described in our advisory program, PROUD Academy intends to provide frequent opportunities for students to develop ownership of and accountability for their own learning. To achieve this, our teachers will normalize the processes of “showing what you know,” receiving feedback, reflecting on performance and striving to improve. Teachers will normalize this by sharing and engaging in dialogue about performance trends with their entire class, and frequently conference with individual students often to guide and support them in a differentiated manner. Students will understand both big picture absolute goals (e.g., by the

end of 6th grade, I will be able to do X and know Y) as well as more personalized growth goals (e.g., I will practice skill A to show that I understand and can apply it consistently by February).

Teachers, with support from the instructional leadership team, will collect and analyze data from all assessments. Data will be analyzed by learning criteria through item analysis on state exams, current achievement and growth over time (NWEA MAP). The first data day/professional development session will be guided by these assessment results and set the expectation that instructional decisions will be based on student data in addition to teachers' observations. The goal of this first session will be for teachers to take a close look at the data picture for each student, to understand where their reading and math proficiency levels are, to diagnose what learning gaps exist, and to determine what (if any) interventions are needed to ensure that adequate proficiency gains are made by the end of the year.

This data will also be used to anticipate state test scores, identify gaps in grade level skill or content knowledge, and adjust curricular planning to support students scoring at or above proficiency. Students who are just below proficiency may require RtI tier one or two supports, while students who are one or more grade levels below proficiency may require tier three supports.

Subsequent data day/professional development will focus on the most recent set of NWEA MAP assessments in addition to teacher observations and formative assessments, attendance, and discipline. Teachers will collaborate to create grade level and content area plans for students who require additional monitoring and intervention. Learning gaps will be addressed both in content area classes as well as during students' intervention and enrichment periods. Data days in the spring will include examining student work to discuss the quality of assignments and whether they are rigorous enough to meet grade level standards.

Cohort and school-wide progress will be monitored by the Manager of Student Supports. Cohorts may be grade levels, content areas and subgroups such as students with disabilities and English language learners, as well as a range of demographic identifiers like race, gender, socioeconomic status, etc. Raw data and analysis will be studied by the leadership team and the Principal will prepare presentations of trends for staff and families. The school will conduct two parent teacher conferences each year and produce progress reports four times each year. These will serve to inform parents/caregivers of their children's progress toward goals in addition to grade level achievement. The data will also be summarized and presented quarterly at board meetings to ensure the board's effective oversight of the school and to be transparent with the community.

**d. Describe how the school will use student assessment data to improve curriculum and instruction and tiered supports.**

At least annually, the instructional leadership team will conduct a thorough review of PROUD Academy's intervention programs. The review will encompass an assessment of the implementation of instructional strategies within each MTSS RtI tier considering data from NWEA MAP assessments that indicate levels of student grade level proficiency and progress. This process will help to determine resources and instructional strategies that were most

effective and should therefore be preserved and strengthened, as well as what may have had limited or minimal impact. The team will then decide on next necessary next steps, which may include, but which will not necessarily be limited to, adding or improving teacher professional development and support, or piloting, supplementing, and/or substituting curriculum materials and resources.

e. Explain the process to use assessment data to apply appropriate and timely tiered student interventions, support, and targeted goals with a plan to address the needs of students who do not meet established achievement targets.

PROUD Academy leaders will establish a clearly articulated schedule for state-mandated and schoolwide assessments. Professional development data days and cycles of MTSS RtI tiered interventions will be aligned to these dates, and tightly monitored by the Principal and Manager of Student Supports.

As described above in Instruction 4e, students will be categorized within one of three MTSS RtI tiers based on their performance on NWEA MAP assessments and other evidence of learning. Immediately following the first three administrations of these assessments (approximately September, November, February), the MTSS RtI team, in consultation with teachers, will determine student placement. “Off cycle” adjustments to interventions may be made for students who make rapid progress or who would benefit from more intense support.<sup>63</sup>

At the end of each grading quarter, progress reports, which will include measures of student progress that are objective and aligned to grade level standards, will be prepared by teachers, reviewed by leaders, and shared with students and families. Teachers will also be trained to administer the DESSA-mini, a universal screen for mental well-being. The way these psychosocial data inform PROUD Academy’s approach to student social and behavioral health issues are detailed in Student Discipline Policies Section III.5.

All assessment data will be housed in PowerSchool, a comprehensive data platform accessible to teachers and leaders. This will be foundational for the ongoing tracking and monitoring of all students’ learning and progress, guiding instructional planning and decision-making. Data will be analyzed at teacher coaching sessions, grade-level meetings, and instructional leadership team meetings to ensure that all students are making progress. If growth is slow or non-existent, interventions will be further modified to better meet the needs of the students.

Leaders will access and analyze the data within and across assessments to closely monitor progress in student learning. Leaders will further explore this data by subgroups (classroom, grade, demographic identifiers, etc.) to appropriately address concerning trends as well as leverage areas of strength for the benefit of students across the school.

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<sup>63</sup> The MTSS tiered system designed to provide increasing levels of psychosocial and behavioral support to students, which integrates restorative practices, are described in the student discipline section under item a.

## **II. Strength of Organizational Effort**

### **1. Experience and Expertise of Founders**

Provide a list of the founding group members that developed and designed the application for the proposed school, as well as resumes detailing the background, relevant experience, knowledge and expertise, and/or qualifications of each founding member.

The PROUD Academy founding team has worked together over the past few years to bring PROUD Academy to fruition. From envisioning the school's design and researching curriculum programs, to seeking input and support from a broad range of community stakeholders, the team collaborated and contributed to all aspects of this effort. Below please find bios for all members of PROUD Academy's Board of Directors. Resumes are included in **Appendix B**.

#### **Patricia Nicolari (she/her) - PROUD Academy founder, Board of Directors member, ex-officio**

PROUD Academy has been Patty's vision for LGBTQ+ youth and their allies after working with youth in education and nonprofits throughout her 40-year career. Patty has always been actively and progressively involved in her community. That passion escalated in 1997, after coming out publicly while a teacher in Ansonia. Patty felt this newfound confidence liberating. The freedom to be authentic became the catalyst for Patty to create change in the broader educational environment for LGBTQ+ students, teachers, and staff. The most powerful part of coming out as a teacher was the outpouring of students who now felt safe enough to disclose their own sexual orientation/gender identity (SOGI), or that of a relative. As a result of coming out, Patty started her high school's first Gender and Sexuality Alliance (GSA) and organized the first Day of Silence. She joined the GLSEN Board of Directors, became a Stonewall Speaker, facilitated support groups for youth and closeted teachers at the New Haven Pride Center, presented workshops across the country, was a recipient of a Dorothy Award for her LGBTQ+ community involvement, and had her story published with other LGBTQ educators in Kevin Jennings' book, "One Teacher in 10."<sup>64</sup> In 2004, Patty was named Teacher of the Year in Ansonia. Patty's experience includes working with marginalized youth as a teacher in an Alternative to Incarceration program in Bridgeport, administrator of an alternative school for grades 7-12, and adjunct professor at Western Connecticut State University. Patty's nonprofit work includes being the director of a mentoring program for youth involved with juvenile probation and DCF foster care. She has volunteered on the Governor's Prevention Partnership LGBTQ+ Advisory Board and presently serves on the New Haven/Hamden Juvenile Review Board. Patty's personal experiences "in" and "out" of the LGBTQ+ family, coupled with her teacher and leadership roles, have led her to this moment in time. Patty earned her BS in physical education and MS in community health, as well as two sixth year certificates in educational foundations and administration/supervision, all from Southern Connecticut State University.

#### **Robert Rader (he/him) - Board of Directors, Chair**

Robert Rader, J.D. has a passion for high-quality education, diversity, and social justice. Bob joined the New York State School Boards Association (NYSSBA) in 1981 and worked at

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<sup>64</sup> Kevin was the Founder/ED of GLSEN, and an assistant deputy secretary at the US Department of Education under the Obama administration.

NYSSBA in a variety of positions, including Legislative Representative, Director of Risk Management and Director of and Counsel for Policy and Employee Relations Services. He was executive director of the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE) from January 1996 until his retirement in July 2022, when he was honored with CABE's Friend of Public Education, its highest award. He was also the 2008 winner of the CSAE Executive of the Year Award. He also received the Certified Association Executive (CAE) designation from the American Society of Association Executives and was past president of its Connecticut branch, CSAE. Bob has written extensively on issues of equity, diversity and inclusion. He was the key driver for the services that CABE offers in this area, including the Equity Toolkit, which provides information to school boards and superintendents on an antiracism agenda. He has also written at length on the social-emotional skills needed by board members to be effective. Bob has presented numerous workshops on issues of importance to boards of education. He has authored hundreds of articles for the CABE Journal and been published in the various National School Boards Association (NSBA) publications and in the Connecticut Society of Association's Source. Bob is the primary author of Leadership for State School Boards Associations, an NSBA publication. He was the key author and developer of The School Board of the Future. Bob was Past Chairman of the National School Boards Association's Liaison Committee, which represented all state association executive directors in working with NSBA. He is a member of the Board of Directors of the Connecticut Regional branch of the Anti-Defamation League, which fights for justice and tolerance for all. He was recently awarded a Certificate for Diversity and Inclusion from eCornell. Bob earned his B.S. in industrial and labor relations from Cornell University and a J.D. from Albany Law School.

**Tisha Markette (she/her) - Board of Directors, Vice Chair**

Tisha Markette has dedicated over 28 years to disrupting inequities in urban education. Currently, she brings leadership development, systems change, and executive coaching expertise to Partners for Educational Leadership (PEL). As Chief Academic & Equity Officer for UP Education Network, she spearheaded district-wide equity initiatives, developing leadership teams and building leaders' capacity to facilitate crucial conversations about race. As the Founding Principal of Amistad Academy Elementary in New Haven, she achieved extraordinary literacy results, with 99% of students at or above grade level within a single year. Tisha's impact extends nationwide. She is a sought-after national conference speaker and has revolutionized literacy instruction across the country. Tisha coached aspiring Principals and facilitated courses in leadership development as the Director of Achievement First's Residency Program. Tisha holds degrees from Florida Atlantic University, Sacred Heart University, and the UConn NEAG School of Education, and has received specialized literacy training at Columbia University and Lesley University.

**Cathie Hillian (she/her) - Board of Directors, Secretary**

Cathie Hillian has been a practicing clinician for the past 17 years. She has spent most of those years working in independent schools as a Counselor. She also served as a Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, class dean, and coach. Currently, Cathie is the Associate Director of Counseling at Miss Porter's School in Farmington, CT. Earlier in her career, she held roles as Clinical Supervisor and Clinical Director for several programs within the North American Family Institute, Inc. In every professional role, Cathie centers the needs of students and determines what is needed to best serve them and helps them to thrive to be successful socially,

emotionally and academically. She has worked with many LGBTQ+ youth and is passionate about advocating for the needs and interests of all students, guided by the belief that it is important to teach students about our differences to develop empathy for and celebrate others' diverse backgrounds, stories and pathways. Cathie currently serves on the Watertown Board of Education where she advocates to provide the best curriculum and environment for all students in the district. Cathie received her master's degree in clinical mental health counseling and her bachelor's degree in recreational management from Springfield College.

**Philip McAdoo (he/him) - Board of Directors, Member**

Dr. Philip McAdoo brings over 15 years of experience as a diversity, equity and inclusion practitioner and educator. He is the former Vice President of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) at Earthjustice, an environmental law organization. Before founding his own consulting firm, he served as the Director of Equity, Justice, and Community at the Sidwell Friends School in Washington, D.C. Among his many accomplishments there, he increased hiring and retention of staff of color, evaluated years of graduate and alumni data to inform and create initiatives to support students, spearheaded a professional development initiative for faculty and staff as well as an annual program for students and their families to foster understanding around race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, and socio-economic diversity. Phillip also developed and implemented new transgender, nonconforming, and recruitment policies and created a Native American education and equity program, engaging Michelle Obama in the project. As an openly gay educator, he has specialized in character development, particularly from the perspective of diversity and inclusion. He has written numerous articles on DEI, authored a children's book, "Every Child Deserves" and recently published a new book, "Independent Queers: LGBTQ Educators in Independent Schools Speak Out." As an LGBTQ activist, Philip has worked tirelessly to combat homophobia in his personal and professional life by fiercely advocating for himself, his family, and the rights of LGBTQ youth, families, and educators. He joined Rep. John Lewis to advocate in support of Every Child Deserves a Family Act, which is designed to lower some of the barriers faced by same-sex couples who want to adopt children from foster care, as Philip and his partner did. He is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with a degree in communications studies. He holds an MA in transformative leadership from The California Institute of Integral Studies and earned his Doctor of Education from The University of Pennsylvania in the Graduate School of Education.

**Stephen G. Ray (he/him) - Board of Directors, Member**

Rev. Dr. Stephen G. Ray Jr. has served as the Senior Minister of the historic United Church on the Green in New Haven since summer 2023. Ray was the 13th President of Chicago Theological Seminary and a past President of the Society for the Study of Black Religion. An ordained minister of the United Church of Christ, Ray has served as assistant minister at Faith Congregational Church in Hartford, pastor of The Black Church at Yale in New Haven, interim pastor at Imani Fellowship Community Church (UCC) in Hartford and Plymouth Congregational Church (UCC) in Louisville, KY. Ray's previous academic appointments include the Neal F. and Ila A. Fisher Chair of Theology at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, Jeremiah A. Wright Sr. Associate Professor of African American Studies and Director of the Urban Theological Institute at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, Associate Professor of Theology and Philosophy at Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary and lecturer at Yale Divinity School and the Hartford Seminary. Among his awards are the Hooker Fellowship for Excellence

in Theological Studies; Charter Oak State College Distinguished Alumni Award; Kentuckiana Metroversity, Distinguished Teacher of Adult Learners; 2006 Associated Church Press Award of Excellence for Column; 2018 Alumni Award for Distinction in Theological Education from Yale Divinity School; Doctor of Divinity honoris causa, United Lutheran Seminary, 2020. A prolific author, his works include: "A Struggle from the Start: The Black Community of Hartford, 1639-1960" and "Do No Harm: Social Sin and Christian Responsibility". In addition to his own monographs, he is co-author of "Black Church Studies: An Introduction"; editor of the 20th Anniversary Edition of "We Have Been Believers: An African American Systematic Theology"; co-editor of "Awake to the Moment: Introduction to Theology"; and a contributor to several other books, academic journals, and church publications. Ray has dedicated his career to activism on behalf of marginalized people and communities. In his writing, teaching, and public speaking Ray has advocated strongly for the rights of LGBTQ+ people and communities in our society. Ray received his Ph.D. in Theology and African American Studies from Yale University and his M.Div. (*summa cum laude*) from the Yale Divinity School.

**Maria Kokiasmenos (she/her), Board of Directors, Member**

Maria Kokiasmenos, J.D. is currently the Vice President and Associate General Counsel at The Hartford. Before joining The Hartford in 2011, she practiced at two local firms in products liability and insurance defense. Her current work focuses on the intersection of law and technology, particularly the use of Artificial Intelligence and predictive modeling in insurance practices. Maria was formerly the board chair at the YWCA Hartford Region, a 150+ year old nonprofit dedicated to eliminating racism and empowering women. She volunteers with Election Protection Coalition & Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, a national, nonpartisan organization that ensures that all voters have an equal opportunity to vote and have that vote count. Maria and her husband are the parents of two boys, one of whom is trans. She is passionate about ensuring that all children have access to a safe, affirming, quality education. Maria (she/her) received her bachelor's degree from New York University and her J.D. from Georgetown University Law Center.

**Nicole Selmanie (she/her) - Board of Directors, Member**

Nicole Selmanie began teaching in Hartford, CT in 2011. As an educator, Nicole is a fierce advocate for students and justice. Early in her career, she developed and led several initiatives aimed at providing access and opportunity to her students, as well as safe, affirming spaces, including student council, a chapter of the National Honor Society, a district-wide Matheletes program and competition, Saturday SAT School, an after-school tutoring program, and a GSA. She has used her leadership skills to serve her schools as team leader and by providing professional development to staff members on classroom culture, building meaningful relationships with students, restorative practices, and evidence-based pedagogy that engages students' natural curiosities. As a member of the LGBTQ+ community, Nicole serves as a resource for many students, committed to creating learning environments that celebrate and affirm all identities. Nicole received her master's degree in educational leadership from Boston University and a sixth-year certificate in administration and supervision from the University of Connecticut.

**Dusty Rader (he/him) - Board of Directors, Member**

Dusty Rader (he/him) is the Interim Coordinator of the LGBTQ Center at Central Connecticut State University (CCSU), where he also teaches Introduction to Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. Dusty leverages his knowledge and experiences to cultivate and maintain empathetic, compassionate, and inclusive safe spaces across school boards, educators, and administrators, via his consulting outfit, Genderally Speaking. He continues this work by providing Safe Zone Trainings through CCSU. He has facilitated a TEDx Talk, penned an article in the Hartford Courant, and been featured in multiple publications including NEA Today,<sup>65</sup> the Hartford Courant, and NBC's #Pride30. Raised by two educators, he is a strong proponent of the value of education in promoting equality and continues his endeavor to educate through his work at CCSU. Dusty began his career as a high school English teacher in Connecticut, simultaneously providing professional development workshops regarding LGBTQ+ students, particularly transgender students, to districts and education organizations in the state, regionally, and nationally. He earned his Bachelor of Arts in English from the University of Vermont, followed by his Master of Arts in Teaching from Central Connecticut State University.

**Tameka Grant-Mack (she/her) - Board of Directors, Treasurer**

Tameka Grant-Mack is currently the state school department head of USD #1. Prior to assuming this role in 2019, she served as the Dean of Students at the Annie Fisher STEM Magnet School in Hartford and at Amistad Academy Elementary School in New Haven. She has worked as a classroom teacher and math consultant. Tameka earned her Bachelor of Arts from UConn, her Master of Arts in Teacher from Sacred Heart University and a sixth-year certificate in educational leadership from UConn. She is a proud resident of Ansonia.

**a. Identify which members intend to serve on the governing council of the proposed school. In addition, please describe whether members of the founding group anticipate moving into another role or relationship (employee, consultant, etc.) with the proposed school and, if so, how many.**

The PROUD Academy Board of Directors (BOD) currently includes 10 members: 9 voting members and one ex-officio. Several are educators, two are attorneys and a number hold leadership roles within their communities. Upon approval, we intend to offer Stephanie Ocasio-Gonzalez, a member of the Ansonia Board of Education, a seat on our board, and identify a parent/caregiver and a teacher affiliated with PROUD Academy once we open in fall 2026.

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<sup>65</sup> <https://www.nea.org/nea-today/all-news-articles/transgender-teacher-being-trans-isnt-anything-be-ashamed>

**PROUD Academy Board of Directors**

Name	Position	Committee(s)	Expertise	Voting
Patricia Nicolari	Founder	Executive Fundraising	Education leader	Ex-Officio
Robert Rader	Chair	Executive	Attorney, Governance	Voting
Tisha Markette	Vice Chair	Executive Curriculum/culture Marketing/admissions	Education leader	Voting
Tameka Grant-Mack	Treasurer	Executive, Finance Curriculum/culture	Educator, Church Co-Treasurer	Voting
Cathie Hillian	Secretary	Executive Curriculum/culture <b>Chair, Marketing/admissions</b>	Counselor	Voting
Nicole Selmanie	Member	Curriculum/culture Marketing/admissions	Educator	Voting
Stephen G. Ray	Member	<b>Chair, Fundraising</b>	Community leader	Voting
Dusty Rader	Member	Curriculum/culture Marketing/admissions	Educator	Voting
Phillip McAdoo	Member	<b>Chair, Curriculum/culture</b>	DEI leader	Voting
Maria Kokiasmenos	Member	<b>Chair, Finance</b>	Attorney	Voting

The following individuals have volunteered their time and expertise to certain committee efforts. They are not formal voting members of the Board of Directors.

Name	Committee(s)	Expertise
Mark Kaufman	Finance	corporate, finance
Rev Tom Jackson	Finance	former New Haven board member, building
Andrew Giering	Governance/Policy	attorney, non-profit board member
John Rose	Governance/Policy	corporate attorney, non-profit board member
Tom Ciuba	Marketing	website development

Cori Dahman	Marketing	website development
Josephine Hawke	Fundraising	grant writing

**b. Identify any organizations, agencies or consultants that are partners in designing or establishing the proposed school. Please include a brief description of their role and any resources they have contributed or plan to contribute to the proposed school's development.**

Karen Drezner is supporting the PROUD Academy founding team to develop the school design and prepare this application. She is the Founder and CEO of Leveraging Leaders, a national independent consulting firm that offers coaching, capacity-building and community. As a lifelong educator and educational leader, she has scaled several organizations, developed several dynamic, diverse teams and designed, launched and facilitated significant improvement efforts in traditional public, charter and independent schools as a founder, leader and board member and consultant. Most recently, she served as a coach for instructional superintendents in the Sacramento City Unified School District with The Leadership Academy. In previous years, she was the Chief Strategy Officer at Amber Charter Schools, Executive Director of Lynch Leadership Academy at Boston College School of Education/School of Management, Director of Leadership Development at Achievement First, and Founder and Executive Director of Bronx Charter School for Children.

**c. If the founding team is partnering or planning to partner with an organization, please include evidence demonstrating the organization's record of student achievement and ability to operate a high-quality school.**

PROUD Academy expects to develop local partnerships that enhance the support and opportunities of our students, families and staff members as the school grows. Please refer to the letters of support included in **Appendix D4**.

#### **National LGBTQ+ Schools Alliance**

Patty Nicolari, the founder of PROUD Academy, launched the National LGBTQ+ School Alliance, a collaborative partnership of existing and prospective schools committed to supporting individual and collective progress of LGBTQ+-affirming schools across the nation. Starting with 4 schools already in operation and PROUD Academy, quarterly virtual meetings have provided opportunities to share updates, discuss challenges and exchange best practices relevant to LGBTQ+ school communities. Over the past year, the Alliance has expanded to include 4 additional school models. As it continues to grow, this national community of school and leaders will be integral to PROUD Academy's ongoing development, learning and impact, ensuring we remain at the forefront of inclusive and affirmative educational practices. This dynamic, valuable collaboration is essential to participating in the broader, national dialogue on inclusive education and LGBTQ+ student school experiences.

Of note, these schools are located across the country. Over two-thirds (67%, 6 of 9) serve the middle grades, while 56% (5 of 9) are public charter schools.

## National LGBTQ+ Schools Alliance Members

School	Location	Grades Served	School Type
Harvey Milk High School	New York, NY	9-12 transfer	traditional public
The Alliance School	Milwaukee, Wisconsin	9-12	traditional public
Magic City Acceptance Academy	Homewood, Alabama	6-12	public charter
Albert Einstein Academy	Lakeville & Strongwood, OH	K-12	public charter
PROUD Academy	Ansonia, CT	6-8	public charter
JS Bryant School	Berkshires, MA	9 -12	therapeutic, private
Miss Major Middle School	Brooklyn, NY	5-9	public charter
Autumn Hill Academy	Waukesha, WI	6-12	public charter
Chrysalis Academy	Los Angeles, CA	5-8	private

## 2. School Governance and Management

Pursuant to C.G.S. § 10-66aa, a charter school is organized as a nonprofit entity operated independently of any local or regional board of education, in accordance with the terms of its charter. The responsibilities of the charter school's governing council include but are not limited to developing and implementing policies; hiring qualified personnel to manage the school's day-to-day operations and holding them accountable for meeting established goals; and establishing a long-range plan that will ensure the school's continued stability and financial viability.

a. Indicate the structure of the governing council, including officers, members (distinguish between voting and non-voting ex-officio members), and length of terms and committees (denote the officers or members on each committee). Please include an organizational chart that encompasses the governing council, council committees, and employees of the proposed school.

Please refer to the PROUD Academy by-laws and conflict of interest included in **Appendix C** for details related to the Board of Directors' ("Board" or "BOD") overall structure, officers, members, committees, and service terms. The BOD, which will satisfy all expectations of a "governing council," will hire and delegate the day-to-day management of the school to a qualified Principal. The Board will hold the Principal accountable for meeting established goals and effectively fulfilling their role. The Board will also, in close collaboration with the Principal, develop and implement policies and establish a long-range plan to ensure the school's continued stability and financial viability.

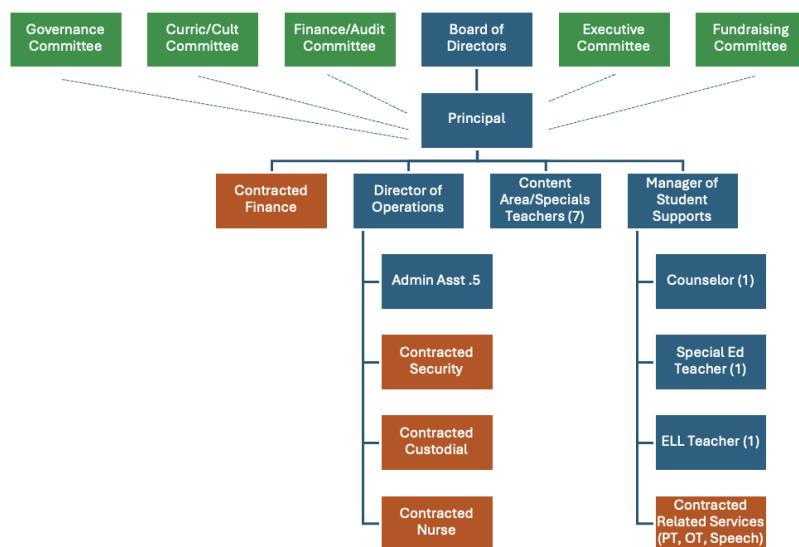
The Principal will meet regularly with each board committee to leverage particular expertise and to receive feedback and advice on certain deliverables and decisions. Other leaders may attend monthly board meetings or committee meetings. For example, the Director of

Operations and contracted finance company (e.g., Charter School Business Management (CSBM) may join finance committee meetings, while the Manager of Student Supports and Assistant Principal may join the curriculum & culture committee. The Principal will collaborate with the board and various committee chairs on the annual meeting calendar, scheduling, and agendas.

Organizational charts for the first and fifth years of operation are presented below.

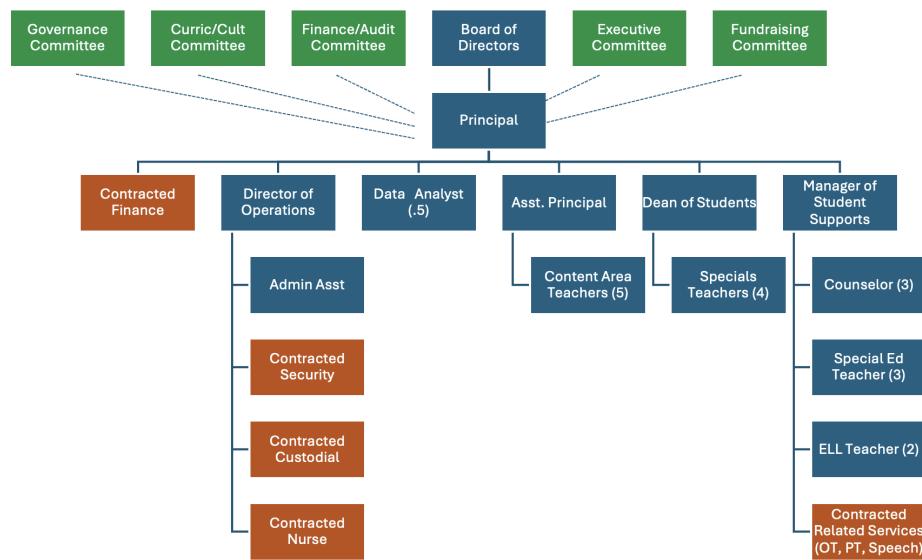
In year 1, the Director of Operations (DO), Manager of Student Supports (MSS) and content area/specials teachers report to the Principal. The DO will manage the administrative assistant and contracted security, custodians and the nurse, while the MSS will supervise and support special education and EL/ML teachers, as well as contracted related service personnel (OT, PT, Speech, etc.).

### Year One Organizational Chart (13.5 FTE)



In the second and third years, as student enrollment grows, this instructional leadership team will expand by one each year, first with an assistant Principal (year 2), then with a Dean of Students (year 3), who will both report to the Principal. The Principal will seek to transition the managing and coaching of teachers to both leaders. All content teachers will report to the AP, while the specialty teachers (music, art, etc.) will report to the Dean. The special education and EL/ML teachers, as well as the Counselor/social worker, will continue to report to the MSS. It is likely that the Principal will collaborate closely with the MSS, AP and DS to coach and evaluate teachers, particularly in the early years of the school, to best ensure effective and improving instructional practice and leadership. This will be critical to retain PROUD Academy's most effective teachers. The Director of Operations will supervise the operations team, which will grow from one half time to one full time administrative assistant in year 2.

## Year Five Organizational Chart (23.5 FTE)



This structure provides the greatest opportunity for the Principal to share and distribute leadership. Coaching in this manner will happen in weekly 1:1 meetings, a routine format which the MSS, AP, DO, and DS will also follow with the individuals they directly supervise. Coaching will, however, not only happen in these dyads, but will be strategically and flexibly arranged in smaller and larger purposeful groups and teams, driven by data and priorities, needs and interests. Teachers will have protected time for weekly team meetings and small and large group professional development.

The leadership team will meet at least weekly, according to a schedule determined by the Principal that achieves the right balance of instructional and operational, short- and long-term goals and priorities, and support for development and accountability for performance.

On the Board level, committees include governance, curriculum/culture, finance/audit, executive and fundraising. Ongoing monitoring of outreach and enrollment will occur via a monthly data dashboard reviewed by the entire Board and used by the finance committee to make short-term adjustments and longer-range plans.

**b. Describe the criteria for selecting officers and members of the governing council. List the individuals as officers and members of the governing council; include their names, relevant experience, and/or qualifications for serving on the council, as well as their relationship to the community in which the school would be located. Please note that the council should include the involvement of teachers, parents, and the chairperson of the local or regional board of education of the town in which the proposed school would be located, or the designee of such chairperson, provided such designee is a member of the board of education or the superintendent of schools for the district or his/her designee.**

As noted in the previous response, the PROUD Academy Board of Directors currently includes 10 members; 9 voting members and one ex-officio, who is the founder. Several members are

educators, two are attorneys and a number hold leadership roles within the communities PROUD Academy aims to serve. Over half of current board members identify as a member of the LGBTQ+ community or are the parents/caregivers of an LGBTQ+ child, while 40% are individuals of color. Several have deep experiences fostering educational and organizational equity and inclusion efforts.

The BOD is in the process of formalizing the criteria and processes for selecting additional members, which will be included, along with bylaws, relevant policies and expectations, in a comprehensive Board Orientation Manual. Initially and then on an annual basis, the BOD will:

1. Complete a board composition matrix, utilizing a template developed by an organization such as BoardSource or BoardonTrack,<sup>66</sup> to identify priority skill sets of new board members.
2. Consider the current and future needs and goals of the school to inform recruitment priorities. For example, a human resources/talent professional may help the Principal to develop job descriptions, create an equitable talent cycle protocol and advise on emerging personnel issues. Real estate or construction expertise is likely to be invaluable as PROUD Academy seeks a permanent home and/or engages in facilities projects and renovations.
3. Carefully track the identities of the students and families PROUD Academy to ensure these are adequately represented on the governance level. The board may want to lift the voices of others who attend the school and may experience marginalization, such as those who are or were EL/ML, have learning disability or belong to certain cultural, ethnic or community groups.

Upon approval, PROUD Academy intends to offer Stephanie Ocasio-Gonzalez, a member of the Ansonia Board of Education, a seat on our board. As students apply, enroll and attend our school, the Board will seek representation from a parent/caregiver and a teacher as well.

**c. Describe the plan to appoint subsequent officers and members to the governing council. Please detail the recruitment, selection, and removal procedures.**

PROUD Academy has already assembled a board composed of members representing diverse identities, areas of expertise and local communities. As the Board evolves and seeks new members, PROUD Academy will reference a board matrix, updated at least annually, to evaluate the board's capacity and expertise and prioritize addressing gaps or meeting needs. Board members will have backgrounds in law, finance, education, fundraising, business and real estate. They will be deeply passionate about and committed to PROUD Academy's mission and students and the Naugatuck Valley area and will be able to participate in board and committee meetings and have no conflicts of interest. They will see themselves as ambassadors for the school more generally, performing appropriate collective oversight, celebrating milestones and engaging additional members, volunteers and supporters. Recruitment, selection and removal procedures are detailed in the bylaws, **Appendix C**.

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<sup>66</sup> <https://boardsource.org/fundamental-topics-of-nonprofit-board-service/composition-recruitment/recruiting-your-board/#board-recruitment-plan>; <https://boardontrack.com/>

d. Describe how the governing council will exercise oversight and responsibility for the overall operation of the school, including, but not limited to, educational programs, governance and fiscal management, personnel, facility maintenance, and community outreach. In addition, please explain how the governing council will hold the proposed school accountable to both families and stakeholders.

The Principal will deliver an oral and written report monthly to the board, and more frequently as may be requested by the Board. The board will also receive formal dashboards with information on a range of academic, disciplinary, operational, and financial measures of the school's performance, provided by the Principal and/or appropriate designees. Different committees will closely examine data and information relevant to their areas of focus and to fulfill regulatory obligations.

The Board will meet monthly. Committee meetings will typically be scheduled on a routine basis based on the area of focus, available data and information, and necessary tasks to be completed. For example, the finance committee will likely meet more often between January and April to draft, review, revise and finalize the annual budget. The curriculum & culture committee will align its meeting schedule with the student assessment calendar.

PROUD Academy extends its commitment to centering the voices of our community stakeholders – including families, students, and staff – to engagement with the Board of Directors. We are committed to ensuring that our stakeholders are informed of and have access to multiple venues for feedback to be considered by school leadership and the Board. While we cannot ensure that every stakeholder will see the desired outcome of their feedback, we will listen and consider all feedback in our decisions. Ultimately, all decisions of leadership and the board must be driven by the calculation of what best serves the mission of the organization. We will solicit feedback from all stakeholders using the following approaches:

- We will ensure families, staff, and students will have multiple and varied opportunities for feedback via our annual surveys focused on all key stakeholders: Families, staff, and students will have multiple opportunities to provide feedback – either via survey, focus group, or interview. The feedback gleaned will be considered by school leadership and by the board as a part of our full program evaluation annual process.
- We will dedicate a portion of each meeting of the board to public comment: Any member of the public may give comment during this portion for consideration by the board.
- Once PROUD Academy has launched its initial school year (fall 2026), we intend to engage in outreach to invite a current teacher and parent/caregiver of an enrolled student to join the Board. Interested individuals would go through the same acclimation and orientation as any other board candidate and support them to feel comfortable leveraging their voice and navigating their membership roles.
- The school will establish a family staff association for families to build relationships with one another and with staff. They will be encouraged to meet at the school, routinely share their perspectives and ideas with the Principal and propose, support, and facilitate school-based initiatives aligned to our mission. Parents/caregivers as well as staff will be welcome to attend Board meetings as well.

e. Describe the authority the governing council will delegate to the school's administrator. Explain the process by which the council and administration will make decisions and provide evidence of the distinct roles and responsibilities of council officers, members, committees, and school administration.

The Board, which will legally hold the charter, will be formally installed along with its officers, at an organizational planning meeting shortly after authorization. In exchange for the autonomies that the charter provides, the Board will be accountable for results and therefore responsible for ensuring that the school meets or exceeds all academic and organizational goals, complies with all federal, state, and local laws, and operates on a sound financial basis in the short-and long-term. The Board holds the legal duties of care, duty, and obedience, meaning that they are charged with caring for the organization without any self-interest, with discharging all governance responsibilities in all years of service, and obeying both the decisions of the board and all laws which apply to it and to the school.

The BOD will delegate the day-to-day management of the school to the Principal. The Board will provide oversight, with input from the Principal, while the Principal will be responsible for management, with the Board providing advice. The Board and Principal will collaboratively partner to make shared decisions in certain areas. Examples of decision areas are noted along the left side of the table below.

<b>OVERSIGHT: Governance</b> Mission & Vision, Board Structure, School Leader Supervision & Evaluation, Policies	Board Decisions	Leader Advise
<b>PARTNERSHIP</b> School Goals, Student Outcomes, Education Plan, Budget Development, Enrollment, Facilities, HR/Employment Terms	Shared Decisions: Board and Leader	
<b>MANAGEMENT: Leadership</b> Staffing (Full Talent Cycle), Academic Programs, Operational Systems & Procedures, Stakeholder Communication	Board Advise	Leader Decisions

f. Describe the criteria and process by which the governing council will hire and evaluate the school's administrator(s).

Our Principal job description is included in the Human Resource Policies response, Section III-6. The Principal will be selected based on experience and skills working with adults to improve their practice. First and foremost, candidates must share in our belief that all students can achieve at the highest levels regardless of race, ethnicity, disability, native language, gender identity or sexual orientation. They must possess solid content knowledge, a large instructional toolbox filled with diverse strategies for meeting the academic and social-emotional needs of all students, a commitment to using data to inform instruction, and evidence of impact on student learning and development. We are particularly eager to seek out candidates who have demonstrated experience supporting and advocating for children and adults who identify as members of the LGBTQ+ community, as this is the core mission of our school.

Upon authorization, the board will review and approve the job description for the Principal, establish annual compensation for that position, and recruit, interview and vote to hire the strongest candidate for the role. As noted in the School Leader response, our outreach efforts will be far-reaching, After advertising and screening applications, we will implement a multi-phase hiring process, with at least 3 candidates, that at a minimum includes:

- Initial phone screen
- Performance task(s)
- Virtual and in-person interview(s)
- Reference checks

The Principal will be formally evaluated, at least annually, by the Board of Directors. The process will be in alignment with the Connecticut Guidelines for Educator and Leader Evaluation and Support,<sup>67</sup> which is described in more detail in the Human Resource Policies section. An Evaluation Committee will be convened for this purpose. The Evaluation Committee will consist of at least three members – the Board Chair, and one member each from the Finance and the Academic Committees. The committee will solicit the input of the entire board through a survey but will be responsible for conducting and completing the annual evaluation. The Committee will utilize multiple data sources in its evaluation, including the academic performance data reviewed by the Academic Committee, financial data reviewed by the Finance Committee, and family, staff, and student feedback data as captured through the school's annual participatory surveys. The board will engage in dialogue with the Principal to identify areas of strength and priorities for development and support the Principal in identifying opportunities for learning and growth.

**g. For applicants planning to partner with an organization:** Detail any plans to contract with an organization and explain why the organization was chosen to assist with the proposed school. If the governing council of the proposed charter school intends to contract with a charter management organization for whole school management services, include a description of the following:

PROUD Academy does not intend to formally partner with a charter management organization.

### **3. School Leader**

**a. For applicants with an identified school leader:** List the name of the individual who will serve as the lead administrator of the proposed school as well as their qualifications, experience, certifications, and education. In addition, please provide evidence that demonstrates whether the individual has a record of leading a high-quality school.

**b. For applicants without an identified school leader:** Present a plan for attracting and hiring a lead administrator with a proven record of success. Please describe the characteristics and skills that the proposed school will look for in recruiting and selecting a leader.

The PROUD Academy Board of Directors, upon authorization, will review and formally approve the job description for the Principal, and then recruit, interview and vote to hire the strongest

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<sup>67</sup> <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/digest/2023-24/ctguidelines2023.pdf>

candidate for the role.<sup>68</sup>

The PROUD Academy BOD is committed to ensuring an equitable process, from initial outreach through hiring, for all roles, starting with the Principal.

Our outreach efforts will be far-reaching. We plan to work with several local and national partners. Examples of our staff recruitment strategies are below:

- PROUD Academy website postings and social media sites
- Online career websites, including but not limited to indeed.com and idealist.org.
- College and graduate school job boards, career fairs and alumni groups/associations
- CT Charter School Association, New England Charter Schools Network, National Alliance of Public Charter Schools
- National and local LGBTQ+ organizations, such as GLSEN, GLAAD, The Trevor Project, Connecticut Pride, Triangle Community Center and many others
- Leveraging our professional networks
- Exploring engagement with search firms or individuals with track records in sourcing diverse candidates for school leadership roles, such as Axis Talent Partners or Alma Advisory Group.

After advertising and screening applications, we will implement a multi-phase hiring process, with at least 3 candidates, that at a minimum includes:

- Initial phone screen
- Performance task(s)
- Virtual and in-person interview(s)
- Reference checks

Our Principal job description is included in the human resource policies response, Section III-6. The Principal will be selected based on experience and skills working with adults to improve their practice. First and foremost, candidates must share in our belief that all students can achieve at the highest levels regardless of race, ethnicity, disability, native language, gender identity, or sexual orientation. They must possess solid content knowledge, a large instructional toolbox filled with diverse strategies for meeting the academic needs of all students, a commitment to using data to plan instruction, and demonstrable evidence of student success. Further, we are particularly eager to seek out candidates who have demonstrated experience supporting and advocating for children and adults who identify as members of the LGBTQ+ community, as this is the core mission of our school.

In addition, we seek the following competencies, assets and experience:

**Competencies:**

- Solution-oriented.
- Maintains optimism, perseverance and patience around changes, challenges and ambiguity.
- Data-driven, ambitious and outcomes-oriented.
- Communicates clearly and persuasively.

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<sup>68</sup> The hire of the Principal will be contingent upon a criminal background check in compliance with Part 87 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education and the Safe Schools Against Violence in Education (SAVE) legislation (Chapter 180 of the Laws of 2001).

- A high degree of comfort and confidence modeling effective classroom management and instruction.
- Knowledge of best practices in adult learning.
- Ability to prioritize and manage multiple obligations and initiatives, strong attention to detail and excellent time management.
- Knowledge of change management theory and practice, team building, and group dynamics.
- Models lifelong learning through professional development and individual growth activities.

**Assets:**

- Holds a deep belief that all students can learn and achieve, and that all families deserve access to high-quality public schools.
- Capacity to develop strong relationships based on trust, respect, effective communication, and common goals.
- Entrepreneurial mindset with a commitment to preserving a bold, can-do culture that sustains the organization's core values.
- Collaborative decision-making style, with a proven track record of working effectively with individuals at all levels to drive decision-making and results.
- Commitment to leveraging the existing strengths and supporting the continuous evolution of our communities, students, families and staff members.
- Master's degree in an education field/administration and supervision.
- Spanish-speaking strongly preferred.

**Experience:**

- Minimum of 5 years as an effective, impactful classroom teacher, preferably in the middle grades.
- Minimum of 2 years leading, coaching, and consulting with teachers.
- Track record of achieving impressive quantitative and qualitative outcomes.
- Experience planning, developing, facilitating and evaluating high-impact professional development.
- Familiarity with data housing options and digital learning systems (e.g. PowerSchool, Google Classroom, on-line curriculum platforms).
- Strong command of all Microsoft Office and Google Suite programs.
- Experience in charter schools strongly preferred.

**4. Evidence of Support**

a. Illustrate the scope of community support for the proposed school. Please provide evidence through letters of support, surveys, petitions or other means, the endorsement of teachers, parents, students, business, community members and/or institutional leaders; such evidence of support must be current or recent.

PROUD Academy, Inc has been deeply immersed in the community since we formally became a nonprofit organization on June 28, 2021.

The Founder of PROUD Academy, in close collaboration with the PROUD Academy Board of Directors, has completed considerable community outreach across the Naugatuck Valley and throughout the State of Connecticut. We have received feedback from a range of stakeholders, from community leaders to families, and, of course, from students directly. These efforts will be ongoing to develop trusting and mutually supportive relationships within our communities, agencies, organizations, and local families. Ultimately, as the first public charter school in the Naugatuck Valley, we not only hope to enhance the educational landscape and become threaded into the fabric of these communities, but moreover to serve as a model for schools across the state, region, and country.

In fact, PROUD Academy's founder, as she sought out relationships with schools and leaders engaged in similar work, established **The National LGBTQ+ School Alliance**. The purpose of the Alliance is to support each other and be a resource as a public, charter, or private school for LGBTQ+ youth and allies as we begin to open around the nation. Presently, we have engaged four schools in operation. Another five schools intend to open in 2025 or 2026; PROUD Academy is one of them. The co-founder of the Trevor Project, Celeste Lescene, is also a member of the Alliance.

The **PROUD Academy website** ([www.ProudAcademyCT.org](http://www.ProudAcademyCT.org)) has information about the proposed charter school. It is routinely updated and includes a link to complete the community survey.

#### **Petition Signatures (Appendix D1)**

Thus far, PROUD Academy has gathered 827 petition signatures. Signers indicated if they were members of the LGBTQ+ community, parents of an LGBTQ+ child, allies and/or community members.

#### **Connecticut Youth Survey (Appendix D2)**

New Haven Pride Center held a youth conference at SCSU on May 20-21, 2022. Over 100 surveys were collected from students from Stamford, Norwalk, New Haven, Middletown, Hartford, Seymour, New Britain, and Branford. Participant demographics are summarized in the table below.

Ages/Grades	Racial Identity	Gender Identity	Sexual Orientation	
Ages 9-18, in grades 4-12. 25% 9-12 17% 13-14 39% 15-16 19% 17-18	65% BIPOC 30% biracial 5% white	47 female 17 male 15 transgender 21 nonbinary	26 bisexual 15 pansexual 9 lesbian 8 heterosexual 6 asexual 6 questioning 3 gay	9 unsure 8 other: • 1 sapphic • 2 genderfluid • 1 omnisexual • 1 queer • 1 biromantic • 1 omniromantic

## **Response Trends**

Trends in responses largely informed the overall philosophy, key values and design of PROUD Academy. Students:

- Highlighted issues related to the overall school environment. They wanted **increased safety** (including security); an **accepting, welcoming and affirming space for everyone**, no matter their identity; gender-neutral bathrooms; and a disability accessible/friendly building. Students also mentioned tuition and transportation as barriers to access that an ideal school environment would proactively address.
- Emphasized the need for **supportive, accepting and understanding staff**; they wanted teachers they could talk to, who pay attention, and “can pick up on when we are being discriminated against.” One student felt that the “school nurse should accept and understand gender identities.”
- Described a desire for **inclusive academic learning**, wanting “inclusive content that makes people feel normal,” such as LGBTQ+ history classes or researching the various flags and their meanings. Several sought **freedom of expression**, like artistic freedom, plays representing the LGBTQ+ community, and a school that gives “trans kids a safe space to express themselves.”
- Shared several valuable suggestions for **collective student support and learning**, including LGBTQ+ inclusive sex education and education about transitioning and nonbinary gender. One student noted, “I didn’t know what my identity was until I did research on websites at 2am. Students also wanted to build their leadership skills, learning how to facilitate workshops and advocate for themselves and others. There was interest expressed for affinity spaces for marginalized groups (e.g., trans, people of color), PRIDE meetings, and sexuality and gender alliance (SAGA) groups.
- Wanted **individual support and learning** as well, like LGBTQ+ relevant therapy, support for “home hardships,” guidance on “how to come out” and what to do “if someone judges us.” One student simply wrote, “make it ok for students to change (SOGI).”<sup>69</sup>
- Asked for **learning opportunities for parents, allies and the broader community**.

## **Community Survey (*Appendix D3*)**

The PROUD Academy community survey, offered as a QR code on our website and at community events, provides another avenue to gather ongoing feedback. The survey template and a summary of response data is included in ***Appendix D3***. We are still in the process of collecting more survey responses but reviewing the ones we have received thus far (n=15), trends are like the student survey described above. Top priorities for respondents were:

- 93% racially diverse staff who are LGBTQ+ allies.
- 80% Mental health support in the school
- 60% A rigorous curriculum that challenges students academically, socially and emotionally.
- 60% How to handle being bullied or harassed.
- 53% parent/caregiver support/training
- 53% Gender neutral bathrooms
- 40% Inclusive curriculum on race and LGBTQ+ history

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<sup>69</sup> SOGI stands for Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity and is an inclusive term that applies to everyone. SOGI-inclusive schools are safe spaces for students of all sexual orientations and gender identities. This means speaking about SOGI in a way that makes every student feel like they belong, and not limiting a person's potential based on their biological sex.

Respondents, who were both students and parents, expressed interest in attending:

- Student: “I would consider attending as a student because the environment would feel a lot more safer.”
- Parent: “Yes, this would be a safe, supported space.”
- Parent: “Yes I would consider enrolling my child in proud academy because they will be able to be themselves.”
- Parent: “My experience is that schools are not equipped to help trans kids with social issues and self esteem, making it much harder for them to learn. They don’t feel safe.”
- Parent: “I think it would be a good opportunity for expanding a closer community and helping kids feel safe and valid”.
- Parent: “I think it’s great opportunity to not only heal the community but make everyone feel safe in there own skin and body without feeling hate or resentment”

#### **Letters of Support (*Appendix D4*)**

Thus far, we have collected 34 letters of support from community leaders and families. Many of these supporters identify as members of the LGBTQ+ community or are parents/caregivers of children who identify as LGBTQ+.

#### **Local Regional and Statewide Outreach and Events (*Appendix D5*)**

PROUD Academy founder Patty Nicolari, with several current and former board members, frequented many local events in Ansonia, across the Naugatuck Valley and throughout the state of Connecticut over the past two years. These included meetings and speaking engagements, in conjunction with community organizations, town officials and political leaders, as well as events where PROUD Academy had a booth and collected petition signatures. Pride events are usually held in June with some in August, September, and October. These were ideal settings to introduce the community to PROUD Academy, survey the community, and gather signatures of support. Patty Nicolari attended several Pride events over the past three years, including those in Milford, Middletown, Bridgeport, Glastonbury, North Haven, Hamden, Norwalk, Ridgefield, Darien, Westport, West Hartford, New Haven, Guilford, Madison, Waterbury, Wilton, Haddam-Killingworth, Hartford, Norwalk, and Greenwich.

#### **Additional Evidence**

**Appendices D6, D7 and D8** include examples of an open house event flyer, a broadly distributed outreach newsletter and a statewide outreach letter to all school Counselors, respectively.

#### **Press Coverage and Media List**

The uniqueness of the PROUD Academy model has attracted media interest. Articles have been written about PROUD Academy locally, statewide, nationally, and internationally. PROUD Academy has:

- Received a Connecticut VOICE Honor Award in the future category for up-and-coming LGBTQ+ organizations in 2022.
- Featured in newspapers locally, such as the New Haven Register, CT Mirror, and the Hartford Courant; nationally from NBC and Scripps News, and internationally, including an interview from PINK News- London, England.
- Engaged in podcasts from SCSU, radio interviews by NPR national and local, WPKN in Bridgeport, and New Haven Independent.

Our founder will be featured in a book *A Year of Pride and Joy* that highlights international leaders of the LGBTQ+ community, including British actor Stephen Fry. The book will be released in 2025.

### **III. Student Composition, Services and Policies**

#### **1. School Demographics**

a. Describe the needs of the community, including demographics and the student population to be served by the proposed school, and how it will potentially increase student achievement.

As indicated by our mission, PROUD Academy aims to inclusively educate LGBTQ+ students and their peers in a safe and affirming learning community, free from bullying and harassment. As a public charter school, PROUD Academy will welcome any student who applies and gains a seat through our public lottery. PROUD Academy intends to serve students in grades six through eight and become a model and guide for many other schools, a beacon for the state of Connecticut and beyond. In the following pages, national and state trends provide overwhelming evidence of LGBTQ+ students' suboptimal school experiences. The remainder of the application includes a compelling argument for a PROUD Academy community of learners to launch, grow and thrive, in the heart of Connecticut.

#### **LGBTQ+ Youth By The Numbers**

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC),<sup>70</sup> about 1 in 4 high school students identified as LGBTQ in 2021, a significant increase from 11 percent in 2015. This includes 12.2% who identified as bisexual, 5.2% as questioning, 3.9% as other, and 3.2 percent as gay or lesbian. In terms of raw numbers, the table below indicates the estimated number of LGBT youth, ages 13-17, in the US and specifically in CT.<sup>71</sup>

	LGBT (Total)	LGB (Total)	LGB (Cisgender)	LGB (Trans)	TRANSGENDER (Total)	TRANSGENDER (Straight/Other)	TRANSGENDER (LGB)
US	1,994,000	1,924,000	1,844,000	80,000	149,750	69,000	80,000
CT	22,000	21,000	21,000	500	950	400	500

Evidence suggests that LGBTQ+ youth represent a growing population. Nationally, the population of individuals identifying as LGBTQ+ has doubled since 2012, with nearly 20 percent of Generation Z identifying as LGBTQ+.<sup>72</sup> Younger generations are identifying as nonbinary at higher rates, with researchers pointing to greater visibility and social acceptance of gender diversity as the reason why. One study found that nearly one-quarter of adolescents identifying

<sup>70</sup> <https://thehill.com/homenews/education/3975959-one-in-four-high-school-students-identify-as-lgbtq/>;  
<https://www.cdc.gov/yrbs/dstr/index.html>

<sup>71</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/yrbs/dstr/index.html>. The national total here represents 9.5% of the population of youth ages 13-17 in the United States and may not include youth who self-identify as gender expansive, queer or questioning, intersex or asexual.

<sup>72</sup> Gallup, "LGBT Identification Steady in U.S.," 2023. <https://news.gallup.com/poll/470708/lgbt-identification-steady.aspx>.

as LGBTQ+ self-identified as nonbinary.<sup>73</sup> As more youth identify as LGBTQ+, more research and public attention has been given to the unique struggles faced by this population, as well as the need for more affirmative spaces tailored to their needs.

## National Context

In the first six months of 2024, political leaders in several states, including New Hampshire, Ohio, Tennessee, Alabama and West Virginia, advanced, or sought to advance, anti-LGBTQ+ legislation, while other states, like Minnesota, Colorado, Maryland and Vermont, repelled efforts to ban books and restrict basic rights. As the governor of Washington State signed an LGBTQ+ inclusive curriculum into state law, Mississippi's governor supported regulating transgender people's use of bathrooms, locker rooms, and dormitories in public education buildings. An article published by National Public Radio (NPR) on March 22, 2024, reported that well over 500 anti-trans bills had been introduced in state legislatures since the calendar year began.<sup>74</sup>

As these and many other local struggles continue, House Republicans attempted to pass the Congressional Review Act (CRA)<sup>75</sup> in July 2024. This resolution would have reversed the Biden Administration's crucial Title IX changes that clarified and expanded protections for LGBTQ+ students and would have stripped the Education Department of its power to protect LGBTQ+ youth from discrimination in school.<sup>76</sup> The U.S. Department of Education's updated Title IX regulations officially went into effect in August 2024, marking a significant milestone in the fight for safe and inclusive learning environments for LGBTQ+ students; however, with at least nine lawsuits from 26 states attempting to block the updated Title IX rule, these regulations are temporarily blocked in 21 states (although they remain in force in Connecticut). Despite these obstacles, the rule is in effect in the remaining states and significantly expanded the patchwork of protections on which LGBTQ+ students have relied.

Adults in educational, community and political leadership roles have a direct effect on students' experience and safety, and we all must do better. In early February this year, just one day after being attacked and assaulted in a school bathroom, 16-year-old Nex Benedict, a nonbinary student in Owasso, Oklahoma, collapsed and died at home. Despite multiple injuries to their head, neck and torso, the school nurse determined that ambulance service was not required, a police officer at the hospital discouraged Nex's family from filing a report, the Tulsa County District Attorney determined that juvenile charges were "not warranted," and the "unaccredited-since-2009"<sup>77</sup> state Medical Examiner's Office deemed their death a suicide.<sup>78</sup>

<sup>73</sup> Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA): "Moving Beyond Change Efforts": Evidence and Action to Support and Affirm LGBTQI+ Youth. SAMHSA Publication No. PEP22 03-12-001. Rockville, MD: Center for Substance Abuse Prevention. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2023. Pg. 38.  
Of note, some people who describe themselves as nonbinary or another gender consider themselves transgender, while others do not.

<sup>74</sup> <https://www.npr.org/2024/03/15/1238780699/nex-benedict-nonbinary-oklahoma-death-bullying>

<sup>75</sup> [https://www.gao.gov/legal/congressional-review-act#:~:text=The%20Congressional%20Review%20Act%20\(CRA,the%20rule%20can%20take%20effect.](https://www.gao.gov/legal/congressional-review-act#:~:text=The%20Congressional%20Review%20Act%20(CRA,the%20rule%20can%20take%20effect.)

<sup>76</sup> <https://www.glsen.org/news-and-stories>

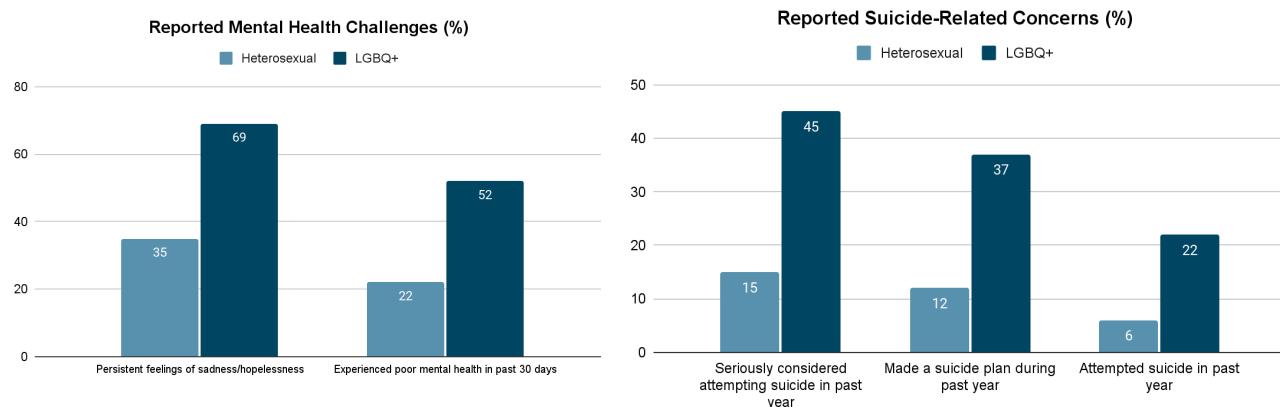
<sup>77</sup> Sarah-Kate Ellis, President and CEO of the LGBTQ+ media advocacy organization, GLAAD, as quoted in the March 15, 2024, NPR article entitled "What Happened to Nex Benedict?"

<sup>78</sup> <https://www.npr.org/2024/03/15/1238780699/nex-benedict-nonbinary-oklahoma-death-bullying>

Oklahoma's governor signed bills prohibiting trans and nonbinary youth from using bathrooms consistent with their gender identities in 2022, and banning gender-affirming care for trans youth in 2023.<sup>79</sup>

Strikingly, national trends further substantiate that the fear, the hostility, and the lack of safety Nex experienced is anything but unique. We highlight two major studies here.

The CDC's Youth Risk Behavior Survey Data Summary & Trends Report: 2011-2021<sup>80</sup> provides data on behaviors and experiences among high school students in the United States related to health and well-being. The data set included 17,232 completed questionnaires. The school response rate was 73%, while the student response rate was 79%. Close to 70% of LGBQ+ students<sup>81</sup> experienced persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness during the past year and more than 50% had poor mental health during the past 30 days. Alarmingly, almost 25% attempted suicide during the past year. The differences in terms of mental health, compared to their peers, are remarkable. The tables below present the most dramatic comparisons between students who identify as heterosexual and LGBTQ+.

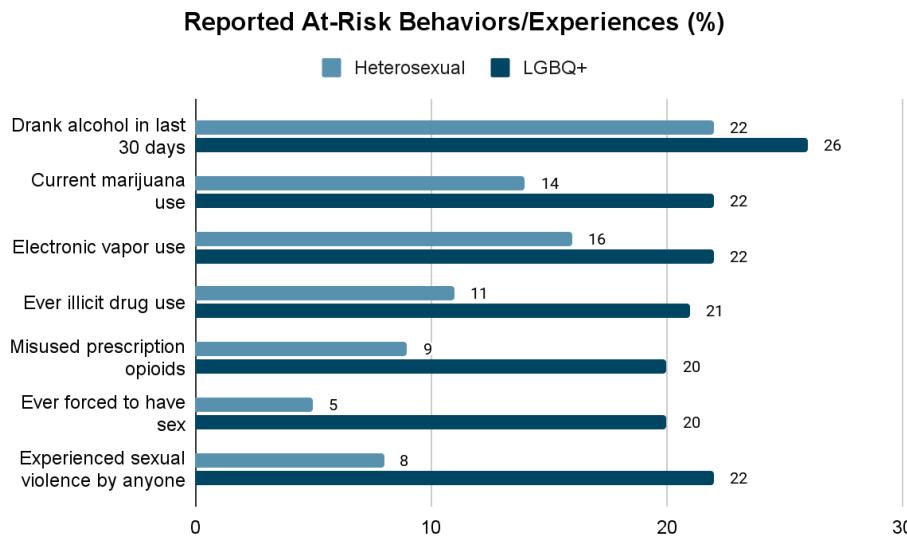


LGBQ+ students were more likely than their peers to have used or misused substances such as illicit drugs, prescription opioids, alcohol, marijuana, and electronic vapor products. They were also significantly more likely to experience violence. The table below includes these comparisons.

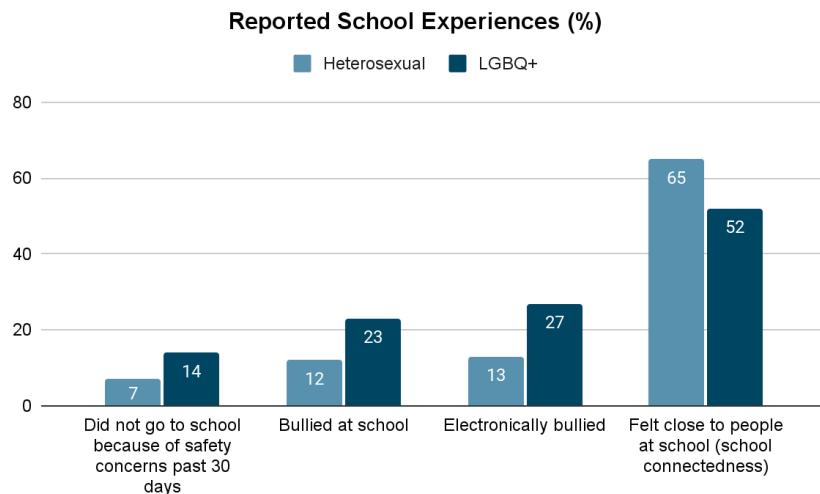
<sup>79</sup> <https://translegislation.com/bills/2023/passed>

<sup>80</sup> [https://www.cdc.gov/yrbs/dstr/pdf/YRBS\\_Data-Summary-Trends\\_Report2023\\_508.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/yrbs/dstr/pdf/YRBS_Data-Summary-Trends_Report2023_508.pdf); Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Youth Risk Behavior Survey Data Summary & Trends Report: 2013–2023*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; 2024.

<sup>81</sup> Because the 2021 national YRBS did not have a question assessing gender identity, this report does not highlight data specifically on students who identify as transgender. Therefore, the T commonly used in the acronym LGBTQ+ is not included when referring to this data set.



LGBQ+ students were also twice as likely as their heterosexual peers to report they did not go to school because of safety concerns in the past 30 days. Unsurprisingly, about one quarter of them experienced bullying, both in person and through electronic means, and less than half of them “feel close to others at school,” (the CDC’s definition of school connectedness). School connectedness will be a core priority of PROUD Academy, as it not only contributes to reducing the risks captured in the tables above; it has a long-lasting, protective impact for adolescents well into adulthood.



The 2021 National School Climate Survey: The Experiences of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Youth in Our Nation’s Schools,<sup>82</sup> was administered online from April through August 2021 by the Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network (GLSEN). Over twenty thousand (22,298) students between the ages of 13 and 21 from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, and Northern Mariana Islands completed the survey. Just over two-thirds of the sample (67.2%) was White. More than one-third (33.8%) identified as cisgender and 31.5% as nonbinary, while 30.1% identified as bisexual and 28.8% as

<sup>82</sup> <https://www.glsen.org/research/2021-national-school-climate-survey>

gay or lesbian. The average age of students in the sample was 15.4 years and they were in grades 6 to 12.<sup>83</sup>

This survey underscored that schools are generally hostile environments for large percentages of LGBTQ+ students; in fact, many LGBTQ+ students avoid school activities or miss school entirely.

- **81.8%** reported feeling unsafe in school because of at least one of their actual or perceived personal characteristics.
- **78.8%** reported avoiding school functions or extracurricular activities because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable.
- **32.2%** missed at least one entire day of school in the past month because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable; **11.3%** missed four or more days in the past month.
- **16.2%** reported having ever changed schools due to feeling unsafe or uncomfortable at school.

The vast majority of LGBTQ+ students who attended school in-person in 2021-2022 experienced in-person harassment or assault based on personal characteristics, including sexual orientation, gender expression, gender, religion, actual or perceived race or ethnicity, and actual or perceived disability.

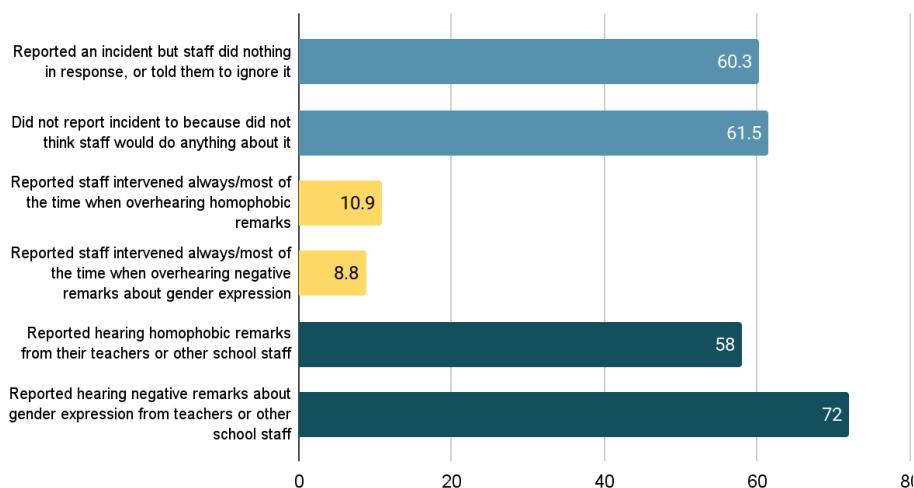
- **76.1%** experienced in-person verbal harassment (e.g., called names or threatened)
- **53.7%** were sexually harassed (e.g., unwanted touching or sexual remarks)
- **31.2%** were physically harassed (e.g., pushed or shoved)
- **12.5%** were physically assaulted (e.g., punched, kicked, injured with a weapon)

Most LGBTQ+ students did not receive appropriate - or any - support from the adults in their school buildings. Almost two-third (61.5%) chose not to report incidents to school staff because they were not confident they would get addressed. Over half (58%) to three-fourths (72%) overheard school staff making homophobic or disparaging remarks related to gender expression. The following table captures these concerning trends.

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<sup>83</sup> To obtain a representative national sample of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) youth, GLSEN conducted outreach through national, regional, and local organizations that provide services to or advocate on behalf of LGBTQ+ youth, and advertised and promoted on social media sites, such as Instagram, Facebook, and Snapchat. To ensure representation of transgender youth, youth of color, and youth in rural communities, special efforts to notify groups and organizations that work predominantly with these populations were made.

### LGBTQ+ Students Reports on School Staff Response (%)



### In Addition to Allies: LGBTQ+ Parents and Caregivers

An ally is commonly described as a person from one identity group who speaks out or takes action in support of individuals from another group.<sup>84</sup> Three characteristics commonly cited by LGBTQ+ people for effective allyship include being accepting, having humility, and taking action.<sup>85</sup> PROUD Academy intends to foster these core habits in all constituents including students, staff, and governing board members. During extensive community outreach activities, the founders of PROUD Academy have also met a significant number of interested families in which one or both parents/caregivers identify as LGBTQ+. Many reported that they will seek out PROUD Academy whether or not their children are LGBTQ+ themselves.

Between two million and 3.7 million children under age 18 have an LGBTQ+ parent. Many of these children are being raised by a single LGBTQ+ parent, or by a different-sex couple where one parent is bisexual. Approximately 191,000 children are being raised by two same-sex parents. Overall, it is estimated that 29% of LGBTQ+ adults are raising a child who is under 18.<sup>86</sup>

Research has demonstrated that children of LGBTQ+ parents fare better when they attend schools with supportive social climates; both lesbian and gay parents and their children are less likely to feel alienated, and more likely to have favorable experiences overall, when school curricula and policies are explicitly inclusive of them.<sup>87</sup> Further, Lick and colleagues (2012)

<sup>84</sup>[https://lovehasnolabels.com/learn/glossary?gad\\_source=1&gclid=CjwKCAjw2dG1BhB4EiwA998cqBvXusWmKk5DiA48rxc\\_LZRD7-AR2Q17RfuzyXfbZyBlvnAvHJ4ToxoCFsAQAvD\\_BwE#ally](https://lovehasnolabels.com/learn/glossary?gad_source=1&gclid=CjwKCAjw2dG1BhB4EiwA998cqBvXusWmKk5DiA48rxc_LZRD7-AR2Q17RfuzyXfbZyBlvnAvHJ4ToxoCFsAQAvD_BwE#ally)

<sup>85</sup> <https://www.splcenter.org/hopewatch/2024/05/31/how-to-be-effective-lgbtq-ally>; <https://hbr.org/2023/04/research-how-to-be-a-better-ally-to-the-lgbtq-community>

<sup>86</sup> <https://familiyequality.org/resources/facts-about-lgbtq-families/>; LGBT Demographic Data, 2019; Press Release 2019; Gates, Marriage and Family 2015

<sup>87</sup> Farr, R. H., Oakley, M. K., & Ollen, E. W. (2016). School experiences of young children and their lesbian and gay adoptive parents. *Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity*, 3(4), 442–447. <https://doi.org/10.1037/sgd0000187>

found that population characteristics, such as higher density of same-sex couple households, were associated with greater well-being among adult children of lesbian and gay parents.<sup>88</sup>

## **Connecticut Context**

Closer to home, five bills introduced in 2023 in the Connecticut state legislature were designed, in various ways, to restrict the expression of gender identity or shield organizations that seek to do so. Quoted in a March 13, 2023, CT Insider article, Juancarlos Soto, the executive director at the New Haven Pride Center, noted, “Sometimes we in Connecticut think that we’re immune or that those things don’t happen here,” he said. “But we see it. We see it every day, and now we see it at every level of the legislative branch.”<sup>89</sup>

Findings from the GLSEN 2019 National School Climate Survey<sup>90</sup> demonstrate that Connecticut schools were not safe for most lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) secondary school students. In addition, many LGBTQ students in Connecticut did not have access to important school resources, such as an LGBTQ-inclusive curriculum, and were not protected by supportive and inclusive school policies.

- The **vast majority** of LGBTQ students in Connecticut regularly (sometimes, often, or frequently) heard anti-LGBTQ remarks. Some also regularly heard school staff make homophobic remarks (**11%**) and negative remarks about someone’s gender expression (**27%**).
- **Most** LGBTQ students in Connecticut experienced anti-LGBTQ victimization at school. They also experienced victimization at school based on disability (**40%**), race/ethnicity (**18%**), and religion (**16%**). Most never reported the incidents to school staff (**59%**). Only **35%** of LGBTQ students who reported incidents said it resulted in effective staff intervention.
- **Many** LGBTQ students in Connecticut reported discriminatory policies or practices at their school. Almost half (**45%**) experienced at least one form of anti-LGBTQ discrimination at school during the past year.

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<sup>88</sup> Lick, D. J., Tornello, S. L., Riskind, R. G., Schmidt, K. M., & Patterson, C. J. (2012). Social climate for sexual minorities predicts well-being among heterosexual offspring of lesbian and gay parents. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*, 9, 99–112.

<https://doi.org/10.100/s13178-012-0081-6>

<sup>89</sup> <https://www.ctinsider.com/politics/article/ct-lgbtq-proposed-legislation-17827360.php>

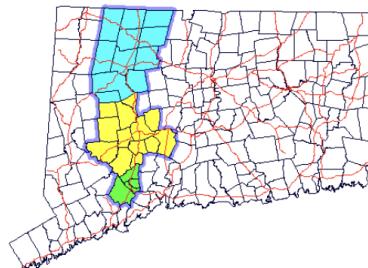
<sup>90</sup> <https://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/2021-01/Connecticut-Snapshot-2019.pdf>

## PROUD Academy Location

Proud Academy intends to primarily serve the Lower Naugatuck Valley region of Connecticut (highlighted in green on the map to the right).<sup>91</sup>



The **Lower Naugatuck Valley** refers to the watershed area of the lower valley, and includes the towns of **Shelton, Seymour, Woodbridge, Ansonia, and Derby**. The towns of Beacon Falls/Prospect, Oxford, and Naugatuck, usually grouped together in the central valley region, are also sometimes assigned to the lower valley region.



Below we have included summary tables that presents demographic information<sup>92</sup> on all of the lower and central Naugatuck Valley towns and their public-school populations. Informed by this data, we expect to attract and serve a student population that will be rich with diversity.

The region's towns vary in size and poverty levels. They represent a wide range of students who receive free or reduced lunch (from 22% to 55.8%), are identified as having disabilities (15.1% to 21.2%) and are English/multilingual learners (2.2% to 18.2%).

The Naugatuck Valley region is also becoming more racially and ethnically diverse, with a rapidly growing Latino/Hispanic population. For example, 67.8% of public-school students identify as Latino in Derby while 46.1% of students identify as such in Ansonia. Latino students represent about one-fifth of Shelton, Seymour and Naugatuck, with the percentages in Oxford and Beacon Falls/Prospect districts closer to 10%.

Although a large majority of students graduate high school in these towns, performance results on statewide English language arts (ELA) and mathematics assessments are concerning, especially in Ansonia and Derby. In Ansonia, less than half of the town's public-school students demonstrate grade level proficiency. Even more troubling, only 15.9% and 10.2% of Derby students showed proficiency in ELA and math, respectively. In fact, Ansonia, Derby and Naugatuck have been identified as Alliance Districts as a result of their accountability index scores.<sup>93</sup>

<sup>91</sup> <https://www.ctdatahaven.org/profiles/naugatuck-valley-cog>; [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lower\\_Naugatuck\\_Valley](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lower_Naugatuck_Valley); <https://greatervalleychamber.com/about/>

<sup>92</sup> [https://public-edsight.ct.gov/overview/profile-and-performance-reports?language=en\\_US](https://public-edsight.ct.gov/overview/profile-and-performance-reports?language=en_US); <https://www.advancect.org/site-selection/town-profiles>

<sup>93</sup> [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/alliance-districts/list\\_of\\_alliance\\_districts.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/alliance-districts/list_of_alliance_districts.pdf)

**Population and Poverty Levels of Residents  
Living in the Lower and Central Naugatuck Valley**

	CT	Ansonia	Derby	Shelton	Seymour	Naugatuck	Oxford	RSD 16 Beacon Falls/ Prospect
Population	3,611,317	18,954	12,373	41,206	16,766	31,653	12,801	6061
Population 0-17	742,877	3632	2089	7474	3515	6146	2689	968
Poverty/Low Income (0-17)	42%	50%	61%	20%	28%	26%	20%	8%

**Lower and Central Naugatuck Valley Public School Student Demographics**

	CT	Ansonia	Derby	Shelton	Seymour	Naugatuck	Oxford	RSD 16 Beacon Falls/ Prospect
Schools		4	6	8	4	4	4	4
Public School Students	513,000	2384	1317	4512	2113	4337	1717	1958
Free/Reduced Lunch	44%	52.3	57%	32.4%	43.6%	55.8%	14.4%	22%
Chronic Absenteeism	20%	22%	25.2%	17.4%	15.2%	27.2%	13.9%	7.6%
Students with Disabilities	17.1%	17.7%	21.2%	16.1%	16.1%	19%	15.3%	15.1%
ML/EL Learners	9.7%	8.2%	18.2%	7.5%	6.4%	10.8%	1.6%	2.2%
Latino/Hispanic	30%	46.1%	67.8%	23%	22.2%	27.4%	10.4%	9.2%
Black	12.5%	19.5%	11%	8.2%	7%	12.2%	2.4%	3.9%
White	47.5%	27.2%	14.3%	59.2%	65.2%	42.6%	82.8%	82.7%
Asian/Pacific Islander	5.2%	1.8%	2%	5.1%	3.6%	2.3%	2.6%	-
>Two races	4.5%	5.3%	4.8%	4.3%	-	5.2%	1.4%	2.7%

**Lower and Central Naugatuck Valley Public School Student Academic Performance**

	CT	Ansonia	Derby	Shelton	Seymour	Naugatuck	Oxford	RSD 16 Beacon Falls/ Prospect
2023 ELA	63.9	49.8%	15.9%	67.6%	66.0%	68.5%	69.5%	71.8%
2023 Math	48.9	46.6%	10.2%	66.4%	70.9%	54.1%	65.3%	70%
2022 HS grad	88.9	78.9%	76.6%	85.6%	86.3%	88.5%	94%	94.6%

PROUD Academy will increase the academic achievement of its students, most of whom, we expect, will have experienced significant challenges in their previous and/or current learning environments. We will recruit, prepare, and support our educators to be supportive, comprehensively addressing needs and celebrating the uniqueness of each child. We will embrace and involve our students' families. We will employ and maintain inclusive school policies and adopt and evolve our curricular resources and instructional strategies to center relevant and rigorous student learning. Further, it is our hope to serve as a partner, resource and model for our surrounding districts and schools, as they work to improve their practices to become safer and more welcoming atmospheres for all of their students.

b. Describe the grade range and ages the proposed school will serve, including grade levels upon opening and the growth plan for each year covered by the desired charter. Please provide a rationale for the enrollment plan, including reasons for choosing to serve the specific grades.

The founders of PROUD Academy have carefully contemplated the school's enrollment design, eager to be small enough to foster a safe community of belonging and large enough to serve as many interested families as possible and offer a rich, well-rounded academic program. This plan will allow PROUD Academy to develop an intimate, supportive environment in a thoughtful, methodical manner and provide teachers with the time required to build the foundational academic skills and content knowledge necessary to ensure students achieve and exceed grade level proficiency and foster a lifelong love of learning.

### **PROUD Academy Enrollment Plan**

Grade	Age	Classes per grade	Students per class	Y1: 2025-26	Y2: 2026-27	Y3: 2027-28	Y4: 2028-29	Y5: 2029-30
6	11-12	3	16-17	50	50	50	50	50
7	12-13	3	16-17		50	50	50	50
8	13-14	3	16-17			50	50	50
Total	11-14	9		50	100	150	150	150

c. Describe the procedures to be used for family and community involvement by parents and guardians of enrolled students in student learning, school activities and school decision-making.

PROUD Academy envision developing multiple pathways for family involvement, and evolving and expanding these over time as we monitor what would most benefit our students and community as a whole. We aim to foster a sense of belonging for all stakeholders by creating, and continuing to strengthen a safe, affirming and engaging learning environment for everyone. Parents and other adult caregivers will be welcomed in the building, experience ongoing communication from teachers and more formally from the school via the ParentSquare platform, reports about their children's academic and developmental progress and evidence of school-wide progress on academic and organizational accountability goals and a range of other relevant matters. We will seek their perspectives and feedback in a myriad of ways, from daily interactions at arrival and dismissal, to dialogue at family association meetings, to responses on annual satisfaction surveys. Our evolution will always be informed and influenced by the families and communities we serve and seek to serve at PROUD Academy. As described in the School Governance and Management (Section II.2), a parent/caregiver of an enrolled PROUD Academy student will be seated on the Board of Directors.

## **2. Special Education and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973**

Charter schools in Connecticut are public schools that typically enroll students through a free and open lottery process. Therefore, the proposed school must be prepared to enroll students with diverse learning needs including students with disabilities. This section of the application should describe how the school will meet the needs of special education students and those students qualified under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

a. Describe the proposed school's plan to meet the needs of students with disabilities who require a range of special education supports and related services, as required, pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504.

PROUD Academy will, at minimum, serve students identified with disabilities as it is required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504, and applicable state laws and regulations. In accordance with the CT Framework for Response To Intervention (RTI) and Scientific Research-Based Interventions (SRBI), our school aims to emphasize its philosophy of inclusion through the integration of services and instructional methods that support students with disabilities to meet and surpass grade-level proficiency academic standards and allows them to fully thrive as engaged learners.

### **Integrated Collaborative Teaching (ICT) Model**

Instructional leaders, in close partnership with special education and EL/ML teachers, will design an appropriate support system that will adhere to all regulations while prioritizing collaborative co-teaching and push-in services so that students experience the entirety of the school's instructional program and minimizing the amount of time they are separated by their peers.

Co-teaching stands as a cornerstone of our instructional model, effectively reducing student-to-teacher ratios, enhancing engagement, and fostering academic excellence across all student demographics. This approach is integral not only for adhering to the Integrated Collaborative Teaching (ICT) model as mandated for students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) but also for enriching the learning experience in general education settings. Our commitment to co-teaching extends beyond compliance, serving as a strategy to broaden instructional opportunities, promote universal access to curriculum, and cultivate an explicitly inclusive school.

### **Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)**

PROUD Academy leaders and teachers will collaborate with parents/caregivers, students and district of residence personnel to develop and implement IEPs. IEPs will be tailored to each student's unique needs and will include specific goals, accommodations, modifications, and related services as mandated by IDEA. IEP meetings to review and update student goals, accommodations, and services based on progress and changing needs will be conducted at least annually and on an as needed basis.

### **Section 504 Plans**

PROUD Academy will identify students who require Section 504 plans through a comprehensive evaluation process, then develop and implement 504 plans that outline necessary accommodations and modifications to ensure equal access to education. The school will regularly monitor the effectiveness of 504 plans and make necessary adjustments in collaboration with parents/caregivers and educators.

### **Provision of Academic Services and Supports**

PROUD Academy will provide specialized instruction as mandated by each student's IEP and/or Section 504 plan. This may include specialized instruction, integrated collaborative teaching, special education teacher support services (SETSS) inside or outside of the classroom and assistive technology.

### **Provision of Related Services**

PROUD Academy will provide or arrange for mandated related services such as speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, counseling, and social work services as specified in IEPs and 504 plans.

### **Provision of Behavioral Supports**

PROUD Academy will implement restorative practice strategies and as needed, positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) to address behavioral challenges and promote a positive school environment.

### **Classroom Supports**

PROUD Academy has also intentionally selected curricula that offer scaffolds and alternatives for diverse learners, particularly those who are formally identified with disabilities. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, classrooms, and the school building more broadly, will be appropriately accessible, adaptable and flexible. Many students who are differently-abled benefit from sensory items like fidgets and assistive technology, flexible seating, visuals, etc. We will maintain compliance with any necessary items in accordance with the supplementary aids section of the IEP.

### **Data-Informed Instruction**

Within and beyond curriculum programs, teachers regularly collect formative assessment data to enable differentiation of services for each student. This data systematically informs a range of interventions and supports and decisions made through our MTSS RtI processes.

**b. Clearly indicate that the proposed school understands its responsibility to meet the requirements of individualized education programs and Section 504 plans and has a detailed plan for the provision of certified personnel, receipt and retention of appropriate documentation, student assessments, classroom adaptations, and sufficient professional development for staff.**

A **Manager of Student Supports (MSS)** will serve as the primary liaison to districts of residence, coordinate special education child find, facilitate and monitor IEP development and review processes, supervise and coach special education and EL/ML teachers, as well as the Counselor(s), and provide professional development and guidance to all PROUD Academy staff members. The MSS will also arrange for students to receive speech and language, occupational and physical therapy services, either on site or in close proximity to the school, based on what is available and convenient for families.

The MSS is responsible for the receipt, organization, confidentiality, secure storage and retention of all records, including but not limited to IEPs, Section 504 forms and all

documentation related to students identified with disabilities. All student records will be held securely in compliance with IDEA, 504, state law and the requirements of students' sending districts. The school will also ensure that data is regularly submitted to the state and to students' PPT in their sending district as required and will adhere to all FERPA guidelines and other best practices regarding record-keeping and confidentiality. The MSS will ensure timely updates and compliance with legal requirements and establish procedures for regular compliance monitoring to ensure adherence to IDEA and Section 504 regulations.

In addition to arranging for appropriate personnel to have access to, understand the content of and align their practices to each student's special education mandated services and recommended instructional modifications and adjustments, the MSS will provide ongoing professional development to ensure staff are knowledgeable about IDEA and Section 504 requirements, as well as best practices in special education.

Using a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather comprehensive data, the MSS will work in close collaboration with special education and general education teachers as well as families, to conduct initial evaluations and reevaluations to identify student needs and determine eligibility for special education services. She/he/they will track student progress toward IEP goals and adjust instructional strategies as needed.

**Special education-trained and certified teachers** provide integrated collaborative teaching, push-in or pull out individual or group mandated academic support and targeted academic intervention for those students with identified learning disabilities and who are designated as at-risk. PROUD Academy will staff at least one special education teacher on each grade level to adequately support its inclusion approach. The Principal, in collaboration with the MSS, may determine, based on student need and IEP recommendations, to focus special education teachers on specific content areas (e.g. humanities/social studies and math/science) in order to provide more intense, seamless learning supports.

**Counselor/social workers** will support students who are mandated for counseling or deemed to be at-risk for socio-emotional needs.

**Classroom teachers** will provide necessary accommodations and modifications to ensure students with disabilities have access to the general education curriculum. This includes assistive technology, adapted materials, and differentiated instruction.

c. Describe the policies and procedures to ensure that students who may be eligible to receive special education and related services, under either IDEA or Section 504, are referred to their school district of residence or to the staff of the proposed school for evaluation.

PROUD Academy will ensure that it maintains and implements policies to ensure that students who may be eligible to receive special education and related services under IDEA are provided internally and/or referred to their school district of residence for evaluation. In all cases, PROUD Academy will communicate with such school districts regarding the student's needs. In order to ensure that this process is equitable and transparent, PROUD Academy will seek to establish formal memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with sending districts, guided by best

practice language released from the Center for Learner Equity.<sup>94</sup> The MOUs will articulate the responsibilities of each party for the services provided to students as well as the necessary screenings to determine where services may be needed.

We expect that each sending district of residence will:

- Hold planning and placement team (PPT) meetings for students with disabilities.
- Pay, on a quarterly basis, an amount equal to the difference between the reasonable cost of education such students and amounts received by our school to educate them from state, federal, local and private sources calculated on a per pupil basis.
- Determine student eligibility for services.
- Develop IEPs

We expect to work collaboratively with each sending district of residence to:

- Ensure high quality services and compliance with the applicable federal and state laws and their accompanying regulations relate to the delivery of services to students attending PROUD Academy
- Develop and implement transition plans for students moving between schools.
- Parental engagement, support and dispute resolution

PROUD Academy expects to:

- Ensure students with disabilities who enroll in our school receive all services mandated in their IEPs, whether provided by the school or the district.
- Implement a pre-referral process. Teachers, parents, or other stakeholders who suspect a student may have a disability can refer the student to the MSS for evaluation.
- Submit a formal request for evaluation to the student's school district of residence or conduct the evaluation in-house if appropriate.
- Monitor IEPs and all related data; share data with district PPTs.
- Provide core instructional supports to students.

In compliance with federal special education law, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004) and its implementing regulations, in combination with the State's special education law, PROUD Academy is also responsible for the identification, monitoring, and support of students with 504 plans. We will identify the need for 504 plans through student records, student and parental communication, and, when needed, the school's RtI process. Should a 504 plan be established, PROUD Academy will make the necessary accommodations to support each individual learner. Examples of accommodations may include:

- Preferential seating
- Extended time on tests and assignments
- Reduced homework or class
- Verbal, visual, or technology aids
- Modified textbooks or audio-video materials
- Behavior management support
- Adjusted class schedules or grading
- Verbal testing
- Excused lateness, absence, or missed classwork
- Pre-approved nurse's visits
- Occupational or physical therapy

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<sup>94</sup> <https://www.centerforlearnerequity.org/wp-content/uploads/Between-a-Rock-and-a-Hard-Place.pdf>

**d. Provide a plan to engage the parents of students with disabilities.**

Parents and caregivers of students with disabilities will be engaged routinely and in multiple ways. Regular communications include IEP/Section 504 meetings to discuss student progress, update goals, and review accommodations and services, as well as progress reporting and updates on student performance and achievement of IEP/504 goals.

Leaders and teachers will also offer workshops on topics such as understanding IEPs and 504 plans, supporting learning at home, and navigating special education services and training sessions for parents/caregivers on effective advocacy, special education rights, and available resources. PROUD Academy will also create opportunities for collaboration and input by administering surveys to gather parent/caregiver feedback on special education services and identify areas for improvement and involve them in decision-making processes. The school intends to facilitate individual and group support so families can connect, share experiences, and receive emotional support, offer relevant resources.

All communication with parents/caregivers will be accessible, including translations and interpreters for non-English speaking families and leveraging digital technologies platforms such as ParentSquare and the PROUD Academy website. School activities will be inclusive and accommodating for parents of students with disabilities.

By implementing these comprehensive plans and procedures, PROUD Academy will effectively meet the needs of students with disabilities, ensure compliance with IDEA and Section 504, and foster strong partnerships with parents/caregivers to support student success.

**3. English Learners/Multilingual Learners**

Charter schools in Connecticut are public schools that typically enroll students through a free and open lottery process. Therefore, the proposed school must be prepared to enroll students with diverse learning needs, including English learners/Multilingual learners (ELs/MLs), all of whom must be provided with full and meaningful access to the general education curriculum. This section of the application should describe the school's EL/ML programs and services, and how they will be implemented.

**a. Present a comprehensive plan that addresses the proposed school's methods and strategies for identifying and serving EL/ML students, administering the mandated annual Language Assessment Scale (LAS) Links assessment and how students will exit from the program. In addition, present how data will be used to inform instruction and how the school will monitor the continued progress of exited EL/ML students.**

The Manager of Student Supports (MSS) will coordinate and monitor the process of identifying and serving EL/ML students at PROUD Academy, with support from the ML/EL teacher and other staff as needed. PROUD Academy will follow the CSDE's English Learner/Multilingual Learner Identification Process for all students entering Grades K-12,<sup>95</sup> noted below.

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<sup>95</sup><https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/student-assessment/special-populations/2024-csde-elml-identification-process-5-2-24.pdf>;  
<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/student-assessment/special-populations/csde-elml-identification-flowchart-grades-k-12-april-2024.pdf>

1. A newly enrolled student at PROUD Academy who is coming directly from another district within the Connecticut public school system is likely to have a previously completed Home Language Survey on file in the EdSight Secure platform. The MSS will log into this platform to collect all necessary information. All newly enrolled students enrolling in PROUD Academy from another state's public school system, a private school, or another country will be administered a Home Language Survey during the enrollment period.
2. For students who enroll at the beginning of the school year, the identification of ELs/MLs must occur within the first 30 days after enrollment. If students enroll during the school year, identification must occur within the first two weeks of enrollment.
3. Whether the MSS reviewing the HLS already completed, or asks parents/caregivers to submit a form, the MSS will review the HLS results to determine if it indicates the student may have a primary or home language other than English (PHLOTE) and may be an English learner/multilingual learner.
4. If the HLS indicates the student may have a PHLOTE, the approved English language proficiency (ELP) screener, the LAS Links Placement Test 2nd Edition English version will be administered.
5. If the student's results on the ELP screener indicate the student is an English learner/multilingual learner, then the student is identified as EL/ML.
6. The student's parent/caregiver will then be informed of the service option(s) and select the service that their child will receive, or they may waive language services. Parents/caregivers may modify their service selection at any time.
7. All EL/ML identified students will be required to participate in the annual English language proficiency assessment until the student meets exit criteria, whether or not their parents/caregivers elect to receive services. Students' EL/ML status will also be reported in the CSDE's Public School Information System (PSIS).
8. Students exiting formal ML/EL services will receive:
  - a. Transition support to ensure they continue to succeed in the general education program.
  - b. Ongoing monitoring of academic and linguistic progress for at least two years to ensure sustained success.

Test accommodations may be provided to ML/EL students for all English literacy school-wide assessments. These include:

- Time extensions (i.e., time and a half of productive test-taking).
- Separate locations and/or small group administration.
- Bilingual glossaries and dictionaries (word-for-word translations only).
- Simultaneous use of English and other available language editions.
- Oral translations for lower incidence languages (languages for which the city or state have no translated written versions of the test).
- Written responses in the native language; and,
- Third reading of listening selections (only for the state English Language Arts assessments).

**b. Describe the proposed school's plan to support a responsive general education classroom that will provide EL/ML students access to the general education program.**

As described in the instruction section, PROUD Academy will develop and foster a culture of inclusion that promotes student engagement and high expectations for academic achievement. The American Institutes for Research, in its 2012 pocket guide entitled "Supporting English Language Learners," encourages adopting the term "emergent bilinguals" to reframe their burgeoning strengths away from a deficit perspective.<sup>96</sup> With emergent bilinguals being one of the fastest-growing segments among school-age children in the U.S. (according to the National Center of Educational Statistics, one out of 10 children in classrooms across the nation are emergent bilinguals), PROUD Academy is eager to honor students' heritage while simultaneously accelerating their learning.

We intend to consider the characteristics and dynamics of the student population, classroom, school, and community. The Center for Instruction, in "Instructional Models and Strategies for Teaching English Language Learners,"<sup>97</sup> offers a set of guiding questions to explore in order to best support this population. For example, the MSS may ask families at enrollment:

- How long has your child lived in the U.S. (e. g., are they recent immigrants, second-generation, etc.)?
- What kinds of language resources are available to your child at home or in their community?
- What type of prior schooling has your child received, and in what languages?

The Principal, MSS and/or ML/EL teacher will also assess:

- The experience levels of ML/EL and content area teachers.
- The levels and types of experience teachers have working with EL/ML students.
- The strengths, weaknesses and evidence of effectiveness of core and supplementary curriculum materials for ML/ELs.
- Students' level of background knowledge in the content area of interest

Generally speaking, students will work in a combination of flexible instructional modalities — whole-group, small-group, and individual practice. Instructional leaders, in close partnership with EL/ML teachers, will design an appropriate support system that will adhere to all regulations while prioritizing integrated collaborative teaching (ICT) and other push-in services so that all students experience the entirety of the school's instructional program and minimize the amount of time they are separated from their peers. EL/ML students will not be excluded from curricular and extracurricular activities based on their limited ability to speak and understand the language of instruction, and EL/ML students will not be assigned to special education because of their lack of English proficiency.

Teachers will leverage small class size (16-17), the use of technology and differentiation strategies. Further, curriculum programs have been identified that include differentiated materials designed specifically for English language learners. In addition, focused and research-based best practices for literacy will also benefit EL/MLs. A few examples include:

<sup>96</sup> [https://www.air.org/sites/default/files/downloads/report/ELL\\_Pocket\\_Guide1\\_0.pdf](https://www.air.org/sites/default/files/downloads/report/ELL_Pocket_Guide1_0.pdf)

<sup>97</sup> Moughamian, A. C., Rivera, M. O., & Francis, D. J. (2009). Instructional models and strategies for teaching English language learners. Portsmouth, NH: RMC Research Corporation, Center on Instruction.

- **Strategic Close Reading Practices:** EL/MLs engage with longer narratives and more intricate texts with teacher supports and scaffolds accommodating the student by providing access to content-vocabulary, schema for passages, and paraphrasing as needed, but without significantly modifying texts to ensure rigor is maintained. Teachers will incorporate additional scaffolding such as graphic organizers, and sentence frames to facilitate comprehension and analysis.
- **Diverse Text Selection:** Our curriculum includes a variety of texts, including informational texts relevant to students' interests and backgrounds. Providing exposure to diverse genres and formats helps EL/MLs build vocabulary and background knowledge essential for understanding complex texts.
- **Explicit Vocabulary Instruction:** Teachers employ explicit vocabulary instruction techniques to build EL/MLs' background knowledge and support their engagement with complex texts. Incorporating visual aids, realia, and contextual examples enhances vocabulary acquisition and retention.

More specifically, EL/ML teachers will work closely with content area teachers to provide Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE), a strategy for English-only classrooms. SDAIE strategies give ELs access to the core curriculum while promoting English language development. Growing out of work done by Krashen (1982), SDAIE comprises strategies that provide grade-appropriate academic content in English to EL/MLs with intermediate-level knowledge of English speaking, writing, reading, and listening. The SDAIE methodology emphasizes the use of realia, manipulatives, visuals, and graphic organizers, with plentiful opportunities for peer interaction. Such multiple representations of information help EL/MLs understand academic content. One of the most important aspects emphasized in the SDAIE methodology is the use of collaborative and cooperative learning groups. Teachers also scaffold student learning through small-group instruction and the use of students' native language as appropriate; in this model, teachers are facilitators who guide students to learn academic content through the use of strategies.<sup>98</sup>

Support will always be modified as needed to meet student needs. Although PROUD Academy emphasizes inclusive, integrated support, which will primarily be operationalized by a push-in, co-teaching approach, the EL/ML teacher may determine explicit instruction, in pull-out small groups or individually, more similar to a sheltered approach, is what would serve a student best. Content area and EL/ML teachers will design and adjust instruction collaboratively, guided by assessment data and coached by the Manager of Student Supports and the Principal. As for any student, the WIN (What.I.Need.) period can also be utilized for targeted EL/ML instruction.

c. Describe the manner in which the proposed school will ensure that it provides parents and guardians of EL/ML students report cards and progress reports that address progress in both language development and academic content in the same manner and with the same frequency as general education reporting, including translation services.

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<sup>98</sup><https://www.google.com/url?q=https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED517794.pdf&sa=D&source=docs&ust=1727378022529769&usg=AOvVaw3D3ul-lxqBZkGdFBEQviuN>

Written progress reports will be translated into the primary language of parents and caregivers, and a translator who speaks and understands the language of the parent/caregiver will be assigned, ahead of time, to formal parent/teacher conferences and other meetings with teachers and leaders as requested or needed. PROUD Academy intends to leverage current staff members for this purpose but will outreach to local community organizations for additional support.

Progress reports for identified EL/ML learners will include performance details from the LAS Links Placement Test and Language Assessment Scale (LAS) Links assessment appropriate given the time of year, and the EL/ML teacher will prepare a written report indicating evidence of progress and areas of growth. The Manager of Student Supports, in partnership with the EL/ML teacher, will schedule a meeting for parents/caregivers of EL/ML students early in the school year to articulate the identification, education and assessment arc, and how it is coordinated within the overall learning experiences within each grade level.

**d. Present a detailed plan that addresses how the academic and linguistic needs of EL/ML students will be monitored and how that process will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the program and ensure that the needs of EL/ML students are met.**

Using daily and weekly achievement data and the feedback of general education, special education, and other educators shared during weekly professional development, the Director of Student Supports, as hired, will ensure that EL/MLs are receiving the supports they need, and that the school is modifying those supports and plans to address challenges and growth.

As described in the student assessment and instruction sections, we will analyze results of formative and summative assessments to track progress towards all goals. Progress in reading can be measured by assessing performance on NWEA MAP and other more targeted measures, aligned to MTSS RtI cycles. Progress in speaking will be measured by growth on practice LAS LINKS assessments routinely administered by our EL/ML teacher. The board will review all assessment results monthly, with updated data current to the most recent testing cycle, and all testing will be disaggregated by subgroups.

At least annually, school leaders will study data across the arc of the school year and more longitudinally to assess the effectiveness of ML/EL instruction, in terms of curricular materials, instructional practice and staffing.

**e. Detail how the proposed school will meet the state bilingual education requirements and federal requirements of EL/ML students by including a plan for the provision of certified personnel, receipt and retention of appropriate documentation, classroom adaptations and sufficient professional development for staff.**

PROUD Academy will comply with all applicable state and federal laws pertaining to equal opportunities for non-proficient English-speaking students and their families. This includes Connecticut's bilingual education requirements, providing bilingual instruction when the number of EL/ML students meets state thresholds and adherence to federal requirements under Title III of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), including providing language

instruction educational programs and ensuring EL/ML students attain English proficiency and meet academic standards.

The MSS will oversee EL/ML teachers, who will be properly certified. The initial staffing plan includes one EL/ML teacher position, which will be adjusted based on the student body enrolled as appropriate. EL/ML teachers are responsible not only for instruction but also for providing the classroom adaptations and supports outlined above and will ensure the receipt and retention of documents with security protocols in place to protect privacy. Upon enrollment, the school will contact previous schools/districts to seek records that may pertain to EL/ML educational services. The MSS and EL/ML teachers will be actively involved in data analysis and planning to meet students' needs.

Screening for students also will be conducted according to the process outlined above. The school will maintain an organizational system which will securely process and retain applicable records which includes keeping records in a locked cabinet. Access will be granted through a specific staff member in the office who grants permission to view the files only to appropriate staff. Sign-out logs will be kept, and staff will sit in a nearby room to review records and promptly return them. Additionally, to further protect privacy, a release of records form must be signed by parents/caregivers prior to any records being shared with another party. Information about the services and modifications to be used in accordance with each student's individualized approach will be shared by the EL/ML teacher so each teacher providing instruction is knowledgeable and prepared.

PROUD Academy aims to hire teachers who understand second-language acquisition and the role that students' first language plays in learning a second language. We will train and support our teachers to gain familiarity with the cultural backgrounds of their students and know how to identify instances where it would be helpful to provide background information about American culture. Our teachers will learn to use of a repertoire of strategies to help EL/MLs access the content delivered in English, develop their abilities to differentiate instruction for EL/MLs based on first and second-language proficiency and content knowledge, create environments that foster second-language acquisition; and communicate with parents and caregivers, who may not be literate or proficient in English.<sup>99</sup>

Professional development will also be provided for teachers on policies and procedures related to EL/ML education, with intensive support available to those who are directly involved with EL/ML students. Training and collaborative instructional planning sessions will always include attention on "high need" students, including those identified as English language learners/emerging bilinguals. These training and working sessions will be a standard part of the annual professional development plan. The staff development program will thoughtfully work to enhance appreciation for EL/ML scholars' native languages and cultures, and to provide information on the techniques, methods, and strategies appropriate for instruction. Sessions will include topics such as distinguishing between competencies of social vs. academic language and devising differentiated lesson plans to enhance the learning environment for EL/ML

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<sup>99</sup> August, D., & Shanahan, T. (Eds.). (2008). *Developing reading and writing in second language learners: Lessons from the report of the National Literacy Panel on Language Minority Children and Youth*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

scholars. EL/ML staff will also attend external training, such as through local Area Cooperative Educational Services. The MSS and EL/ML teachers will also participate in Connecticut Administrators of Programs for English Language Learners (CAPELL),<sup>100</sup> a group committed to the success of the State's EL/ML learners which actively strives to promote policies and best practices in teaching and learning to ensure equitable access. The MSS will oversee assessment, warehousing of student data in a manner that is both timely and secure, Title III obligations, and the ongoing monitoring of student supports.

#### **4. Admissions Policy and Criteria**

a. Describe the student admissions policy and criteria. Please include a plan for the admission lottery, explaining how the proposed school would enroll students during the year if spaces became available. If necessary, please indicate whether the proposed school is applying to the SBE for a waiver of the requirements of the enrollment lottery in accordance with C.G.S. § 10-66bb(j).

##### **Admissions criteria:**

PROUD Academy's admission policy, as required under federal, state and local law, is non-sectarian and does not discriminate against any student on the basis of ethnicity, national origin, gender, disability, or any other grounds that would be unlawful. Admission will not be limited on the basis of intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, athletic ability, disability, race, creed, gender, national origin, religion, or ancestry. All school aged children of Connecticut who are eligible to attend public schools will be eligible to attend PROUD Academy. In alignment with the enrollment plan, the school will initially serve grade 6, with grades 7 and 8 added, one each year, until a full 6-8 program is scaled. For admission, students must be age appropriate for the grade levels offered at the school.

The enrollment of new students will be limited to the grades served at the time, subject to the availability of open seats within each grade. PROUD Academy is not applying to the SBE for a waiver of the requirements of the enrollment lottery in accordance with C.G.S. § 10-66bb(j).

Between 9/1/25 and 4/1/26, families may complete and submit applications online via SchoolMint. Applications will be available in multiple languages. Paper applications and support for the completion of the application will be available upon request. The application will provide the school with basic information about the student, such as name, address, date of birth, and evidence of preference (sibling, child of staff member, etc.). Information sessions, advertised and open to the public, will be hosted through March. All applications must be completed and received on or before the application deadline to be included in the lottery.

##### **Lottery system:**

Students will gain access through a blind, open lottery system. First preference will be given to returning students (after the first year), who will automatically be assigned a space at the school to return. Students who are returning from the previous year will not need to reapply or re-enter the lottery. Second preference will be given to siblings of students already enrolled

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<sup>100</sup> <https://capellct.org/>

and/or siblings of students whose name is drawn in the lottery, as long as the siblings' names are also entered into the current year's lottery. All siblings are required to have applications submitted within the required time frame. A sibling will be defined as a brother, sister, or other child legally under the same parent/caregiver's care. Siblings will be granted a space if available in their grade or added to the waitlist.

All students in a preference group will be selected randomly before any student will be drawn from the next preference group. We will use the draw order of applicants after all students have been drawn and the number of seats to be filled via the lottery to determine whether students are admitted and, if not, the order of the waitlist.

Applications will be due by April 1st of each year to be included in the lottery process. The lottery will be held within two weeks of the April 1st deadline. It will be open to the public, although attendance is not mandatory. The date, time and location of the lottery will be publicly noticed.

PROUD Academy will contract the services of an independent and unaffiliated organization to conduct the public lottery in April each year. During the lottery process, all completed applications submitted during the enrollment period will be publicly drawn in random order until all applications have been drawn. Each application will be recorded and numbered in the order in which it was drawn and assigned to a specific grade. Once all available seats are filled, the remaining students in the lottery will be placed on a waitlist in the order that they are drawn. Any applications received after the 4/1/26 lottery deadline will be placed on the waitlist in the order in which they are received. Families will be notified within 48 hours of their acceptance or position on the waitlist via emails (through the SchoolMint platform) and phone calls.

With notice of acceptance, families will also receive a detailed explanation of the enrollment packet items and submission deadlines, and a list of documents that parents/caregivers need to submit to enroll their child, including birth certificate, proof of address, up-to-date immunization records and completed physical examination record. This may be shared through a streamlined, online platform like SchoolMint, PowerSchool or similar. School staff will assist families with this process as needed.

Students who were not accepted for an open seat will receive notification, with the waitlist number drawn from the lottery, informing them that they will be placed on a waitlist. Should openings become available, the waitlisted students will be contacted in the order they were drawn in the lottery. Open seats will be backfilled in all grades throughout the year. The waitlist is valid for the academic school year and will not roll over from year-to-year.

Reasonable and multiple attempts will be made to contact the families of students who are drawn for available seats during the lottery, and students at the top of the waitlist, to ascertain whether or not they are interested in enrolling at PROUD Academy before proceeding to the next name on the list. If reasonable and multiple attempts to contact a student's parents/caregiver are unsuccessful, then the school may remove that student from the waitlist.

The school will keep accurate records of waitlisted students, including names, home addresses, telephone numbers, and grade levels, as well as attempts to contact the parents/caregiver.

Parents/caregivers of children who are transferring from other schools are encouraged, but not required, to share recent report cards as well as assessment results, particularly in literacy and/or math. Parents/caregivers of students identified with disabilities are asked to share current Individualized Education Plans (IEPs).

PROUD Academy will continue to make every effort to fill open seats. If seats become available during the school year and there is no waitlist, marketing and recruitment efforts will be used to fill available seats. Outreach efforts will continue with active recruitment of applicants across diverse neighborhoods, local elementary schools, and community organizations. The school will strategically leverage social media as well.

**b. Discuss the student recruitment process and timetable to ensure effective public information to attract a diverse student body. Please detail the proposed school's plan to attract, enroll, and retain students from among the following populations: students with a history of low academic performance; students who qualify for free or reduced-price meals pursuant to federal law and regulations; students with a history of behavioral and social difficulties; students identified as requiring special education; students who are ELs/MLs; or students of a single gender. Please also specify how the school will ensure that it complies with the provisions of C.G.S. § 10-15c (see Appendix E) and that it does not discriminate based on disability, athletic performance, or proficiency in the English language.**

As part of an ongoing effort to attract a diverse student population, PROUD Academy's outreach has been ongoing for several years across the Naugatuck Valley and beyond. Our initial goal has been to build awareness, and the interest has been compelling and sustained over time. This is evidenced by 827 petition signatures from supporters across multiple Connecticut towns, many of whom are families with a child or parent/caregiver who identifies as LGBTQ+, and over 30 letters of support.

Once chartered, we will continue to foster brand awareness generally as we prioritize our efforts to reach students who may be categorized as having low academic performance, receiving free or reduced lunch or experiencing behavioral and social difficulties. Derby and Ansonia both demonstrate low overall academic performance (e.g., in Derby, 15.9% and 10.2% of students demonstrate proficiency in ELA and math respectively; in Ansonia, both percentages hover under 50%). It must be re-emphasized that research has demonstrated that students who identify as LGBTQ+ tend to experience these academic, psychosocial and behavioral challenges at higher rates than the student population overall. They are also overrepresented within the population of students who are formally identified with disabilities.

PROUD Academy's enrollment policy expressly prohibits tactics that may limit the availability of seats. We will not "screen" students. Students will not be recruited based on talent or past academic performance. The school will not request information about whether a student has been diagnosed with a disability or has an IEP or 504 Plan prior to enrollment. Upon being admitted, families will be asked to provide such information and an additional orientation will

be offered for any students who require special services to ensure the family is aware of how their needs will be met. Parents, caregivers or students will not be required to attend mandatory meetings or workshops to apply for seats or enroll their children. No contracts or other performance or volunteer agreements will be required as a condition of enrollment.

Written recruitment materials will clearly articulate that all students will be welcomed and embraced; and this will be proactively communicated during every interaction, whether in person, during a phone call or virtual meeting or via email. The timeline for submitting applications is eight months long - between September 2025 and April 2026.

Applications and marketing materials will be available in multiple languages and written to be accessible to adults with low literacy levels (over half of adults in the U.S. have a literacy level below 6th grade, while 21% of adults in the US and 17.2% in Connecticut are not functionally literate<sup>101</sup>). Those staffing the in-person outreach will speak Spanish to more easily interact with the growing number of Latinx/Hispanic families in many towns throughout the state. Mailings and social media blasts (such as Facebook and Instagram) will be directed at certain zip codes and neighborhoods, and PROUD Academy will prioritize the communities they canvas in person (a grassroots technique) to ensure hard-to-reach families have access to the PROUD Academy opportunity. For example, PROUD Academy will visit low-income housing developments and be in places families often frequent, such as community centers, grocery stores and houses of worship. Informational materials will advise all families of the opening of the charter school, the educational mission, philosophy and design and the means by which students may apply and include clickable links to online resources and the online application. Informational materials will also emphasize the school's comprehensive academic program aimed to include and engage all students, including those with disabilities and/or those who are learning English. Finally, PROUD Academy will never charge any application fees.

PROUD Academy will collaborate with the many organizations that serve and support LGBTQ+, as well as racially and ethnically diverse children and their families, to schedule or attend meetings and gatherings and recruit interested students. Letters of support from a wide variety of local organizational leaders are included in Evidence of Support, **Appendix D4**.

Because we want students and families to remain enrolled throughout their middle school years, PROUD Academy will establish a number of structures and systems to ensure high rates of retention. The environment will be small and intimate —50 students per grade, 150 at full capacity. A low teacher: student ratio, with adequate special education and EL/ML teachers and growing number of Counselors will ensure students are well-known and cared for by many adults. The academic program will be rigorous and engaging, offering multi-tiered levels of learning support inside and outside of classrooms. Parallel levels of psychosocial support will also be in place. A daily WIN (What I Need) period will provide the flexibility for students to pursue additional guidance and enrichment, and daily advisory will engage students in groups of 4 or 5 to explore and develop social emotional and relational strengths and ensure academic learning is progressing.

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<sup>101</sup> <https://worldpopulationreview.com/state-rankings/us-literacy-rates-by-state>;  
<https://www.thenationalliteracyinstitute.com/post/literacy-statistics-2022-2023>

Beyond establishing trusting and respectful partnerships with parents and other adult caregivers, PROUD Academy will be a community that will embrace all manner of family structures and arrangements, instead of adhering to narrow societal norms, definitions or expectations. We believe this will foster an environment where everyone will belong and be valued and allow both adults and children to develop meaningful, authentic relationships.

Finally, PROUD Academy will seek, transparently share and respond to feedback from students, families and staff members through formal surveys and many other informal means. Opportunities to exercise their voice and provide valuable input will strengthen buy-in and ownership.

**c. Describe the efforts the proposed school would take to reduce racial, ethnic and/or economic isolation. Please discuss relevant programs (e.g., curricular and extracurricular and/or student teacher recruitment), if any, the school plans to implement.**

The mission and key values of PROUD Academy reflect a commitment to reduce isolation, not only for students identifying as LGBTQ+, but also for those who may experience racial, ethnic and economic isolation as well. Foundationally, we will be a data-rich institution that closely monitors trends across multiple fronts. Related to student recruitment, that means information collected on applications will be disaggregated by a number of subgroups, and as we notice patterns or unique markers, we will seek to better understand them to ensure equitable access to available seats through the lottery. For example, if only one Ecuadorian family has submitted an application, we will explore how they learned about PROUD Academy and if they are members of a larger local community.

As we review reported student and family demographics of newly enrolled students, and then, in an ongoing manner, as interactions occur and relationships are developed, all staff will be trained and expected to notice both objective and subjective indicators of isolation and inform the Counselor or leaders of concerns or need for support. For instance, we may only enroll one student who is in the process of a gender transition, or fewer students than we expect whose families are facing socio-economic and social isolation related to challenging immigration issues. Students and families may need support or resources. Individual teachers may require development and coaching around unique issues.

PROUD Academy will seek to hire staff who represent the racial, ethnic and socio-economic diversity we expect to see in the students and families we serve, and those that identify as members of the LGBTQ+ community or are allies. They will be engaged in ongoing and relevant professional development, and acclimated to structures and systems, that support and continuously strengthen our shared commitment to the four PROUD pillars of diversity, equity, inclusion and holistic development. For example, as described in the student discipline response, PROUD Academy's MTSS will include a holistic process of identifying challenges and providing increasing levels of psychosocial and behavioral support to students, beginning with universal screening to proactively address mental well-being. The **DESSA-mini** will provide individual, summary, and subgroup data, and offers actionable support strategies and

interventions as well as the opportunity to monitor progress over time.<sup>102</sup> The results from the initial screen will inform the tiered supports students may receive within and beyond the classroom environment.

Students will see themselves reflected in our core and supplemental curriculums, be guided by teachers to engage in Community Connections learning opportunities, be well known in small classes, in even smaller advisory groups and during the WIN period, as they take advantage of individual support and enrichment.

Finally, PROUD Academy will mediate any risks of isolation by creating a safe, affirming space where everyone feels a deep sense of belonging. This will include, beyond the school day student experiences, school-wide the school-wide building of culture with our families, staff and the surrounding communities.

## 5. Student Discipline Policies

a. Discuss how the proposed school will create and maintain a clear behavior management system that encourages positive behaviors and integrate restorative practices into the Scientific Research-Based Interventions (SRBI) and Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS). Describe how Tier 1 and positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) will be used to support all students, including students identified as eligible for special education.

Creating a safe and affirming school culture is a critical priority of PROUD Academy. It has been well-documented that most LGBTQ+ students (58.9%) have experienced LGBTQ+-related discriminatory policies or practices at school.<sup>103</sup> We also know that a hostile school climate affects the academic success and psychosocial development of all students; this is particularly true for LGBTQ+ students, who experience high rates of victimization and discrimination at school and demonstrate worse educational outcomes and poorer psychological well-being.<sup>104</sup>

PROUD Academy will share the school's code of conduct and discipline policies with all leaders, teachers, staff, students and families. introducing and then reinforcing expectations in daily practice. We know, however, that consequences ring hollow without rationale and relationships. Too often, responses to distracting or challenging student behaviors are applied inconsistently, particularly for children of color. We aim, therefore, to implement a continuum of restorative practices that range from positive emotional and social learning to conversations and intervention, to circles and conferences.

This approach takes training and practice by both adults and children but fosters critical thinking and community responsibility in a manner far beyond pure consequences for unacceptable behavior.



<sup>102</sup> [DESSA and DESSA-mini](#)

<sup>103</sup> <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/research-briefs/>

<sup>104</sup> <https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2024/02/22/race-and-lgbtq-issues-in-k-12-schools/>

**Responsive Classroom**<sup>105</sup> guides teachers to develop a proactive discipline strategy, which is foundational to all classrooms and schools as a whole. Students are less likely to transgress expectations and rules that are communicated clearly and are more likely to practice self-control and exercise critical and ethical thinking. At the middle school level, teachers help students make explicit connections between classroom rules, their own goals, and concrete behaviors, fostering investment.

Responsive Classroom has six guiding principles:

1. Teaching social and emotional skills is as important as teaching academic content.
2. How we teach is as important as what we teach.
3. Great cognitive growth occurs through social interaction.
4. How we work together as adults to create a safe, joyful, and inclusive school environment is as important as our individual contribution or competence.
5. What we know and believe about our students—individually, culturally, developmentally— informs our expectations, reactions, and attitudes about those students.
6. Partnering with families—knowing them and valuing their contributions—is as important as knowing the children we teach.

**PRIDE Principles** will be fostered and encouraged, brought to life in the daily experiences of students, families and staff members. We:

**Persevere**  
**Respect**  
**Inspire**  
**Dare**  
**Empower**

**Persevere** through challenges, embracing resilience in our academic, personal, and community journeys.

**Respect** all identities, treating everyone with dignity and honoring the diversity that enriches our school.

**Inspire** each other to strive for excellence, creativity, and passion, encouraging personal and collective growth.

**Dare** to take bold steps, challenge norms, and stand up for what is right, fostering a culture of courage and advocacy.

**Empower** ourselves and others through education, leadership, and community engagement, driving positive change and equity.

The **PROUD Advisory** program will foster connectedness and communication, while supporting academic and social development. Our founders envision our graduates possessing a healthy balance of intellect and ethical character – citizens with a positive self-image, motivated for lifelong learning and achievement, who respect others and the environment, and who can skillfully communicate their interests. It is our goal that the key values of PROUD become *actualized* in personal habits. PROUD Advisory will support our students to become leaders of their own learning.

Although advisory programs have become common practice and are intuitively valued, there continues to be limited empirical evidence that clearly articulates best practices. Not surprisingly, this often results in implementation that varies in focus and impact. To avoid this,

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<sup>105</sup> <https://www.responsiveclassroom.org/secondary-practices/>

PROUD Academy will invest in resources to ensure all students have a significant, high-quality advisory experience.

PROUD Academy will hire a Counselor who will be specifically focused on facilitating and supporting the PROUD Advisory program structures and its key components. Structures include:

- *Assignments:* Each advisor will be assigned a group of 5-6 students. This number may be adjusted by grade level or other relevant factors, such as student needs, dynamics, etc. The range of advisors include classroom teachers, teachers of special subjects (art, Spanish, etc.) and special populations (EL/ML students, students with disabilities) and some leaders.
- *Summer Orientation:* Sessions will be designed to acculturate 6th grade and other new students to PROUD Academy. Teachers will focus on the school's academic and behavioral expectations and will establish the groundwork to launch a meaningful advisory experience.
- *Daily Meetings:* Students will begin every morning in a small, customized advisory period. Components are social and emotional development, support around academic performance, persistence and high school preparation and exposure to college and careers.

#### *Social and Emotional Development*

CASEL (the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning) published a guide in 2015<sup>106</sup> that identifies the most effective social and emotional learning programs for middle schoolers, such as Second Step, Expeditionary Learning (EL), and Facing History and Ourselves. It provides details about targeted skills, instructional methods, and components of several curriculum programs that are geared toward the middle grades, many of which will meet the needs of PROUD Academy 6th graders in particular. Responsive Classroom also offers a number of structures that can be applied to smaller advisory groups.<sup>107</sup> PROUD Academy may also integrate aspects of SEE Learning, an innovative K-12 education program of the Center for Contemplative Science and Compassion-Based Ethics (CCSCBE) at Emory University,<sup>108</sup> which provides a universal and science-based approach to bringing the ethical development of the whole child into education. SEE Learning expands on the field of social-emotional learning (SEL) by drawing from new developments in educational practice and scientific research. Key components include attention and awareness training, compassion for self and others, trauma and resilience-informed care, systems thinking and ethical discernment. Restorative conversations and circles will be integral practices.

#### *Support around Academic Performance and Persistence*

As described above, the advisory program will help to create and strengthen community, but first and foremost, PROUD Academy is a community of **learners**. This translates to advisors playing a key role in the academic progress of their advisees, closely supervising their performance (via routine reviews of grades in PowerSchool, other platforms and report cards), as well as persistence (completion of assignments and classwork) attendance (all day every day) and conduct through both formal and informal avenues. Every advisor will be expected to address concerns immediately to help students overcome or entirely avoid challenges, serve as

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<sup>106</sup> [2015 CASEL Guide: Effective Social and Emotional Learning Programs, Middle and High School Edition](https://casel.org/casel-guide-effective-social-emotional-learning-programs-middle-and-high-school-edition/)

<sup>107</sup> <https://www.responsiveclassroom.org/secondary-practices/responsive-advisory-meeting/>

<sup>108</sup> <https://seelearning.emory.edu/en/resources>

a critical point person for parents and caregivers, and celebrate academic accomplishments and achievements.

#### *High School Preparation and Articulation/College & Career Exposure*

Advisors, in close consultation with the school Counselor, will ensure all students make successful transitions to high school. Although the formal process will begin with students in the summer before 7<sup>th</sup> grade, all leaders and teachers will have consistently messaged and reinforced the importance of being in school every day, on time, and demonstrating what they are learning in class and on formal measures, like standardized assessments, throughout a student's time at PROUD Academy.

Therefore, in 6th grade, the advisory experience will center on community-building, social-emotional development, and academic monitoring and mentoring. Advisory relationships will support the development of good study habits as well as effective time management and organizational skills. 7th grade will build on this foundation, fostering a greater sense of independence and responsibility and intentionally integrating high school readiness. 8th grade will continue to encourage exercising leadership, integrate high school readiness and articulation and exposure to college and careers. The exploration, placement and related reflection and learning of field work and afterschool community experiences will also be included.

#### **MTSS RtI Psychosocial/Behavioral Supports**

PROUD Academy believes that implementing a continuum of restorative practices, establishing clear rules and expectations, and offering a comprehensive, daily advisory program will reduce the potential for students to exhibit distracting and unsafe behaviors. Still, there will be occasions that students will need a greater degree of support in school. Mirroring the MTSS RtI tiers that categorize the needs for academic supports, PROUD Academy's MTSS will also include a holistic process of identifying challenges and providing increasing levels of psychosocial and behavioral support to students, beginning with universal screening to proactively address mental well-being. The **DESSA-mini** is a strengths-based tool that only takes 1 minute to complete and is available in English and Spanish. The detailed assessment takes a mere 8 minutes to complete. The **DESSA** is research-based, nationally normed, and psychometrically sound. It provides schools with individual, summary, and subgroup data, and offers actionable support strategies and interventions as well as the opportunity to monitor progress over time.<sup>109</sup> As with RtI tiered academic interventions, strategies may be applied to all learners, including students with disabilities. The results from the initial screen will inform the tiered supports students may receive within and beyond the classroom environment.

- Tier I will address the majority of day to day social and behavioral challenges that commonly arise in classrooms. In addition to the systemic preventive practices already described, teachers may use non-verbal cues, allow or schedule movement or grounding exercise breaks, assign responsibilities, provide choice or praise. Students may also benefit from increased family communications or the development of contracts or plans.

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<sup>109</sup> [DESSA and DESSA-mini](#)

- Tier II interventions may occur inside or outside of classrooms, individually or within small groups. Positive reinforcement efforts, increased instruction or supervision, or pre-teaching may be employed by teachers, in addition to Tier I strategies. The school Counselor may assemble small groups of students with similar challenges to explore and support progress in a target area (e.g., managing emotions like frustration or anger, developing peer relationships).
- Tier III is more likely to be individualized interventions to address persistent or higher intensity challenges. Strategies may include arranging counseling, engaging in partnerships with external mental health, medical or community-based professionals, or developing a behavioral intervention plan and engaging family members.

The Manager of Student Supports, in partnership with the Principal and Counselor, will review, at least quarterly, the identification and tiering of students to watch closely for and address any troubling patterns (i.e., overrepresentation of certain subgroups, like gender, race, disability, language, etc.). The Principal and other leaders will provide coaching and other support to teachers, differentiated to meet unique student needs and foster teacher development. Reviews will include concerns related to attendance, including late arrivals.

**Safe School Climate Plan:** In order to foster an atmosphere conducive to learning, PROUD Academy will comply with all anti-bullying legislation and will adopt a Safe School Climate Plan consistent with Connecticut state law. Staff and the Board will use the plan to outline their expectations for creating a positive and inclusive school climate and thus preventing, intervening, and responding to incidents of bullying. Bullying behavior will be strictly prohibited, and students who engage in such behavior will be subject to disciplinary action. The school's commitment to addressing bullying behavior will involve a multi-faceted approach, which includes education and the promotion of a positive school climate in which bullying will not be tolerated by students or school staff. A **Safe School Climate Coordinator** will be appointed from among the school's staff and will frequently collaborate with building level staff and the Board to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying or other problematic behavior. The Principal, or their designee, will also be recognized as a **Safe School Climate Specialist**. The Safe School Climate Specialist will investigate or supervise the investigation of reported acts of bullying and will act as the primary school official responsible for preventing, identifying, and responding to reports of bullying in the school. Finally, a **school-based committee** will be established, which will include the Coordinator and Specialist, as well as at least one parent/caregiver, to be responsible for developing and fostering a safe school climate and addressing issues as they arise.

b. Describe the acts for which a student may be disciplined, include the consequences or range of consequences resulting from committing such acts. Discuss restorative practices, including strategies to prevent or reduce suspensions, with educational alternatives for students who are expelled.

To the greatest extent possible, our restorative practices approach, described above, is designed to keep students learning in classrooms and reduce the number of high-level incidents. As concerning incidents arise, members of the MTSS team (Principal, nurse, Manager of Student Supports and Counselor) will be prepared to assess and determine the most

appropriate response or set of responses. For example, a student outburst may reflect a serious emotional crisis, in need of support or service, rather than a behavior to be addressed by a consequence.

In certain circumstances though, leaders may need to assert progressive discipline strategies for certain incidents or significant challenges that have not improved with MTSS interventions. Leaders and teachers will always seek to apply logical consequences and actively partner with families, but it may be necessary to impose more serious consequences to ensure the PROUD community remains physically and psychologically safe for everyone. Consequences may address problematic behaviors that occur within the school building, on or off school grounds or on transportation.

Although it is not practical or even possible to list every behavior or action, the following may be addressed by restorative practice strategies within the MTSS tiers described above or subject to more progressive discipline consequences, including removal from class or in-school or out-of-school suspensions.

- Attempt to assault any student or staff member.
- Vandalize school property causing minor damage.
- Endanger the physical safety of another by the use of force or threats of force that reasonably places the victim in fear of imminent bodily injury.
- Engage in conduct which disrupts school or classroom activity or endanger or threaten to endanger the health, safety welfare of others.
- Engage in insubordination.
- Fail to complete assignments, carry out directions, or comply with disciplinary sanctions.
- Cheat on quizzes, exams, or commit plagiarism.
- Used forged notes or excuses.
- Steal, or attempt to steal, or possess property known by the student to be stolen.
- Commit extortion.
- Engage in gambling.
- Abuse school property or equipment.
- Use obscene or abusive language or gestures.
- Engage in acts of verbal or physical sexual harassment.
- Make a false bomb threat or pull a false emergency alarm.
- Possess or use tobacco products (smoke/vape) or alcohol.
- Commit any other act which school officials reasonably conclude disrupts the learning environment of the school.
- Repeated behaviors which, in aggregate, may require more progressive disciplinary action.

More egregious behaviors that may be addressed by progressive discipline consequences, including removal from class or in-school or out-of-school suspensions or expulsion are listed below. Similarly, this list cannot be exhaustive but indicates a commitment to maintain a safe learning community.

- Bullying
- Discrimination or harassment on the basis of sex
- Possession or distribution of drugs or alcohol

- Sale, possession, use, or distribution of dangerous weapons, including martial arts weapons.
- Violent conduct (including the improper use of physical force).
- Making a bomb threat.
- Threatening to harm or kill another student or member of the staff; where any such activity has the reasonable likelihood of threatening the health, safety or welfare of school property, individuals thereon, and/or the educational process.
- Theft/vandalism
- Other violations of policy and the law that are seriously disruptive to the educational process.

Suspected criminal activity may be referred to the local police department, an action which is separate and distinct from discipline that may be imposed in the school setting.

c. Describe the proposed school's policies regarding student expulsion and suspension (in and out-of-school) for both general education and students identified as special education, and the educational alternatives available to students who are expelled or suspended. In addition, please include the due process procedures the school would follow in applying the discipline policy for all students, including students identified as eligible for special education.

Policies regarding student expulsion and suspension are guided by Connecticut's Education Laws and applicable federal laws such as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Students and families will be informed of the school's rules and the consequences for problematic and unsafe behaviors. A Family/Student Handbook, offered in multiple languages, with details regarding the disciplinary code will be distributed annually and may be posted on the school's website. Parents/caregivers will be asked to review it each year with their child to ensure they understand its contents and will be encouraged to ask questions or request a meeting with a staff member if they have concerns. Translation services will be available as needed or requested. Upon approval, PROUD Academy will review, finalize, and adopt formal policies including the Family/Student Handbook. In general, the school will seek to keep students in school to the maximum extent possible and will exhaust a broad range of interventions and strategies, unless the conduct displayed immediately threatens the safety and stability of the environment for others.

PROUD Academy will expressly comply with state laws on suspension and expulsion that apply to all public schools, as outlined in statute and in the state's Guidelines for In-School and Out-of-School Suspension.<sup>110</sup> This will include careful evaluation to conclude whether an in-school or out-of-school suspension is most appropriate in each circumstance, with the understanding that Section 10-233c states suspensions should be in-school (ISS) unless with respect to any pupil in (1) grades three to twelve, the administration determines during the suspension hearing that (a) the pupil being suspended poses such a danger to persons or property or such a disruption of the educational process that the pupil shall be excluded from school during the period of suspension, or (b) an out-of-school suspension is appropriate for such pupil based on evidence of (i) previous disciplinary problems that have led to suspensions or expulsion of such

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<sup>110</sup> [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Press-Room/Files/In\\_School\\_Suspension\\_Guidance.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Press-Room/Files/In_School_Suspension_Guidance.pdf)

pupil, and (ii) efforts by the administration to address such disciplinary problems through means other than out-of-school suspension or expulsion, including positive behavioral support strategies, or (2) grades kindergarten to two, the administration determines during the suspension hearing that an out-of-school suspension is appropriate for such pupil based on evidence that such pupil's conduct on school grounds is of a violent or sexual nature that endangers persons. At their discretion, an administrator may assign a Saturday detention in lieu of an ISS or Out-of-School Suspension. If an ISS is granted this will mean the student can be present in the school building, but they must remain in a different area/room rather than in their regular classrooms. The services and supports provided during ISS will support learning and be provided in accordance with any IEP/504 Plan. ISS will feature active supervision including support for behavior and access to grade-level assignments and work. The school will be mindful of the following considerations:<sup>111</sup>

- Staffing of the in-school suspension setting, including the academic credentials and qualifications of instructional and administrative personnel
- Grouping of students by grade level and academic needs
- Physical location of the in-school suspension setting
- Instructional content and assignment of classroom work
- Teaching social skills, positive behavior, and improved decision making

Out-of-school suspension will be assigned as appropriate. Typically, and in alignment with Connecticut statutes, out-of-school suspension will be the result of conduct that directly violates a publicized policy, seriously disrupts the school environment for others, and/or has caused endangerment to other persons or to public or private property. Administrators will be mindful of the need to provide a formal hearing if a student is recommended for suspension more than 10 times or 50 school days cumulatively during a single school year. The school will also comply with requirements that guarantee an informal hearing for students who are facing a suspension (whether in-school or out-of-school). Students who are suspended will have the opportunity to complete the classwork, assessments, and assignments they missed during the disciplinary period.

Expulsion will require a formal hearing and if a student is expelled, they will be provided an alternative educational opportunity in alignment with Connecticut's Standards for Educational Opportunities for Students Who Have Been Expelled.<sup>112</sup> PROUD Academy will coordinate with the district of residence regarding the provision of an alternative educational opportunity in accordance with the law. Specifically, PROUD Academy will cooperate with the district in planning the alternative educational opportunity and shall provide instructional materials to enable the district to provide appropriate instruction to the child. Depending on the specific circumstances this may be accomplished through online work or through tutoring. In the case of an emergency, as outlined above, the hearing will be held as soon as possible. Otherwise, the hearing will be held within 10 school days of the student's removal. The school will send compliant written notices home as required by law and will share documents that may be discussed within the constraints of FERPA.

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<sup>111</sup> ibid.

<sup>112</sup><https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Publications/Standards-for-Educational-Opportunities-for-Students-Who-Have-Been-Expelled/Standards-for-Alternative-Educational-Opportunities>

During every step of the disciplinary process, leaders and staff will be mindful of the circumstances surrounding each student and the incidents, including patterns of behavior that may need to be addressed, including by requesting a Planning and Placement Team (PPT) meeting. If at any time a family requests a PPT meeting as a result of concerns regarding behavior the school will be responsive and will work with the district to initiate the PPT process. Further, Connecticut State Regulations, Section 10-76d-7(c), requires each school to promptly refer to the PPT those who have been suspended repeatedly or whose behavior, attendance or progress in school is considered unsatisfactory. For students who experience multiple in-school suspensions, a referral must be made to the PPT to consider whether evaluations should be conducted to determine the child's eligibility for special education. Further, prior to expelling a student with a disability, the school (by itself and through the district) will work to convene a PPT meeting. This will occur within ten school days of a decision to change the placement as required in order to conduct a manifestation determination. If there is a determination the disability was the reason for the inappropriate conduct, the school will work with the district on the next steps which may require a Functional Behavioral Assessment and/or the implementation of a new behavioral intervention plan.

**Due Process:** The following rights, while not exclusive, will guide suspension and expulsion hearings.

- The right to a hearing before being expelled, except in cases of emergency. The hearing will be held on or before the 11th school day after being excluded from school. If it is a suspension hearing, it must be held before the 11th suspension or 51st school day of suspension.
- The right to notice before an expulsion hearing. The notice must explain which rule the school believes was broken and what the student did to break the rule. Notices and hearings shall be in the dominant language or mode of communication used by the parents or caregiver.
- The right to bring an attorney to the hearing; the notice will provide the student's family with information on how to get representation.
- The right to explain their side including the right to present evidence and testimony from witnesses.
- The right to question or cross examine any witnesses the school may present.

Due process for students identified as receiving special education or Section 504 accommodations includes the consideration that such students may not be expelled for behaviors that are caused by the disability, as outlined above. This process may include the administration of functional behavioral assessments and/or the development of behavior intervention plans. Prior to expelling or suspending a special education student for more than ten days, a manifestation determination review will be conducted to determine if the behavior is linked to the student's disability. PROUD Academy will ensure that special education students continue to receive services as outlined in their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) during suspensions.

**d. Pursuant to Public Act 23-167, explain how the proposed school will incorporate the new restorative practices policy into the code of conduct.**

As described, PROUD Academy will incorporate restorative practices into the code of conduct. These include, but are not limited to, a dedicated space for reflection and resetting, targeted learning and exercises, facilitated conversations and circles, journaling and incident-specific or ongoing counseling and family engagement and partnership.

## **6. Human Resource Policies**

**a. Describe the criteria and standards to be followed in the hiring and dismissal process of teachers, administrators, and other school staff. In addition, please provide a sample job description for a teacher and a Principal.**

Arguably, the most critical responsibility of the PROUD Academy Board of Directors is to hire the Founding School Principal, who will in turn hire all other leaders, teachers and school staff members. Principal and teacher job descriptions, which include criteria and standards, are included in **Appendix E1**.

The recruitment of qualified leaders, teachers and staff at PROUD Academy will be rooted in the school's mission and vision, the unique needs of our students, and the strong connections within our community. Aligning with best practices for educational staffing, recruitment will be based on criteria that emphasize not just qualifications and professional experience, but also a strong alignment with our core values. The strongest candidates will not only be skilled educators but also passionately committed to the school's mission and the unique needs of our students.

Once the school is approved and the charter granted, the BOD will form a task force to lead the search for a Founding Principal. Should the need to fill this position arise again in the future, the board will reassemble the task force to spearhead the search. The process to attract, evaluate and identify a Principal for PROUD Academy is detailed in Section II.3.

Once the Founding Principal recruits and hires the Director of Operations and the Manager of Student Supports, this team will in turn vet candidates for teacher and other staff roles. In future years, the Principal will create a teacher selection committee that will include existing school leaders and teachers. This approach will ensure diverse representation, active participation and equity of voice within the staff community as new colleagues are invited to join PROUD Academy. We also believe that staff collaboration in the hiring process will authentically demonstrate to candidates who we are, what we believe and how our values are operationalized.

Teacher applicants will undergo a thorough screening process that includes structured interviews, teaching demonstrations, and evaluations of their ability to integrate PROUD Academy's values into their teaching practice. This multi-stage process ensures that selected candidates are highly qualified, and mission aligned. Potential hires will have the opportunity to interact with the school community, including teachers, parents/caregivers, and students, to

gauge fit and ensure mutual alignment with PROUD Academy's educational philosophy and community expectations.

Our recruitment and hiring process is designed to bring strong, mission-aligned educators and staff into our school community. PROUD Academy commits to building a team that not only excels academically but also champions the school's core values, ensuring that every member contributes to a learning environment where all students feel valued, understood, and empowered.

Applications from all qualified candidates will be considered. Applicant screening, interviewing, and selection will comply with all employment non-discrimination laws and policies. For each candidate considered for employment, the Director of Operations will conduct a criminal background check and obtain a minimum of three professional references. Appropriately certified teachers will be hired in compliance with the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE).

Employment at PROUD Academy is "at-will" which means that the School or the employee may terminate the employment relationship with or without cause. Within five working days of an employee's termination, PROUD Academy will give the terminated employee a written notice of the exact date of termination and the exact date of the cancellation of employee benefits connected with the termination. The terminated employee may be eligible for compensation for unused vacation time and may be eligible for unemployment compensation; however, employees will not receive any additional benefits, rights or privileges beyond the last day worked. This notice applies to all employees regardless of date of hire. More details regarding termination are included in the DRAFT Personnel Policies Handbook, ***Appendix E2***.

**b. Describe the targeted staff size and teacher-to-student ratio aligned to the school mission, educational philosophy, students served, and budget.**

In the first year of operations, we expect to hire 13.5 staff members, 12 of whom will be instructional leaders (2), teachers (9) or Counselors (1). This will create a 6:1 teacher to student ratio and allow PROUD Academy to offer integrated co-teaching, flexible grouping, daily W.I.N. periods, tiered academic and psychosocial supports and small advisory groups of 4 or 5 students. By year 5, we plan to employ 23.5 staff members, including 4.5 instructional leaders, 14 teachers and 3 Counselors (totaling 21.5), which will maintain our small advisory groups and a low teacher to student ratio (approximately 10:1).

**c. Discuss how the proposed school will attract, retain, and develop high-quality teachers and school leaders and comply with state requirements regarding teacher certification.**

The leaders in the founding year, with participation from Selection Committee members thereafter, will initiate an extensive outreach campaign to attract a diverse pool of teaching candidates. This will include leveraging educational job boards, social media, professional networks, and partnerships with organizations focused on educational equity and LGBTQ+ advocacy. Priority may be given to candidates who have experience or a strong interest in

LGBTQ+ inclusive education and those who demonstrate a commitment to creating affirming classroom and school environments.

Developing and retaining teachers begins during recruitment and will be experienced as an ongoing, coordinated and carefully sequenced and differentiated process throughout the entire employment period.

**Onboarding:** Each new employee will be onboarded by the Principal, other leaders and colleagues as the role requires. This process will be comprehensive and differentiated to ensure we not only attract and hire the best educators and staff members, but we set them up for short and long-term success and foster a sense of belonging. PROUD Academy leaders will seek feedback and input on the hiring and onboarding process to ensure the experience is a positive, informative and welcoming one.

**Learning and Development:** PROUD Academy will foster a supportive environment that encourages risk-taking, innovation, and collaboration among teachers by establishing clearly articulated systems and structures that create and sustain a collegial, diverse professional community of educators. Professional development opportunities tailored to the needs of the staff, focusing on areas such as inclusive curriculum design, LGBTQ+ issues in education, and innovative teaching methodologies. Recognizing and rewarding excellent teaching and providing clear pathways for professional growth and leadership within the school will be key strategies for retaining top talent. Utilizing our Framework for Excellent Teaching teacher evaluation framework, we will support an engaging and collaborative methodology for developing teacher practices and affirming growth. As teachers will have multiple moments of success, we will have daily reasons to draw attention to these successes. PROUD Academy will take every opportunity to appropriately highlight our teacher growth and accomplishments.

**Collaborative, Cohesive Culture:** By fostering a supportive, collaborative, and inclusive school environment, PROUD Academy aims to retain high-quality teachers and leaders. This includes creating a schedule that allows for ample prep time, breaks, cross-curricular conversations and partnerships, mentorship and peer support opportunities networks. Beyond the day-to-day experience of working at PROUD Academy, we understand that we must offer competitive and equitable salaries, benefits and other personal and professional incentives and remain open to considering new and creative strategies and we evolve.

**Collecting and Responding to Feedback:** One of the best strategies to achieve high staff retention rates is to truly listen to and value the perspectives of all employees. This requires establishing multiple channels for feedback and two-way communication and creating an atmosphere where everyone feels safe and respected enough to be honest, straightforward, optimistic and solution oriented. We will regularly gather feedback from our staff, formally and informally, about what is working, what is not and what needs to change or evolve to meet their needs, as well as those of our students and families.

**d. Describe procedures to document efforts to increase the racial and ethnic diversity of staff.**

PROUD Academy is eager to hire a team that is diverse in many ways. We understand that each individual has multiple, overlapping identities and seek to normalize this for our students and their families, building an authentically affirming and dynamic environment where everyone feels a sense of belonging. The BOD will search for a Founding Principal who is unwaveringly aligned to this core priority and has demonstrated effectiveness recruiting and retaining a racially and ethnically diverse staff that includes educators who identify as members or allies of the LGBTQ+ community.

Identifying Principal candidates who have demonstrated a commitment to culturally responsive teaching and school leadership, will be crucial, as will an appetite for continuous improvement and learning. Khalifa and his colleagues, in their seminal 2016 literature review, identified four key elements of culturally responsive school leadership (CRSL).<sup>113</sup> These include critical self-awareness, culturally responsive curricula and teacher preparation, culturally responsive and inclusive school environments and engaging students and parents/caregivers in community contexts.

Practices that culturally responsive schools employ will be adopted by PROUD Academy. Examples may include empathy check-ins, offering opportunities for affinity groups and equity and inclusion learning and development that is ongoing and integrated into instructional coaching and professional development.

**e. Describe human resource policies governing salaries and fringe benefits, personnel contracts, and affirmative action and benefit packages.**

Please refer to the DRAFT PROUD Academy Personnel Policies Handbook, **Appendix E2**.

**f. Discuss how the proposed school will evaluate teachers and administrators. Explain how the school will implement the Connecticut Guidelines for Educator Evaluation by: (1) indicating that the governing council intends to adopt the Connecticut Guidelines for Educator and Leader Evaluation and Support for teacher and administrator evaluation and development; or (2) describing an alternative method for teacher and administrator evaluation and development that meets the “Core Requirements” outlined in the Connecticut Guidelines for Educator Evaluation.**

Regular performance evaluations will include observations, feedback, and goal setting to support continuous improvement in instructional practices. Teachers will be evaluated based on their ability to improve student outcomes, with a focus on using data to drive instruction and support diverse learners. Leaders and teachers will be formally evaluated in alignment with the Connecticut Guidelines for Educator and Leader Evaluation and Support.<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> Khalifa, M.A., Gooden, M.A., & Davis, J.E. (2016). Culturally responsive school leadership: a synthesis of the literature. *Review of Educational Research*, 86(4). 1272-1311. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654316630383>

<sup>114</sup> <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/evaluation-and-support/ctleadereducatorevalsupportplan2024.pdf>

The BOD will delegate teacher and leader evaluation and development to the Principal; however, it will ask the Principal to present comprehensive plans that reflect the Connecticut Guidelines for Educator and Leader Evaluation and Support for teacher and administrator evaluation and development to the BOD academic committee, and then the entire board, so that it can understand the alignment and expectations and hold the Principal accountable for effective teaching and learning at the School. Further, the BOD will work with the Principal to identify or build an evidence-based tool and process, in alignment with the Connecticut Guidelines, in order to evaluate the Principal, at least annually.

## **7. Child Day Care Services**

- Indicate if child day care services will be provided (i.e., preschool and/or before and after school services to children). If yes, please indicate the age range of the children the proposed school would serve in the program(s).

PROUD Academy does not currently have plans to provide child care services.

## **8. Student Health and Welfare**

- Describe the proposed school's plan for the provision of the following services to students: school nurse, C.G.S. § 10-212; vision and hearing screening, C.G.S. § 10-214; immunization requirements, C.G.S. § 10-204a; and mandatory health assessments, C.G.S. §§ 10-206 and 10-206a.

PROUD Academy is committed to meeting all required provisions for school health which are outlined in C.G.S. Chapter 169 regarding school health and will preventively support its students to make choices and develop habits that lead to good health and avoid illness and risk. The school's staff will receive timely and relevant training in order to best prepare them to notice any issues of potential concern and work in concert with leaders and other colleagues to most effectively address them. In particular classroom teachers and those engaged in implementing the school's multi-tier system of support (MTSS) team, will observe, monitor and support students who demonstrate need for support.

The school will employ a full-time school nurse beginning with the first year of the school's operation in alignment with C.G.S. § 10-212. This individual will be actively engaged by the school's MTSS team as relevant needs of specific students arise.

As a middle school serving grades 6, 7, and 8, provision C.G.S. § 10-214 related to vision and hearing screenings, indicated for elementary grades, does not apply. However, PROUD Academy will ensure that all learners have access to necessary vision and hearing screenings should related issues emerge.

The school nurse, as required, will provide postural screenings for each female student in grade seven, and each male student in grade eight. Students who do not identify as either female or male will be screened in either grade seven or grade eight, at the discretion of leadership and the nurse. The school leader, with support from the nurse, will provide written notice to the

parent or caregiver of each student (A) who evidences any postural problem, with a brief statement describing such evidence, and (B) who did not receive a postural screening, with a brief statement explaining why the student did not receive postural screening.

Any test results or treatment provided as a result of screenings described above will be recorded and reported as required [pursuant to subsection (a) of section 10-206].

In alignment with C.G.S. § 10-204a, PROUD Academy will require each student to be protected by adequate immunization against diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, poliomyelitis, measles, mumps, rubella, haemophiles influenzae type B and any other vaccine required by the schedule for active immunization adopted pursuant to section 19a-7f before being permitted to enroll, and will be required to receive a second immunization against measles prior to entering seventh grade, unless written documentation is presented that the student is exempt.

PROUD Academy recognizes that If the parents or caregivers of any student are unable to pay for any required immunization, the expense of such immunization shall, on the recommendation of such child's local or regional board of education, or similar body governing a nonpublic school or schools, be paid by the student's town of residence. Further, each local or regional board of education shall provide for health assessments [pursuant to subsection (c) of section 10-206] without charge to all students whose parents or caregivers meet the eligibility requirements for free and reduced-price meals under the National School Lunch Program or for free milk under the special milk program. To meet its obligations pursuant to this section, a board of education may utilize existing community resources and services.

## **IV. School Viability**

### **1. Building Options**

- a. Describe present options for a school building, including location, capacity, and timeline for identifying and acquiring the facility.
- b. Explain why this facility would be suitable for the proposed school, including any plans and associated timelines to renovate and bring the facility into compliance with all applicable school building codes.

The PROUD Academy founders have been offered incubation space with the Joel E. Smilow Unit of the Boys and Girls Club of the Lower Naugatuck Valley.<sup>115</sup> The facility is located at 28 Howard Avenue, right in the heart of Ansonia. The mission of the Boys and Girls Club is "to provide, in a safe environment, programs that inspire, educate, guide, and enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to realize their full potential as productive, responsible, and caring citizens," one that is deeply aligned to the mission, vision and core values of PROUD Academy.

The available space is 32,000 square feet in total. Almost one-third of that represents 10,000 square feet of a gymnasium, which PROUD will utilize for physical education instruction and any number of community meetings and activities. A nurse's office with an attached restroom and a

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<sup>115</sup> <https://bgc-Inv.org/>

private space that can be utilized by the Counselor to work with students are both in close proximity to the main office. An industrial kitchen is available for food services, connected to a cafeteria that can accommodate up to 40 students. We intend to contract with the local school district for food services.

The remaining square footage will be used for 12-15 classrooms, which will be content-specific (ELA, math, science, specials) as well as intervention and flex spaces. Additional rooms for offices, staff bathrooms, etc. will be designated. Minor renovations will be needed to accommodate the school.

The table below lays out the space needs for each of the first 5 years of the charter.

Y1: 2026-27	Y2: 2027-38	Y3: 2028-29	Y4: 2029-30	Y5: 2030-31
<u>50</u> 3 ELA//SS 3 math 1 science lab/STEAM 2 specials 1 intervention <u>1 social work</u> <b>11</b>	<u>100</u> 6 ELA//SS 6 math 1 science lab/STEAM 3 specials 2 interventions <u>2 social work</u> <b>20</b>	<u>150</u> 9 ELA//SS 9 math 1 science lab 1 STEAM 4 specials 3 intervention <u>3 social work</u> <b>30</b>	<u>150</u> 9 ELA//SS 9 math 1 science lab 1 STEAM 4 specials 3 intervention <u>3 social work</u> <b>30</b>	<u>150</u> 9 ELA//SS 9 math 1 science lab 1 STEAM 4 specials 3 intervention <u>3 social work</u> <b>30</b>
1 Kitchen 1 Nurse 1 Cafeteria 1 Gym 3 Stu bathrooms 3 Sta bathrooms 1 Office main 2 Office lead	1 Kitchen 1 Nurse 1 Cafeteria 1 Gym 6 Stu bathrooms 6 Sta bathrooms 1 Office main 2 Office lead	1 Kitchen 1 Nurse 1 Cafeteria 1 Gym 8 Stu bathrooms 8 Sta bathrooms 1 Office main 3 Office lead	1 Kitchen 1 Nurse 1 Cafeteria 1 Gym 8 Stu bathrooms 8 Sta bathrooms 1 Office main 3 Office lead	1 Kitchen 1 Nurse 1 Cafeteria 1 Gym 8 Stu bathrooms 8 Sta bathrooms 1 Office main 3 Office lead

PROUD Academy founders are also exploring a number of options for a permanent home, which we anticipate needing by year 3 (2028) of operation. Potential sites include:

1. A 47,187 square foot facility sitting on 4.68 acres at 126 Ford Street in Ansonia is for sale; PROUD founders have toured the property and received detailed specifications from the owner.
2. St. Joseph's School, at 36 Jewett Ave, also in Ansonia, a preK-8 school, was closed in 2004.<sup>116</sup>

## 2. Financial Plan

- a. Present a pre-opening budget statement detailing estimated start-up activities that are not reflected in the projected five-year budget statement. To provide a full understanding of the statement, please include a budget narrative explaining the projected amounts reported in the budget by line item and by year.

<sup>116</sup> ["To Save A Parish, A Church Closes A School,"](#) NY Times, June 27, 2004

- b. Present a projected five-year budget statement detailing the estimated financial activity of the proposed school for the first five years of operation. The statement should contain all commitments proposed in the application. To provide a full understanding of the statement, please include a budget narrative explaining the projected amounts reported in the budget by line item and by year.
- c. Present a projected cash flow statement for year one of operation to show the estimated movement of funds in and out of the proposed school for year one of operation. The statement must include a plan for funding cash flow shortfalls. The statement should indicate an understanding of when grant funds will be available.

A proposed budget, including the pre-opening year statement, projected 5-year budget statement and projected cash flow statements for each of the first five years of the charter can be found in **Appendix F**.

PROUD Academy's budget reflects a bottom-up analysis and approach to determining the required resources for achieving its intended mission, goals and outcomes. PROUD Academy has then applied the financial expertise of key board members as well as the experiences of Charter School Business Management (CSBM) to overlay teaching and operational systems and methodologies necessary to create and sustain an academically rigorous and affirming community in a cost-efficient manner.

### **Start-Up Budget, First Year and Five-Year Operational Budget and Cash Flows**

#### **Revenue**

PROUD Academy has created a mission-aligned financial model that requires very modest fundraising outside of public reimbursement.

The startup budget, the first-year budget and each year of the 5-year budget are all developed to be cash flow positive utilizing primarily public monies. The pre-opening budget revenue assumes \$340,000 in Charter School Program (CSP) grant income, and a one-time start-up grant of \$300,000 from the state of Connecticut in the pre-opening year.

#### ***Per Pupil Income:***

With student to teacher ratios of approximately 10:1 and 3 sections at each grade level, PROUD Academy believes local needs and demand make an initial total student body of 50 6th graders highly achievable for its first year of operation. Given the demographics and regional demand for the school, the addition of one grade per year in each of the ensuing two years will also be attainable. PROUD Academy's budget assumes a per-pupil funding of \$12,615 for its first year of operations and, conservatively, no annual increase to the per pupil funding amount thereafter for its five-year budget.

***Other State and Federal Grants:***

The budget reflects expected income from IDEA, Title funds and the School Lunch Program.

- We expect to receive Charter School Program funding totaling \$850,000, though PROUD Academy believes it will be eligible for additional funds based on both the high need student populations and collaboration with traditional school districts priorities.
- Revenue estimates for other government sources, such as state and federal funds for special education, Title I, etc. are reflected as increasing with student enrollment. We estimated 21% students with disabilities considering the percentages in nearby towns and the heightened rate within LGBTQ+ student communities. We also understand that the rate of special education funding may vary as we review the recommendations for each enrolled student and negotiate payments with each sending district.

***Other Revenue***

- The budget includes anticipated reimbursement monies from ERate.
- PROUD Academy does not intend to collect payments directly from students who do not qualify for free and reduced-price lunch. Given the population we expect to serve, this number (and generated revenue) is quite small, and the monies are generally difficult and time-consuming to collect.
- PROUD Academy is committed to serving students identified with disabilities. We understand that we will work in collaboration with students' sending districts to determine fair and appropriate funding rates to serve our students.
- Although not reflected in our proposed budget, other potential funding sources we plan to pursue include grant opportunities offered by Peter and Carmen Lucia Buck (PCLB) Foundation directly, and through participation in the PCLB-supported North Star Fellowship, a partnership of the Mind Trust and Latinos for Educational Equity and Diversity (LEAD).

***Plans for Shortfalls - Cash Flows***

Under its detailed start-up, first-year and five-year operating budgets, PROUD Academy projects that it will be cash flow positive. In the unlikely event that additional funding is required, PROUD Academy board members understand that serving includes a responsibility to act as ambassadors and supporters of the school. In that vein, they plan to seek private funding opportunities in order to avoid the risk of any shortfalls.

**Expenses**

The expenses incorporated in the PROUD Academy budget are conservative. Detailed, line-by-line assumptions for all expenses can be found in the Budget Template.

In the pre-operating year, a majority of the costs represent bringing on the Principal, Director of Operations, and Manager of Student Supports in order to outreach to families, facilitate the lottery, enroll students, hire teachers and other staff, purchase instructional and operational resources, and prepare to launch the school.

Expenses reflected in the 1- and 5-year budgets represent both market-based estimates of personnel and operating costs.

All of the school's budgets assume that all of the costs of occupancy as a stand-alone facility will be borne by PROUD Academy. The school is planning to incubate in available space at the Naugatuck Valley Boys and Girls Club and identify a permanent home within the first year or two.

### **Year 1 Budget:**

**Revenue:** \$1,730,407.50. Opening with 50 students in 6th grade generates \$630,000 in per pupil revenue. The budget also assumes state and/or federal revenue for students with disabilities and low-income students. The school also expects reimbursement for technology infrastructure through E-rate. Finally, PROUD Academy expects to use the final portion of its CSP grant in Year 1, and similar to other new charter schools, anticipates support from the Peter Carmen and Lucia Buck Foundation (PCLB), which has already awarded PROUD Academy grant monies to support its community engagement and proposal development efforts.

**Expenditures:** \$ 1,693,143.00.

- **Salaries and Benefits:** \$1,162,035.00. This reflects salaries and benefits for 13.5 FTE.
- **Services:** \$280,918. This reflects \$20,000 for professional development consultants and trainers, \$50,000 for pupil services and the remainder for student and family facing operational costs.
- **Facility:** \$37,440. Rent is estimated at \$36,000 for the first operational year. The school will also pay insurance and utilities, unless costs are included in the rent agreement.
- **Marketing and Development:** \$27,000 for advertising and insurance.
- **Supplies and Equipment:** \$185,750. This represents \$58,200 for curriculum materials/books and \$35,800 for instructional materials. \$26,000 is allotted for general supplies, \$37,500 for furniture and \$28,250 for technology. Investments in classroom materials, office expenses and staff professional development and recruitment are also reflected in this category.

### **Five Year Budget**

PROUD Academy projects a balanced budget, with surplus, each year of the charter term.

#### **Revenue:**

<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>
\$1,730,407.50	\$2,248,615.00	\$2,841,822.50	\$2,616,822.50	\$2,616,822.50

The majority of revenue will continue to be per-pupil funding based on a growing enrollment. The school anticipates using the remainder of its CSP funds in Year 1 and Year 2. Other state and federal funds are a function of enrollment with assumptions of student characteristics remaining constant across the five years. E-rate reimbursement is assumed to be 80% for technology infrastructure in Year 2, and 50% in subsequent years.

#### **Expenditures:**

<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>
\$1,693,143.00	\$2,213,498.00	\$2,551,985.40	\$2,562,253.22	\$2,581,175.70

- **Personnel:** The PROUD Academy staff grows from 13.5 FTE in year 1 to 23.5 in year 5. Both instructional and operational staff at the school increases commensurate with the growth in enrollment.
- **Services:** As the number of staff members and students increase, expenses for payroll, special education and professional development consultants also increase.
- **Facility:** The budget assumes a private lease that increases each year, with annual rent reaching \$108,000 by year 5. The PROUD Academy founders are continuing to explore a permanent home, which may affect costs and financial planning.
- **Supplies and Equipment:** Most cost lines in this category increase slightly over 5 years. Furniture and technology investments are larger in early years and decrease in later years.
- As noted above, we have drafted a conservative budget. Should revenue be higher, our expenditures would reflect a greater number of core content area teachers and an increase of spending on professional development for teachers, leaders, Counselors and the staff as a whole.

d. Present a schedule of borrowings and repayments. Please identify any estimated funds borrowed (loans, notes, mortgages, etc.), including the source of the funds, repayment schedule, and purpose of the borrowing. The schedule of borrowings and repayments should be aligned to the pre-opening budget, projected five-year budget, and cash flow statement.

PROUD Academy does not currently have any borrowing or repayment commitments.

e. Explain the structure for managing the proposed school's finances; please include any fiscal staff positions, required qualifications, and job duties.

PROUD Academy's Principal will delegate the day-to-day management of finances to the Director of Operations (DO) and outsource overall financial management to an experienced firm such as Charter School Business Management (CSBM), with oversight provided by the PROUD Academy board finance committee.

The Director of Operations must have strong budget management experience and experience with financial reporting as a minimum qualification for this role. This person should be able to implement GAAP-compliant policies and be able to track and maintain business expenses using the QuickBooks system and Fund E-Z. This role requires 2-5 years of experience working in operations, accounting, business, finance or another relevant field. The role will be supervised by the Principal with support from the board treasurer. The DO will be responsible for school purchasing and adhere to the following approval thresholds: the Principal may approve purchases up to \$5,000 and the finance committee chair or board chair must approve purchases greater than \$5,000. Capital investments, including technology purchases, will be coordinated by the DO.

A PROUD Academy Fiscal Policies and Procedures (FPP) manual will outline standard, GAAP-aligned fiscal management protocols. This document will be developed once the charter is granted and revisited and adjusted at least annually to ensure tight controls, including the

appropriate separation of duties, and responsible tracking and monitoring of revenue and expenses.

Each year, PROUD Academy will create an annual budget.

#### **Key Budgeting Policies**

- The school's goal is to operate pursuant to its long-range financial plan. The school creates realistic budgets that are monitored and adjusted when appropriate. Actual expenses should be equal to or less than actual revenue with no material exceptions.
- An annual budget, prepared by the organization, is reviewed and approved by the Finance Committee and the Board of Directors prior to the start of the fiscal year.
- The budget process starts early and input from the board members, school administration and staff are solicited and considered in developing the budget.
- Budget variances are analyzed routinely, and material variances are discussed and addressed at the Board level including any necessary budget revisions.
- If there are significant material changes in the school's financial spending or revenue projections, the changes to the operating budget are reviewed by the Finance Committee and approved by the Board of Directors at the half-year/third quarter meeting.
- The school's long-range fiscal plan is compared frequently to actual progress and adjusted to meet changing conditions.

**School Procedures to Implement these Policies:** PROUD Academy will develop an annual budget and budget monitoring process and document the process in writing. The table on the following page is a sample of the school's process. The budget team consists of the board chair, board treasurer and other finance committee members, with the Principal, director of operations and other staff/board members as deemed necessary.

<b>FY</b> <b>Jul 1- Jun 30</b>	<b>Budget Development</b>
	<b>Timeline</b>
<b>Sept</b>	Strategic Planning – Annual Update of Strategic Budget
<b>January</b>	Define Budget Goals
<b>January</b>	Create Budget Assumptions
<b>February- March</b>	Assemble Supporting Information: Expenses: # of employees, positions, salaries, benefits, cost of leases, etc. Income: per-pupil allocation and other revenue expectations
<b>April</b>	Create/Update Budget Templates: Multi-page spreadsheet with worksheets for staff salaries and allocations, revenues & contracts, expenses by site/ grade level/or day vs after-school programs, admin expenses, full budget
<b>April-May</b>	Budget Expenses-- By Program/Site and Contract
<b>April-May</b>	Forecast Revenues--By Program Site and Contract
<b>April-May</b>	Finalize Draft Budget
<b>May</b>	Draft is presented and refined by management and board
<b>May- June</b>	Final Budget Adopted by Board of Trustees

f. Describe the fiscal controls and financial management policies the governing council will employ to provide oversight of the proposed school's financial position.

#### Financial Monitoring

The Board will monitor the school budget throughout the year, paying close attention to budget to actuals and cash flow projections. On a quarterly basis, after discussion with the Treasurer, the Director of Operations, with support from CSBM, will circulate the following information to the Board of Trustees one week(s) prior to the scheduled Board meeting:

- Statement of Financial Position
- Statement of Activities for the month to date and year to date
- Budget Comparison Report for the month to date and year to date, incorporating a variance analysis explaining variances in excess of 10% from the actual to the originally approved budget.
- Updated cash flow model for the coming eighteen months, highlighting any periods of difficult cash flows.

In addition to this package, the Principal will provide a fundraising status update indicating the status of efforts, open proposals, etc. Below is the timeline for the monitoring process.

### **3. Self-Evaluation and Accountability**

a. Identify clear operational goals at all levels (e.g., school-wide, grade-level, classroom, staff, and student).

During the school's planning year, PROUD Academy leaders will work in partnership with the Board of Directors to finalize a robust accountability plan that will include academic and organizational metrics by which to track and measure progress towards goals. Progress towards these goals will be measured at least annually. Draft goals are included below.

The academic goals reflect the understanding that achievement or proficiency or status is a one-time snapshot measurement of a student's academic performance in a subject area like ELA or math - an indicator of how well a student or a group of students performed on the standards assessed by the test at a specific point in time. Growth, on the other hand, is about the change in achievement scores for the same student between two or more points in time. Our goals are aligned to the recommendations and indicators set forth in the CT Next Generation Accountability System and the CT Growth Model Technical Paper.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> <https://edsight.ct.gov/relatedreports/CT%20Growth%20Model%20Technical%20Paper%20FINAL.pdf>

## ACADEMIC GOALS

### **GOAL 1: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS**

**All students at PROUD Academy will become proficient readers and will make strong yearly progress towards mastery of English language reading skills.**

**1a. Absolute Measure.** Each year, 75 percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above proficiency (“met” or “exceeded”) on the state English language arts assessment for grades 6-8.

**1b. Comparative Measure.** Each year, the percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at or above proficiency on the state English language arts assessment will be greater than that of students in the same tested grades attending schools in the sending districts.

**1c. Growth Measure.** Each year, all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year and are eligible to be included in the matched cohort will meet or exceed their growth to standard targets on the state English language arts assessment, as determined by the Smarter Balanced vertical scale.<sup>118</sup>

**1d. Participation Measure.** Each year, PROUD Academy will achieve at least a 95 percent student participation rate on the state English language arts assessment.

### **GOAL 2: MATHEMATICS**

**All students at PROUD Academy will become proficient mathematicians and will make strong yearly progress towards mastery of mathematical skills.**

**2a: Absolute Measure.** Each year, 75 percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above proficiency on the state mathematics assessment for grades 6-8.

**2b: Comparative Measure.** Each year, the percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at or above proficiency on the state mathematics assessment will be greater than that of students in the same tested grades attending schools in the sending districts.

**2c. Growth Measure.** Each year, all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year and are eligible to be included in the matched cohort will meet or exceed their growth to standard targets on the state mathematics assessment, as determined by the Smarter Balanced vertical scale.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> Students eligible to be included in the matched cohort analysis will have two consecutive years of test scores and will have been promoted to the next grade. The Matched Student Cohort Change (or Growth) compares the achievement of the same student from one grade in year 1 to the next higher grade in year 2. This is generally considered the gold standard for growth because there are no mismatched students; only those students who are matched across years are included in the calculation. The matched approach allows us to quantify the amount of growth achieved by the same students from near the end of one grade, to the end of the next grade – a good measure of curriculum and instructional effectiveness.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

**2d. Participation Measure.** Each year, PROUD Academy will achieve at least a 95 percent student participation rate on the state mathematics assessment.

**GOAL 3: SCIENCE**

**All students at PROUD Academy will become proficient in science and will make strong yearly progress towards mastery of scientific skills.**

**3a: Absolute Measure.** Each year, 75 percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above proficiency on the Grade 8 NGSS science assessment.

**3b: Comparative Measure.** Each year, the percent of all tested students who are enrolled in at least their second year and performing at or above proficiency on the state science assessment will be greater than that of students in the same tested grades attending schools in the sending districts.

**3c. Participation Measure.** Each year, PROUD Academy will achieve at least a 95 percent student participation rate on the state science assessment.

**GOAL 4: ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS**

**All English language learners at PROUD Academy will become proficient in English and will make strong yearly progress towards mastery of English language skills.**

**4a. Growth Measure.** Each year, all tested EL/ML learners who are enrolled in at least their second year and are eligible to be included in the matched cohort will meet or exceed their growth to standard targets on the LAS LINKS assessment, as determined by the vertical scales within the CT Growth Model for the English Language Proficiency Assessments.<sup>120</sup>

**ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS**

**GOAL 5: STUDENT AND FAMILY SATISFACTION:**

**PROUD Academy will achieve strong student enrollment, student and family satisfaction and student engagement.**

**5a. Absolute Measure.** Each year, the school will maintain at least 95 percent student enrollment.

**5b. Absolute Measure.** Each year, parents/caregivers will express satisfaction with the school program, measured by positive responses to items included on the school's Parent/Caregiver Survey. The school will seek to achieve a survey response rate of at least 75%.

**5c. Absolute Measure.** Each year, students will express satisfaction with the school program, measured by positive responses to items included on the school's Student Survey. The school will seek to achieve a survey response rate of at least 75%.

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<sup>120</sup><https://edsight.ct.gov/relatedreports/CT%20Growth%20Model%20for%20ELP%20Technical%20Paper%20FINAL.pdf>

**5d. Absolute Measure.** Each year, the school will have a daily student attendance rate of 95 percent.

**GOAL 6: LEGAL COMPLIANCE**

**PROUD Academy will be in legal compliance.**

**6a: Absolute Measure.** Each year, the school will generally and substantially comply with all applicable laws, rules and regulations, including, but not limited to, the Connecticut Charter Schools Act, the Connecticut Freedom of Information Law, the Connecticut Open Meetings Law, the federal individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, and the provisions of its by-laws and charter.

**6b: Absolute Measure:** Each year, the school will have in place and maintain effective systems, policies, procedures and other controls for ensuring that legal and charter requirements are met.

**6c: Absolute Measure:** Each year, the school will maintain a relationship with independent legal counsel that reviews relevant policies, documents, and incidents and makes recommendations as needed, and in proportion to the legal expertise on the board of trustees, if any.

**GOAL 7: FISCAL SOUNDNESS**

**PROUD Academy will make sound decisions and effective, responsible use of financial resources to maximize student learning.**

**7a: Absolute Measure:** Each year, the school will operate on a balanced budget, meaning actual revenues will equal or exceed actual expenses.

**7b: Absolute Measure:** Beginning with the school's first operating year, at the end of each fiscal year, unrestricted net assets will be equal to or exceed 2% of the school's operating budget for the upcoming year.

**7c: Absolute Measure:** Each year, the school will take corrective action, if needed, in a timely manner to address any internal control or compliance deficiencies identified by its external auditor or the CT Department of Education.

b. Describe the school's self-assessment or evaluation systems of accountability for all stakeholders to ensure that it is: (1) demonstrating educational progress of students; (2) meeting its stated mission and goals; (3) making sufficient efforts to attract, enroll and retain students from among the populations described in C.G.S. §§ 10-66bb(c)(A)(i) to (A)(vi); and (4) making efforts to reduce racial, ethnic, and/or economic isolation.

**School Level**

**Ensuring Student Academic Learning:** The systems of accountability for our school will be guided by the annual academic metrics indicated above. Self-assessment will be ongoing within

the school. As described in detail in the student assessment response, teachers will routinely administer formative, benchmark and summative assessments of learning to their students. Teachers will work with students to set individual growth goals following the completion of their diagnostic tests at the start of the academic year; these will be revisited as the year progresses. Leaders will facilitate data review, analysis and planning processes within grade level and content area teams, as well as with individual teachers, during and beyond scheduled data days; supporting teachers to adjust instruction accordingly. Leaders will closely monitor the progress of subgroups, such as students identified with disabilities or English learners. Teacher practice is a critical component of student learning; therefore, teacher development will be systematically supported and effectiveness evaluated.

Further, PROUD Academy leaders and members of the Board of Directors will closely track the progress of students who are categorized as “high need.” In Connecticut, students are considered to have high needs if they are:

- Economically disadvantaged, as determined by qualifying for free or reduced-price lunch.
- An English language learner (ML/EL)
- A student with disabilities (SWD) who is receiving special education services.

Self-assessment and evaluation are reflected in the cycles of benchmark assessments and MTSS RtI placements and monitoring processes. This data will be presented routinely, formatted on a standard dashboard, to the Board of Directors.

**Ensuring Organizational Health:** The systems of accountability for our school will be guided by the annual organizational metrics indicated above. Self-assessment will be ongoing within the school. For example, while family and student satisfaction will be formally measured via a survey on an annual basis, leaders and teachers will constantly be taking the pulse of our culture in a myriad of ways. Student attendance will be tracked daily. Family engagement in school community events and activities, and in partnership with teachers, as well as briefer “dipstick” surveys we will administer from time to time, will inform our self-assessment.

Systems will be established to ensure legal compliance and responsible fiscal health; these are detailed in the financial plan section. Of course, attracting, enrolling and retaining students is our core fiscal priority. Our strategies are described in the admission policy and criteria section and our self-assessment measures will be supported by digital tracking systems that are updated and reviewed often. We will invest in a platform like SchoolMint to streamline our access to and use of this data and make it easier for families to submit enrollment documents and remain well informed of deadlines and updates, etc. As with evidence of academic progress, this data will be presented routinely, formatted on a standard dashboard, to the Board of Directors.

### **Efforts to Reduce Racial, Ethnic and Socioeconomic Isolation**

Our goal is to create and sustain a diverse school community. We intend to recruit and retain students with disabilities, ML/EL learners, students from economically disadvantaged families, and non-white students at rates that are, at minimum, comparable to the towns within the Naugatuck Valley.

Reports can be generated from SchoolMint, and trends can be detected, by disaggregating data and information, and acted upon to avoid and reduce racial, ethnic, and/or economic isolation. We will track and closely monitor all outreach and marketing activities to ensure we are reaching, informing and engaging families and students who are racially, ethnically and economically diverse.

We also work to retain these students at a higher rate than the surrounding schools by employing these and additional strategies:

- Highly engaging, rigorous and differentiated academic learning experiences
- Low teacher/student ratio
- Culturally relevant curriculum resources
- Robust integrated co-teaching approach
- Small, flexible instructional groupings
- Free and varied academic supports (WIN periods, after-school and summer programs)
- Safe, inclusive and affirming school community
- Explicit community building, and targeted support, delivered via the advisory program.
- Translation support for families
- Confidential financial assistance for field trips, uniforms, etc.
- Staff that is reflective of and connected to our students and their families.
- Relevant and ongoing development of teachers and leaders in content, practice and cultural responsiveness
- Family engagement and involvement
- Embracing and celebrating a wide range of identities and cultures

**Governance Level:**

**Board Monitoring:** As noted above, a comprehensive data dashboard of key performance indicators will be developed to ensure the board is well-informed and can provide appropriate oversight for PROUD Academy. The dashboard will be updated at least monthly and reviewed during general and committee meetings of the Board. Data will include academic performance and indicators of culture and community, as well as operational details related to fiscal and operational health (budget to actuals, compliance items, student enrollment, retention, and attendance, etc.).

Data related to student achievement, discipline, and enrollment and retention will be disaggregated by subgroups to ensure systems maintain equity and help support decision making and resource allocation. The dashboard will align with the State Department of Education's accountability expectations and charter school renewal standards.

**Board Self-Assessment:** The Board will conduct a thoughtful self-assessment at least annually. Each member of the Board will utilize a self-evaluation tool that is aligned to charter school governance best practices and charter school accountability standards. Specifically, each member will reflect on topics such as leadership roles and communication practices, the composition of the Board and expertise of members, the strength and roles of committees, the implementation of well-run meetings focused on school performance and accessible to

stakeholders, fundraising efforts, and the efficacy of the Board's overall governance practices. The results will be compiled, discussed, and used to guide reflection, dialogue, and development efforts.

**c. Identify robust data systems and processes to regularly track leading and lagging indicators of student achievement, student enrollment, and organizational operations and effectiveness.**

We expect to invest in a comprehensive data platform like PowerSchool,<sup>121</sup> which will allow leaders and teachers to regularly track leading and lagging indicators of student achievement, student enrollment, and organizational operations and effectiveness. PowerSchool has the ability to capture key identifiers, evidence of academic learning, attendance, behavior and MTSS interventions. Housing data in this manner will ensure relevant information is accessible to leaders, teachers, parents/caregivers, and students and will help leaders and teachers monitor progress, analyze trends, and address concerns.

SchoolMint is the most widely used platform for student recruitment, enrollment and engagement with families, while ParentSquare is a well-regarded communication tool to help families remain connected to and informed by the school. To track finances, we will likely utilize Quickbooks and bill.com.

**d. Presents a clear plan to share student learning practices and experiences with the local or regional board of education of the town in which the proposed school is located.**

As PROUD Academy develops its academic program and its safe, inclusive, and affirming learning community, we will be eager to share our learning practice and experiences with schools and districts. We expect to operationalize this plan over time, facilitating richer and more impactful professional development and evidence of impact as we grow. The national trends described in our student demographics section are unacceptable and are driving our intentions to open PROUD Academy. We understand that although we may not enroll every student that needs us, we can have a broader influence on other schools in order to improve more students' learning experiences, particularly those who identify as LGBTQ+.

We envision professional development sessions in a variety of formats, including in person and virtual, school intervisitations and more formal presentations. Leaders may begin this work, but over time, we hope to share opportunities for our teachers, students, and families to contribute and share best practices beyond our school walls as well.

#### **4. Timetable**

**a. Provide a detailed timetable of projected activities and dates leading to the opening of the proposed school. The timetable should include, at least, activities related to community outreach, student enrollment, curriculum development, recruiting and hiring high-quality teachers and leaders, and building acquisition.**

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<sup>121</sup> <https://www.powerschool.com/solutions/simplify-school-communication/>

Below is an outline of steps to be undertaken between the time the charter application is submitted and the opening of the school, with start and completion dates in month/year format. The individuals responsible for these tasks are:

- BOD: Board of Directors, led by the Chair
- P: Principal (begins work 9/26)
- DO: Director of Operations (begins work 1/26)
- MSS: Manager of Student Supports (begins work 3/26)

Start Date	Completion Date	Focus Area	Task	Person(s) Responsible
11/24	ongoing	Development	Continue community relations and partnership development	BOD
11/24	ongoing	Operations	Continue community outreach to prospective families	BOD
11/24	2/25	Leadership	Finalize Principal JD and search process	BOD
2/25	2/25		SBE votes on application/granting initial charter (90 days from submission)	
3/25	3/25	Governance	Finalize & approve BOD policies BOD member background checks	BOD
3/25	3/25	Funding	Apply for CSP funding	BOD/consultant
3/25	4/25	Operations	Draft/finalize FPP manual	BOD/accountant
3/25	6/25	Operations	Apply for federal 501(3)(c)/CT tax exempt status	BOD/accountant
2/25	6/25	Leadership	Execute Principal search	BOD
3/25	6/25	Governance	All members attend required board trainings, ensure open meetings law practices are established	BOD
2/25	5/25	Facility	Negotiate & finalize incubation building lease Identify alternative facility option(s)	BOD/attorney
5/25	6/25	Facility	Finalize facility work plan	BOD
7/25	8/25	Leadership	Principal hired, inform SBE	BOD
8/25	12/25	Instruction Operations	Principal begins work	P
8/25	12/25	Finance	Review and refine pre-op yr budget	P/BOD
8/25	10/25	Operations	Finalize student recruitment plan & materials	P
9/25	12/25	Instruction	Study curriculum and other learning materials	P
9/25	ongoing	Instruction	HQ MS visits - observe instruction and systems	P
9/25	ongoing	Operations Instruction	Build collaborative relationships with BOD, community leaders, authorizers	P
11/25	1/26	Operations	Execute DO search	P
1/26	3/26	Instruction	Execute MSS search	P

		Operations		
1/26	3/26	Operations	DO begins work	P/DO
1/26	ongoing	Operations	Build collaborative relationships with P, community leaders, vendors	DO
1/26	ongoing	Operations	Student recruitment/accepting applications	DO/P
1/26	3/26	Leadership/ Operations	Finalize staff & student/family handbooks, translate family materials	DO/P
1/26	6/26	Instruction Operations	Execute searches for teachers and staff	P/DO
1/26	6/26	Facility	Facility construction (as needed)	BOD/DO/P
2/26	3/26	Instruction	Develop resource purchase lists	P/DO
2/26	3/26	Operations	Finalize enrollment packet contents, distribution and collection processes via SchoolMint	DO
2/26	5/26	Instruction	Arrange instructional PD/partnerships	P
2/26	4/26	Instruction	Create/refine Instructional systems (schedules, planning, implementation, assessment, etc.)	P, add MSS in 3/26
2/26	6/26	Instruction Operations	Teacher candidate vetting, hiring, background checks and other requirements of employment	P/MSS/DO
3/26	4/26	Instruction	MSS begins work	P
3/26	5/26	Operations	Finalize facility move in, set-up plans	DO/P
3/26	5/26	Instruction Operations	Plan summer institute, family/student orientation	P/DO/MSS
4/26	4/26	Operations	Conduct lottery	DO/P
4/26	4/26	Operations	Notify families of lottery results, seats and waitlists	DO
4/26	ongoing	Operations	Establish billing system for school district funds, and other compliance systems	DO/P
4/26	ongoing	Instruction	Secure all students' IEPs, request student academic records from former districts/schools	MSS/DO
4/26	ongoing	Operations	Purchase furniture, supplies, books, technology	DO
5/26	6/26	Facility	Obtain facility certificates of insurance	BOD/DO/P
4/26	8/26	Operations	Hold family orientations and meetings, support families with enrollment process	DO
5/26	ongoing	Operations	Continue enrolling students	DO
6/26	8/26	Facility	Building signage & space set up	DO
5/26	6/26	Instruction	Prep for 6 <sup>th</sup> grade orientation week	P
5/26	7/26	Instruction	Prep for staff summer institute (2 weeks)	P
5/26	6/26	Operations	Request DOH nurse Develop medication administration plan	DO
5/26	6/26	Operations	Develop health services plan	DO
5/25	6/25	Operations	Prepare facility for move in/set up	DO/BOD

5/26	6/26	Operations	Create Y1 annual cash flow projections	DO/P
5/26	6/26	Operations	Finalize food services vendor	DO
5/26	6/26	Operations	Purchase food/beverage storage equipment, in accordance with vendor and legal requirements	DO
6/26	7/26	Operations	Doors open for operation	All
6/26	6/26	Operations	Set up locked storage for student academic & health records, files with proper FERPA protections/ procedures	DO
6/26	7/26	Operations	Arrange security services and finalize safety procedures	DO
7/26	8/26	Operations	Complete SAVE plan	DO
7/26	8/26	Operations	Prepare unaudited statements of income by 8/15	DO
8/26	9/26	Instruction	Contract with related services providers	MSS/DO
7/26	9/26	Operations	Verify immunization status of all students	DO/Nurse
8/26	8/26	Instruction	Staff Summer Institute: All staff begin work	All
8/26	8/26	Instruction	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Orientation (1 week)	All
9/26	ongoing	Instruction Operations	Launch Y1, open doors for school	All

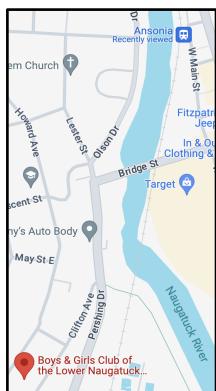
## 5. Transportation

a. Describe the plan for transporting students from within the local school district to and from the proposed school. Please detail any arrangements that have been made with the local school board(s). If the school plans to implement an extended-day or extended-year program that requires transportation beyond what the district provides, please detail any arrangements that have been made to transport these students. If necessary, please indicate what transportation options, if any, are available for out-of-district students.

Pursuant to C.G.S. § 10-66ee(f), the local board of education of the school district in which the charter school is located shall provide transportation services for students at the charter school who reside in such school district unless the charter school makes other arrangements for such transportation. PROUD Academy founders have begun to discuss this coordination with Ansonia's superintendent of schools and will engage with district leaders in any other town should we need to identify a location outside of Ansonia in future years.

Many families may be able to drive their children to PROUD Academy, as Ansonia is located centrally within the Naugatuck Valley and having a car is typical in the region. PROUD Academy is committed to ensuring the school is as accessible as possible to students across Connecticut who want to attend our school. We also want students to arrive at school and return home safely, and with a high degree of predictability. To ease the challenges families often encounter

around balancing work, school and family schedules, local public transportation options are available.



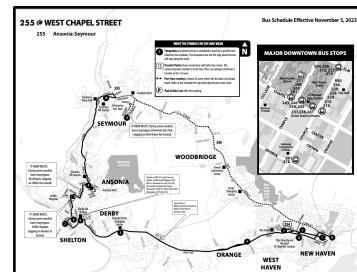
### MetroNorth Train Service<sup>122</sup>

The Ansonia MetroNorth train station, located at 40 West Main Street is a .3 mile (6-minute walk) to the Ansonia Boys and Girls Club, at 28 Howard Avenue. The train line runs between Waterbury and Derby/Shelton, with stops in Ansonia, Seymour, Beacon Falls and Naugatuck, and connects to the New Haven line, which stops in several cities and towns along the coast. The train ride between Derby/Shelton is a mere 4 minutes, and the ride between Waterbury and Ansonia is 28 minutes. A school monthly pass costs \$35 per student.



### CT Transit Bus Service<sup>123</sup>

The 255 bus is another option for travel between lower Naugatuck Valley towns. Rides between Ansonia and Seymour or Beacon Falls are about 15 minutes long, while rides between Ansonia and Derby, Naugatuck or Shelton take about 20 minutes; to/from Bridgeport, 28 minutes. Students living as far as Waterbury or New Haven may not find this bus service their best option for transit to/from Ansonia, with 40- or 52-minute commutes, respectively. Ticket prices range based on travel zones. PROUD Academy plans to explore discounted fare options with CT Transit for its students.



Once approved, PROUD Academy will carefully track the location and transportation needs of students who apply and then enroll in the school. Should alternative strategies be necessary, we may choose to invest in a contract with a private bus or shuttle company or lease a passenger van to pick students up at “hub” locations closer to where students live.

## Preferences

### 1. Serving High-Need Student Populations

a. Pursuant to C.G.S. § 10-66bb(c)(3)(A), an applicant may be considered for this preference if you intend to be a charter school whose primary purpose is the establishment of an education program designed to serve one or more of the following high-need student populations: (1) students with a history of low academic performance; (2) students who receive free or reduced-price lunch, pursuant to federal law and regulations; (3) students with a history of behavioral and social difficulties; (4) students identified as requiring special education; (5) students who are EL/MLs; or (6) students of a single gender. Please indicate the high-need

<sup>122</sup> <https://new.mta.info/agency/metro-north-railroad>

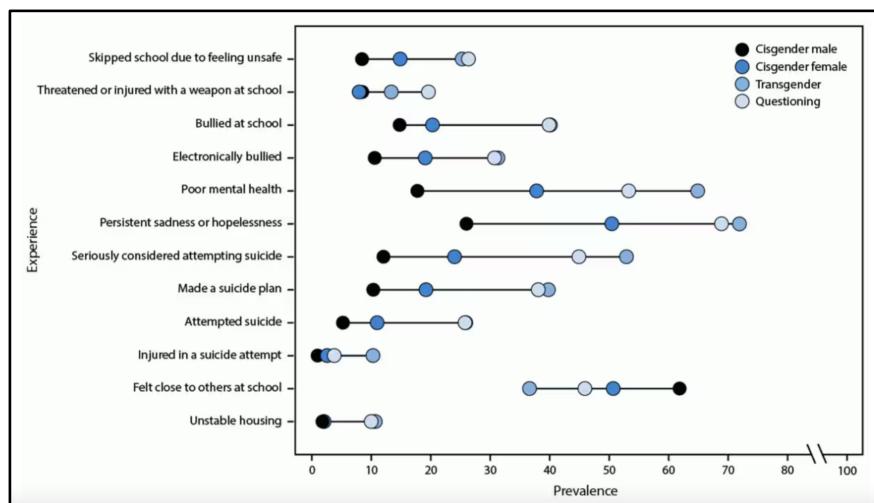
<sup>123</sup> <https://www.cttransit.com/>

student population(s) that the proposed school would serve and describe in no more than 250 words how the services and educational programs of the school would lead to academic achievement for such students. The SBE will also consider all applicable sections of the application.

Recognizing that students have multiple and overlapping identities, PROUD Academy seeks to serve those who are most often minoritized and experiencing stigma, those who are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and/or Questioning (LGBTQ+) and members of the Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities. Universally, PROUD Academy aims to ensure that every learner feels seen, supported, and valued.

Students who identify as LGBTQ+ are commonly characterized as at-risk and high need. Section III.1. presents research indicating these students are much more likely to have (1) a history of low academic performance and experience (3) behavioral and social difficulties. The CDC recently released the first nationally representative prevalence estimates of transgender identity and questioning transgender identity among U.S. high school students since 2017.<sup>124</sup> This study found that transgender and questioning students face a higher prevalence of experiencing violence, poor mental health, suicidal thoughts and behaviors, and unstable housing and a lower prevalence of school connectedness compared with their cisgender peers.

**Adjusted prevalence estimates\* of experiences of violence, poor mental health, suicidal thoughts and behaviors, school connectedness, and unstable housing by transgender identity among high school students — Youth Risk Behavior Survey, United States, 2023**



Further, less than half of students residing in Ansonia are demonstrating grade level proficiency in ELA and math (49.8% and 46.6% respectively). In the neighboring town of Derby, a mere 15.9% and 10.2% of students are proficient in ELA and math. PROUD Academy students are likely to reside in these two towns and other towns that have been designated as Alliance School Districts.

<sup>124</sup> Suarez NA, Trujillo L, McKinnon II, et al. Disparities in School Connectedness, Unstable Housing, Experiences of Violence, Mental Health, and Suicidal Thoughts and Behaviors Among Transgender and Cisgender High School Students — Youth Risk Behavior Survey, United States, 2023. MMWR Suppl 2024;73(Suppl-4):50–58. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.su7304a6>

PROUD Academy's curriculum resources and instructional design (Sections I.3 and I.4), specifically the PROUD Academy's cycles of curriculum enhancement, are intended to ensure core content is accessible, relevant and expansive. Our staffing plan allows for low teacher to student ratios, flexible grouping, integrated co-teaching and small advisory groups to be standard practices. A Manager of Student Supports and several Counselors will ensure students receive preventive support and their complex needs are addressed. Section III.5 describes the structures that will support individual students and the community as a whole, including restorative practices and tiers of psychosocial support.

**3. Opening in a Priority School District or District with at Least 75 Percent Racial or Ethnic Minority Enrollment**

a. Pursuant to C.G.S. § 10-66bb(c)(3)(C) and (D), an applicant will be awarded this preference if the proposed school opens in a Priority School District or a district with at least seventy-five percent racial or ethnic minority enrollment. Please indicate the district where the school will operate.

PROUD Academy intends to open in Ansonia, CT, and serve students who reside in Ansonia and across the Naugatuck Valley. Ansonia is currently just shy of seventy-five percent racial or ethnic minority enrollment, with 72.8% students who identify as Latino/Hispanic, Black, Asian/Pacific Islander or Two or More Races. In Derby, the neighboring town, 85.7% of enrolled students identify as racial or ethnic minority. Of the towns located in the Naugatuck Valley, three of them - Ansonia, Derby and Naugatuck - are formally identified as Alliance School Districts.<sup>125</sup> Given its mission, PROUD Academy is likely to attract students who live in other Alliance School Districts located outside the Naugatuck Valley region, but within driving distance to Ansonia, such as New Haven, West Haven, East Haven, Hamden, Stratford, Waterbury and Bridgeport.

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<sup>125</sup> Alliance School Districts are school districts with among the lowest Accountability measures in the state. [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/trb/content/postretirement/pr\\_alliance\\_districts\\_2023-24.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/trb/content/postretirement/pr_alliance_districts_2023-24.pdf)



**WIT &  
WISDOM®**

# **Curiosity, Inquiry, Knowledge**

Connecticut Core  
Standards Correlation  
to *Wit & Wisdom*

**Grade 6 | January 2024**



#### ABOUT *WIT & WISDOM*

*Wit & Wisdom*® is a Kindergarten through Grade 8 English language arts (ELA) curriculum created by Great Minds. Founded in 2007, Great Minds PBC has evolved from an education advocacy start-up to a respected curriculum developer providing the highest quality materials and professional development to schools and districts nationwide. In pursuit of its goal to raise expectations for every student, Great Minds enlists educators to write curricula that use proven learning strategies to reward students' natural curiosity, build knowledge, and cultivate lifelong critical-thinking skills. Writing teams collaborate to ensure a consistent structure and vision for learning within and across all grade levels.

With *Wit & Wisdom*, every text a student explores is authentic and of the highest quality. Students use these texts at every turn—to learn, and eventually master, essential reading, writing, speaking, listening, grammar, and vocabulary skills. All students read and discuss grade-level texts, and the curriculum includes suggestions for supporting this learning at key moments in the lessons.

*Wit & Wisdom* is composed of four modules per grade level. Each artfully explores a specific topic to develop depth of understanding and inspire curiosity. Modules build students' knowledge of important topics in the arts, science, and social studies through the use of diverse and culturally relevant texts. The core of each module is a selection of literary works, informational texts, and visual art. Modules are made up of approximately 30 lessons that are covered in six to eight weeks. All modules integrate reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language instruction.

*Wit & Wisdom* was intentionally designed to be implemented alongside a high-quality, research-based foundational skills program therefore the majority of the foundational skills standards will fall into this category. With strategic placement of supplemental materials, students can be successful in achieving the proficiencies of the Connecticut Core Standards while benefiting from the rich texts and knowledge building of *Wit & Wisdom*. For more information on *Wit & Wisdom*'s alignment to the science of reading, please see [The Science of Reading and Wit & Wisdom](#) and [Examining Scarborough's Rope: Background Knowledge](#). A detailed analysis of the alignment between the Connecticut Core Standards, English Language Arts and *Wit & Wisdom* is provided in the table on the pages that follow this introduction.

An adoption of *Wit & Wisdom* brings to your classroom:

#### HIGH RATINGS

The independent, nonprofit reviewer EdReports.org gives *Wit & Wisdom* top ratings for text quality, building knowledge, and usability. *Wit & Wisdom* received a Tier 1 designation for all grades, Kindergarten through Grade 8, from the Louisiana Department of Education.

#### PROVEN RESULTS

Schools and districts nationwide are experiencing increased student engagement and growth with *Wit & Wisdom*. See their stories and data at <https://greatminds.org/research>. Data stories from districts can be found at <https://greatminds.org/case-studies>. Finally, we are proud to share *The Knowledge Map Project*, an initiative of the Institute of Educational Policy at Johns Hopkins University and Chiefs for Change. This study provided *Wit & Wisdom* with high marks, saying it contains “high-quality texts with extensive topical coverage,” and “makes especially good use of the visual arts.” Read more at <https://edpolicy.education.jhu.edu/knowledge-map/>.

#### ONGOING SUPPORT

Great Minds offers *Wit & Wisdom* curriculum-specific professional development that values educators’ experiences and unique contexts. Our professional development helps teachers build their content knowledge and instructional practices to guide them in how to develop habits of inquiry in their students through rich experiences with the curriculum’s complex texts. Ongoing support includes:

##### **Introducing *Wit & Wisdom***

- *Wit & Wisdom* Blog and Online Resources Implementation Guide
- Module Zero (GK–2, G3–5, G6–8)
- *Wit & Wisdom* Preparation Protocols
- On-Demand Professional Development and Implementation Support Videos

##### **Extending *Wit & Wisdom***

- Family Tip Sheets
- Multilingual Glossary
- Volume of Reading text list
- *Wit & Wisdom* assessment resources (Standards Trackers and Question Sets)
- The Art of *Wit & Wisdom* (lessons and vocabulary relating to the curriculum’s rich artwork)

## Reading Standards for Literature

### Key Ideas and Details

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<p><b>RL.6.1</b> Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</p>	<p>Grade 6, Module 1, Lessons 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34</p> <p>Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27, 29, 30, 31, 34, 35, 36</p> <p>Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 1, 1DD, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 24, 26DD, 27, 30, 31, 32, 35, 36, 37, 38</p> <p>Grade 6, Module 4, Lessons 1, 8, 29, 31, 32</p>
<p><b>RL.6.2</b> Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.</p>	<p>Grade 6, Module 1, Lessons 11, 12, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 27, 28, 29, 33</p> <p>Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, 18, 21, 23, 25, 29, 30</p> <p>Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 2, 3, 5, 9, 14DD, 18</p>
<p><b>RL.6.3</b> Describe how a particular story’s or drama’s plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution.</p>	<p>Grade 6, Module 1, Lessons 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34</p> <p>Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 29, 30, 31, 36</p> <p>Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15</p>

## Reading Standards for Literature

### Craft and Structure

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<p><b>RL.6.4</b> Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.</p>	<p>Grade 6, Module 1, Lessons 4, 5DD, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 14DD, 19, 20, 22, 23, 26, 27</p> <p>Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 10DD, 11, 11DD, 12, 13, 14, 16, 16DD, 21, 22, 22DD, 23DD, 25, 29, 34, 35</p> <p>Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 2DD, 3, 4, 5, 7, 7DD, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12DD, 14DD</p> <p>Grade 6, Module 4, Lessons 5DD, 9DD</p>
<p><b>RL.6.5</b> Analyze how a particular sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the theme, setting, or plot.</p>	<p>Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 29, 30, 34, 36</p> <p>Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 3, 5, 9, 17</p>
<p><b>RL.6.6</b> Explain how an author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text.</p>	<p>Grade 6, Module 2, Lesson 24</p> <p>Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 8, 10, 11, 15, 20</p>

## Reading Standards for Literature

### Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<p><b>RL.6.7</b> Compare and contrast the experience of reading a story, drama, or poem to listening to or viewing an audio, video, or live version of the text, including contrasting what they “see” and “hear” when reading the text to what they perceive when they listen or watch.</p>	<p>Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 21, 23, 25</p>

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>RL.6.8</b> Not applicable to literature.	n/a
<b>RL.6.9</b> Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres (e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories, etc.) in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics.	Grade 6, Module 1, Lessons 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 11DD Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 22, 24

## Reading Standards for Literature

### Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>RL.6.10</b> By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6–8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.	Grade 6 Modules 1–4 <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i> considers this standard a Continuing Standard. Because it is fundamental to the learning design, it is addressed continually across all lessons and modules.

## Reading Standards for Informational Text

### Key Ideas and Details

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>RI.6.1</b> Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	Grade 6, Module 1, Lessons 6, 7, 9, 10, 17, 18, 21, 23 Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 8, 22, 28 Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 5, 9, 16, 17, 17DD, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 26DD, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38 Grade 6, Module 4, Lessons 1, 2, 2DD, 3, 3DD, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 16DD, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>RI.6.2</b> Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.	Grade 6, Module 1, Lessons 17, 18, 21 Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 28, 29 Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 16, 17, 19, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 33 Grade 6, Module 4, Lessons 2DD, 3, 4, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 30
<b>RI.6.3</b> Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text (e.g., through examples or anecdotes).	Grade 6, Module 1, Lesson 18 Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 22, 28 Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 5, 9, 16, 17, 17DD, 22, 25, 26, 27, 27DD, 28, 29, 31, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38 Grade 6, Module 4, Lessons 2, 2DD, 3, 3DD, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 19, 20, 24, 25

## Reading Standards for Informational Text

### Craft and Structure

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>RI.6.4</b> Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings.	Grade 6, Module 1, Lessons 1DD, 6, 8, 8DD, 15, 18DD, 25 Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 7DD, 9DD, 23DD, 24DD, 28, 29, 32 Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 5, 8, 9, 16DD, 22DD, 24DD, 25DD, 28, 32DD, 33DD Grade 6, Module 4, Lessons 1, 2, 2DD, 3, 4, 4DD, 5, 5DD, 6, 7, 7DD, 8, 9, 9DD, 11, 13, 14, 15, 15DD, 16, 20, 21, 23DD, 24, 25DD, 30, 30DD
<b>RI.6.5</b> Analyze how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas.	Grade 6, Module 2, Lesson 8 Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 22, 26 Grade 6, Module 4, Lessons 2, 7, 15, 16, 18, 22, 24, 26

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>RI.6.6</b> Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text.	Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 16, 19, 27, 28, 30 Grade 6, Module 4, Lessons 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 27

## Reading Standards for Informational Text

### Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>RI.6.7</b> Integrate information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue.	Grade 6 Modules 1-4 <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i> considers this standard a Continuing Standard. Because it is fundamental to the learning design, it is addressed continually across all lessons and modules.
<b>RI.6.8</b> Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.	Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 17, 22, 28
<b>RI.6.9</b> Compare and contrast one author's presentation of events with that of another (e.g., a memoir written by and a biography on the same person).	Grade 6, Module 1, Lessons 6, 7, 9, 10 Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 21, 27, 27DD, 30, 31 Grade 6, Module 4, Lesson 17DD

## Reading Standards for Informational Text

### Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<p><b>RI.6.10</b> By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 6–8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.</p>	<p>Grade 6 Modules 1–4 <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i> considers this standard a Continuing Standard. Because it is fundamental to the learning design, it is addressed continually across all lessons and modules.</p>

## Writing Standards

### Text Types and Purposes

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<p><b>W.6.1</b> Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.</p>	<p>Grade 6 Modules 1–4 <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i> considers this standard a Continuing Standard. Because it is fundamental to the learning design, it is addressed continually across all lessons and modules.</p>
<p><b>W.6.1a</b> Introduce claim(s) and organize the reasons and evidence clearly.</p>	<p>Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 6, 7, 13, 18, 35</p>
<p><b>W.6.1b</b> Support claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.</p>	<p>Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 6, 7, 13, 18, 35</p>
<p><b>W.6.1c</b> Use words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationships among claim(s) and reasons.</p>	<p>Grade 6, Module 3, Lesson 37DD</p>

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>W.6.1d</b> Establish and maintain a formal style.	Grade 6, Module 3, Lesson 37DD
<b>W.6.1e</b> Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented.	Grade 6, Module 3, Lesson 18
<b>W.6.2</b> Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.	Grade 6 Modules 1-4 <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i> considers this standard a Continuing Standard. Because it is fundamental to the learning design, it is addressed continually across all lessons and modules.
<b>W.6.2a</b> Introduce a topic; organize ideas, concepts, and information, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.	Grade 6, Module 1, Lessons 3, 4, 7, 13, 16, 19, 24, 25, 29 Grade 6, Module 3, Lesson 16 Grade 6, Module 4, Lesson 27
<b>W.6.2b</b> Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.	Grade 6, Module 1, Lessons 4, 6, 7, 10, 11, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 25, 29 Grade 6, Module 2, Lesson 27 Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 8, 16, 28 Grade 6, Module 4, Lessons 6, 7, 8, 12, 13, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27
<b>W.6.2c</b> Use appropriate transitions to clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.	Grade 6, Module 1, Lessons 2DD, 7DD, 8, 10, 11, 12DD, 16, 20, 21, 25, 29, 32DD, 34 Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 15DD, 31, 34DD, 35DD Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 8, 16, 28, 31 Grade 6, Module 4, Lessons 6, 12, 22

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>W.6.2d</b> Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.	Grade 6, Module 1, Lessons 23DD, 32DD, 33DD Grade 6, Module 2, Lesson 23DD Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 8, 28
<b>W.6.2e</b> Establish and maintain a formal style.	Grade 6, Module 1, Lessons 23DD, 24DD, 29, 30DD, 32DD, 33DD Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 8, 16, 28, 31 Grade 6, Module 4, Lessons 6, 7, 12, 22, 27
<b>W.6.2f</b> Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the information or explanation presented.	Grade 6, Module 1, Lessons 8, 24, 25 Grade 6, Module 3, Lesson 19 Grade 6, Module 4, Lessons 22, 27
<b>W.6.3</b> Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.	Grade 6 Modules 1-4 <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i> considers this standard a Continuing Standard. Because it is fundamental to the learning design, it is addressed continually across all lessons and modules.
<b>W.6.3a</b> Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.	Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 20, 21, 27, 31, 32, 33
<b>W.6.3b</b> Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.	Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 15, 16, 19, 21, 27, 31

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>W.6.3c</b> Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another.	Grade 6, Module 1, Lesson 2DD Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 15DD, 27, 31, 34DD Grade 6, Module 4, Lesson 6
<b>W.6.3d</b> Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to convey experiences and events.	Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 7, 8, 23DD, 31
<b>W.6.3e</b> Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.	Grade 6, Module 2, Lesson 32 Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 33, 36

## Writing Standards

### Production and Distribution of Writing

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>W.6.4</b> Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.	Grade 6, Module 1, Lessons 5, 10, 11, 16, 20, 20DD, 21, 22DD, 23DD, 24DD, 25, 29, 30DD, 31, 32, 32DD, 33, 33DD, 34, 34DD Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 9, 18, 27, 29, 32, 33, 34, 34DD, 35, 36 Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 8, 15, 19, 31, 33, 36, 37, 38 Grade 6, Module 4, Lessons 6, 12, 22, 27, 29
<b>W.6.5</b> With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.	Grade 6, Module 1, Lessons 12DD, 21DD, 31, 32DD, 33, 33DD, 34, 34DD Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 21, 22, 24, 25, 31, 33, 34, 34DD, 35, 35DD Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 35, 36, 37, 37DD, 38 Grade 6, Module 4, Lessons 21, 22, 26, 27, 29, 29DD, 30

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<p><b>W.6.6</b> Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of three pages in a single sitting.</p>	<p>Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 25, 26, 29, 34, 35, 36 Grade 6, Module 3, Lesson 38</p>

## Writing Standards

### Research to Build and Present Knowledge

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<p><b>W.6.7</b> Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate.</p>	<p>Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 20, 33</p>
<p><b>W.6.8</b> Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources; assess the credibility of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and providing basic bibliographic information for sources.</p>	<p>Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 20, 33 Grade 6, Module 4, Lessons 4, 5, 6, 10, 12, 13, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26</p>
<p><b>W.6.9</b> Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.</p>	<p>Grade 6 Modules 1-4 <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i> considers this standard a Continuing Standard. Because it is fundamental to the learning design, it is addressed continually across all lessons and modules.</p>
<p><b>W.6.9a</b> Apply grade 6 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres [e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories] in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics”).</p>	<p>Grade 6, Module 1, Lessons 4, 5, 11, 16, 18, 19, 20, 23, 24, 25, 27, 28, 29 Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 25, 27, 29 Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 7, 8, 14, 15, 31</p>

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>W.6.9b</b> Apply grade 6 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not”).	Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 28 Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 16, 19, 28, 31, 38 Grade 6, Module 4, Lessons 6, 7, 12, 22, 27
<b>W.6.10</b> Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.	Grade 6, Module 1, Lessons 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 22, 23, 24, 26, 30 Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 13, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31 Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34 Grade 6, Module 4, Lessons 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 30DD, 31, 32

## Speaking & Listening Standards

### Comprehension and Collaboration

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>SL.6.1</b> Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.	Grade 6 Modules 1-4 <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i> considers this standard a Continuing Standard. Because it is fundamental to the learning design, it is addressed continually across all lessons and modules.
<b>SL.6.1a</b> Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.	Grade 6, Module 1, Lessons 6, 9, 12, 14, 15, 23, 26 Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 21, 22, 25, 28, 36 Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 2, 9, 10, 12, 18, 24, 25, 26, 32 Grade 6, Module 4, Lessons 8, 9, 13, 28, 32

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>SL.6.1b</b> Follow rules for collegial discussions, set specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.	Grade 6, Module 1, Lessons 3, 6, 7, 9, 12, 14, 15, 23, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 34 Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 25, 28, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36 Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 9, 18, 32 Grade 6, Module 4, Lessons 28, 32
<b>SL.6.1c</b> Pose and respond to specific questions with elaboration and detail by making comments that contribute to the topic, text, or issue under discussion.	Grade 6, Module 1, Lessons 6, 9, 12, 14, 15, 17, 23, 29, 30 Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 21, 22, 25, 28, 36 Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 2, 9, 10, 12, 18, 24, 25, 26, 29, 30, 32 Grade 6, Module 4, Lessons 8, 9, 13, 28, 32
<b>SL.6.1d</b> Review the key ideas expressed and demonstrate understanding of multiple perspectives through reflection and paraphrasing.	Grade 6, Module 1, Lessons 9, 12 Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 25, 26, 30, 36 Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 9, 10, 12, 18, 24, 29, 30, 32, 33 Grade 6, Module 4, Lessons 8, 9, 13, 28, 32
<b>SL.6.2</b> Interpret information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how it contributes to a topic, text, or issue under study.	Grade 6, Module 1, Lessons 2, 6, 9, 10, 14, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 29 Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 36 Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 4, 5, 9, 17, 18, 21, 23, 24, 26, 27, 32, 33 Grade 6, Module 4, Lessons 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 17, 25, 30
<b>SL.6.3</b> Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.	Grade 6, Module 3, Lesson 17 Grade 6, Module 4, Lessons 11, 28, 32

## Speaking & Listening

### Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>SL.6.4</b> Present claims and findings, sequencing ideas logically and using pertinent descriptions, facts, and details to accentuate main ideas or themes; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.	Grade 6, Module 1, Lessons 18, 29 Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 6, 9, 13, 15, 17, 18, 26, 30, 36 Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 9, 18, 27, 32, 33 Grade 6, Module 4, Lessons 13, 28
<b>SL.6.5</b> Include multimedia components (e.g., graphics, images, music, sound) and visual displays in presentations to clarify information.	Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 23, 25, 26, 31, 36 Grade 6, Module 3, Lesson 33
<b>SL.6.6</b> Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.	Grade 6, Module 1, Lessons 14, 15, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 26, 28, 29, 32, 34 Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 21, 25, 26, 30, 32, 33, 35, 36 Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 2, 3, 9, 18, 23, 32, 33 Grade 6, Module 4, Lessons 13, 28, 32

## Language Standards

### Conventions of Standard English

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>L.6.1</b> Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.	Grade 6 Modules 1-4 <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i> considers this standard a Continuing Standard. Because it is fundamental to the learning design, it is addressed continually across all lessons and modules.

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>L.6.1a</b> Ensure that pronouns are in the proper case (subjective, objective, possessive).	Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 4DD, 5DD, 13DD, 34DD, 35DD Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 19, 24DD, 31, 35DD, 36, 37, 37DD, 38 Grade 6, Module 4, Lesson 29
<b>L.6.1b</b> Use intensive pronouns (e.g., <i>myself, ourselves</i> ).	Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 18DD, 19DD, 20DD, 27, 34DD, 35DD
<b>L.6.1c</b> Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person.	Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 4DD, 5DD, 8, 8DD, 9DD, 10DD, 15, 15DD, 19, 31, 35DD, 36, 37, 37DD, 38 Grade 6, Module 4, Lessons 12, 22, 29
<b>L.6.1d</b> Recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents).	Grade 6, Module 2, Lesson 27 Grade 6, Module 3, Lesson 5DD Grade 6, Module 4, Lessons 6DD, 8DD, 11DD, 12, 12DD, 22, 27, 27DD, 29DD
<b>L.6.1e</b> Recognize variations from standard English in their own and others' writing and speaking, and identify and use strategies to improve expression in conventional language.	Grade 6, Module 1, Lessons 3DD, 23DD, 24DD, 25, 30DD, 32DD, 33, 33DD, 34, 34DD Grade 6, Module 2, Lesson 23DD Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 9, 18
<b>L.6.2</b> Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.	Grade 6 Modules 1-4 <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i> considers this standard a Continuing Standard. Because it is fundamental to the learning design, it is addressed continually across all lessons and modules.

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>L.6.2a</b> Use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements.	Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 25DD, 27DD, 28DD, 31DD, 32DD, 33DD, 34DD, 35DD
<b>L.6.2b</b> Spell correctly.	Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 25, 26, 27, 32, 33, 34, 35 Grade 6, Module 3, Lesson 37DD

## Language Standards

### Knowledge of Language

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>L.6.3</b> Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.	Grade 6 Modules 1-4 <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i> considers this standard a Continuing Standard. Because it is fundamental to the learning design, it is addressed continually across all lessons and modules.
<b>L.6.3a</b> Vary sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style.	Grade 6, Module 1, Lessons 2DD, 7DD, 10, 11, 12DD, 14DD, 16, 20DD, 21, 21DD, 22DD, 25, 29, 33, 34, 34DD Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 32, 33, 34, 35, 36 Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 8, 15, 17DD, 18DD, 19, 27DD, 31, 31DD, 36, 36DD, 37, 37DD, 38 Grade 6, Module 4, Lessons 7, 22, 29
<b>L.6.3b</b> Maintain consistency in style and tone.	Grade 6, Module 1, Lessons 23DD, 24DD, 25, 29, 30DD, 32DD, 33, 33DD, 34, 34DD Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 34, 34DD Grade 6, Module 4, Lessons 17DD, 19DD, 20DD, 22, 22DD, 27, 27DD, 29DD

## Language Standards

### Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<p><b>L.6.4</b> Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 6 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.</p>	<p>See L.6.4a-c</p>
<p><b>L.6.4a</b> Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.</p>	<p>Grade 6, Module 1, Lessons 1DD, 5, 5DD, 6, 6DD, 8, 8DD, 11, 15, 15DD, 18DD, 19DD, 20, 25, 25DD, 26DD, 27, 27DD Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 3DD, 5, 6DD, 7, 7DD, 8DD, 9DD, 10, 11DD, 14DD, 16DD, 24DD, 25, 28, 29, 32 Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 1DD, 3, 3DD, 5, 6DD, 7, 9, 13DD, 14DD, 16, 16DD, 22DD, 25DD, 28, 32DD, 33DD Grade 6, Module 4, Lessons 1, 2DD, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7DD, 8, 9, 9DD, 11, 13, 15DD, 16, 20, 23DD, 24, 25DD, 28DD, 30DD</p>
<p><b>L.6.4b</b> Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., <i>audience</i>, <i>auditory</i>, <i>audible</i>).</p>	<p>Grade 6, Module 1, Lessons 15DD, 16DD, 18DD, 25DD Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 2, 2DD, 3DD, 6DD, 7DD, 8DD, 9DD, 24DD Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 2DD, 6DD, 11DD, 13DD, 16DD, 29DD, 32DD, 33DD Grade 6, Module 4, Lessons 3, 3DD, 10DD, 13DD, 21DD, 28DD</p>
<p><b>L.6.4c</b> Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.</p>	<p>Grade 6, Module 1, Lessons 15DD, 16DD, 18DD Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 7DD, 12DD, 13DD, 33 Grade 6, Module 4, Lessons 4DD, 9DD, 14, 16DD, 21DD, 24DD, 25DD, 26DD</p>

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>L.6.4d</b> Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).	Grade 6, Module 1, Lessons 1DD, 15DD, 16DD Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 14DD, 24DD, 28, 29, 32 Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 1DD, 2DD, 3, 3DD, 4DD, 5, 6DD, 7, 7DD, 9, 12DD, 13DD, 14DD, 16DD, 22DD, 25DD, 32DD, 33, 33DD Grade 6, Module 4, Lessons 2DD, 4, 5, 6, 7DD, 8, 9, 9DD, 11, 13, 15DD, 18DD, 21DD
<b>L.6.5</b> Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.	See L.6.5a-c
<b>L.6.5a</b> Interpret figures of speech (e.g., personification) in context.	Grade 6, Module 1, Lessons 8, 9, 11, 14DD, 19, 19DD, 20, 26, 26DD, 27, 27DD Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 22DD, 23DD Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 4, 9, 10, 11 Grade 6, Module 4, Lessons 4, 21
<b>L.6.5b</b> Use the relationship between particular words (e.g., cause/effect, part/whole, item/category) to better understand each of the words.	Grade 6, Module 1, Lessons 18DD Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 1DD, 11DD, 12DD, 16DD Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 14DD, 16, 21DD, 22DD, 26DD, 33 Grade 6, Module 4, Lessons 15DD, 18, 18DD, 26DD
<b>L.6.5c</b> Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., <i>stingy</i> , <i>scrimping</i> , <i>economical</i> , <i>unwasteful</i> , <i>thrifty</i> ).	Grade 6, Module 1, Lesson 1DD Grade 6, Module 2, Lessons 10DD, 14DD, 23DD, 24DD Grade 6, Module 3, Lessons 8, 16 Grade 6, Module 4, Lessons 1, 4DD, 5DD

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>L.6.6</b> Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.	Grade 6 Modules 1-4 <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i> considers this standard a Continuing Standard. Because it is fundamental to the learning design, it is addressed continually across all lessons and modules.



**WIT &  
WISDOM®**

# **Curiosity, Inquiry, Knowledge**

Connecticut Core  
Standards Correlation  
to *Wit & Wisdom*

**Grade 7 | January 2024**



#### ABOUT *WIT & WISDOM*

*Wit & Wisdom*® is a Kindergarten through Grade 8 English language arts (ELA) curriculum created by Great Minds. Founded in 2007, Great Minds PBC has evolved from an education advocacy start-up to a respected curriculum developer providing the highest quality materials and professional development to schools and districts nationwide. In pursuit of its goal to raise expectations for every student, Great Minds enlists educators to write curricula that use proven learning strategies to reward students' natural curiosity, build knowledge, and cultivate lifelong critical-thinking skills. Writing teams collaborate to ensure a consistent structure and vision for learning within and across all grade levels.

With *Wit & Wisdom*, every text a student explores is authentic and of the highest quality. Students use these texts at every turn—to learn, and eventually master, essential reading, writing, speaking, listening, grammar, and vocabulary skills. All students read and discuss grade-level texts, and the curriculum includes suggestions for supporting this learning at key moments in the lessons.

*Wit & Wisdom* is composed of four modules per grade level. Each artfully explores a specific topic to develop depth of understanding and inspire curiosity. Modules build students' knowledge of important topics in the arts, science, and social studies through the use of diverse and culturally relevant texts. The core of each module is a selection of literary works, informational texts, and visual art. Modules are made up of approximately 30 lessons that are covered in six to eight weeks. All modules integrate reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language instruction.

*Wit & Wisdom* was intentionally designed to be implemented alongside a high-quality, research-based foundational skills program therefore the majority of the foundational skills standards will fall into this category. With strategic placement of supplemental materials, students can be successful in achieving the proficiencies of the Connecticut Core Standards while benefiting from the rich texts and knowledge building of *Wit & Wisdom*. For more information on *Wit & Wisdom*'s alignment to the science of reading, please see [The Science of Reading and Wit & Wisdom](#) and [Examining Scarborough's Rope: Background Knowledge](#). A detailed analysis of the alignment between the Connecticut Core Standards, English Language Arts and *Wit & Wisdom* is provided in the table on the pages that follow this introduction.

An adoption of *Wit & Wisdom* brings to your classroom:

#### HIGH RATINGS

The independent, nonprofit reviewer EdReports.org gives *Wit & Wisdom* top ratings for text quality, building knowledge, and usability. *Wit & Wisdom* received a Tier 1 designation for all grades, Kindergarten through Grade 8, from the Louisiana Department of Education.

#### PROVEN RESULTS

Schools and districts nationwide are experiencing increased student engagement and growth with *Wit & Wisdom*. See their stories and data at <https://greatminds.org/research>. Data stories from districts can be found at <https://greatminds.org/case-studies>. Finally, we are proud to share *The Knowledge Map Project*, an initiative of the Institute of Educational Policy at Johns Hopkins University and Chiefs for Change. This study provided *Wit & Wisdom* with high marks, saying it contains “high-quality texts with extensive topical coverage,” and “makes especially good use of the visual arts.” Read more at <https://edpolicy.education.jhu.edu/knowledge-map/>.

#### ONGOING SUPPORT

Great Minds offers *Wit & Wisdom* curriculum-specific professional development that values educators’ experiences and unique contexts. Our professional development helps teachers build their content knowledge and instructional practices to guide them in how to develop habits of inquiry in their students through rich experiences with the curriculum’s complex texts. Ongoing support includes:

##### **Introducing *Wit & Wisdom***

- *Wit & Wisdom* Blog and Online Resources Implementation Guide
- Module Zero (GK–2, G3–5, G6–8)
- *Wit & Wisdom* Preparation Protocols
- On-Demand Professional Development and Implementation Support Videos

##### **Extending *Wit & Wisdom***

- Family Tip Sheets
- Multilingual Glossary
- Volume of Reading text list
- *Wit & Wisdom* assessment resources (Standards Trackers and Question Sets)
- The Art of *Wit & Wisdom* (lessons and vocabulary relating to the curriculum’s rich artwork)

## Reading Standards for Literature

### Key Ideas and Details

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>RL.7.1</b> Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	Grade 7, Module 1, Lessons 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 33, 34, 35 Grade 7, Module 3, Lessons 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 34, 35, 36, 37 Grade 7, Module 4, Lessons 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 19, 20, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 38
<b>RL.7.2</b> Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.	Grade 7, Module 1, Lessons 4, 5, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29 Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 30 Grade 7, Module 3, Lessons 3, 4, 5, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30 Grade 7, Module 4, Lessons 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 23, 24, 25, 26, 29, 38
<b>RL.7.3</b> Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).	Grade 7, Module 1, Lessons 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29, 30 Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 33, 34, 35 Grade 7, Module 3, Lessons 16, 18, 19, 20, 22, 28 Grade 7, Module 4, Lessons 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 13, 17, 19, 28

## Reading Standards for Literature

### Craft and Structure

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>RL.7.4</b> Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.	Grade 7, Module 1, Lessons 1DD, 5, 20, 26, 27DD, 28, 29 Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 4DD, 5, 10, 14, 17DD Grade 7, Module 3, Lessons 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 6DD, 15, 18, 20, 24 Grade 7, Module 4, Lessons 6, 12DD, 13, 13DD, 14DD, 23, 25, 26, 28DD
<b>RL.7.5</b> Analyze how a drama's or poem's form or structure (e.g., soliloquy, sonnet) contributes to its meaning.	Grade 7, Module 1, Lessons 10, 15, 18 Grade 7, Module 2, Lesson 17 Grade 7, Module 3, Lessons 2, 3, 4, 5
<b>RL.7.6</b> Analyze how an author develops and contrasts the points of view of different characters or narrators in a text.	Grade 7, Module 1, Lessons 6, 11, 16, 27 Grade 7, Module 3, Lessons 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 28 Grade 7, Module 4, Lessons 13, 18

## Reading Standards for Literature

### Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>RL.7.7</b> Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poem to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each medium (e.g., lighting, sound, color, or camera focus and angles in a film).	Grade 7, Module 3, Lessons 2, 3, 4, 5

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>RL.7.8</b> Not applicable to literature.	n/a
<b>RL.7.9</b> Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history.	Grade 7, Module 1, Lessons 5, 25 Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 4, 18 Grade 7, Module 4, Lessons 3, 4, 9, 12, 13, 14, 16, 23, 26

## Reading Standards for Literature

### Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>RL.7.10</b> By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6–8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.	Grade 7 Modules 1–4 <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i> considers this standard a Continuing Standard. Because it is fundamental to the learning design, it is addressed continually across all lessons and modules.

## Reading Standards for Informational Text

### Key Ideas and Details

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>RI.7.1</b> Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	Grade 7, Module 1, Lessons 2, 10, 20 Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 1, 4, 18, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35 Grade 7, Module 3, Lessons 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 25, 26, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37 Grade 7, Module 4, Lessons 3, 4, 5, 9, 11, 12, 14, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>RI.7.2</b> Determine two or more central ideas in a text and analyze their development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.	Grade 7, Module 1, Lesson 2 Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 8, 18, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31 Grade 7, Module 3, Lessons 7, 8, 10, 13, 14, 25, 26, 31 Grade 7, Module 4, Lessons 3, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 30, 32, 38
<b>RI.7.3</b> Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text (e.g., how ideas influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events).	Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 4, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29, 30, 33, 34, 35 Grade 7, Module 4, Lessons 4, 17, 21, 22, 23, 26, 27, 28, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37

## Reading Standards for Informational Text

### Craft and Structure

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>RI.7.4</b> Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.	Grade 7, Module 1, Lessons 2, 13DD Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 4DD, 10DD, 14DD, 22DD, 24, 28, 29DD Grade 7, Module 3, Lessons 8, 9, 10, 13, 31, 32 Grade 7, Module 4, Lessons 3, 3DD, 9, 12DD, 14, 15, 16, 16DD, 18, 23DD, 24DD, 30DD
<b>RI.7.5</b> Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text, including how the major sections contribute to the whole and to the development of the ideas.	Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 1, 4, 8, 23, 24 Grade 7, Module 4, Lessons 3, 9, 14, 15, 16, 18, 30
<b>RI.7.6</b> Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author distinguishes his or her position from that of others.	Grade 7, Module 2, Lesson 18 Grade 7, Module 3, Lessons 9, 31 Grade 7, Module 4, Lessons 3, 4, 5, 9, 16, 17, 18, 26

## Reading Standards for Informational Text

### Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>RI.7.7</b> Compare and contrast a text to an audio, video, or multimedia version of the text, analyzing each medium's portrayal of the subject (e.g., how the delivery of a speech affects the impact of the words).	Grade 7 Modules 1-4 <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i> considers this standard a Continuing Standard. Because it is fundamental to the learning design, it is addressed continually across all lessons and modules.
<b>RI.7.8</b> Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims.	Grade 7, Module 3, Lessons 7, 8, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 19, 21, 23, 31, 32
<b>RI.7.9</b> Analyze how two or more authors writing about the same topic shape their presentations of key information by emphasizing different evidence or advancing different interpretations of facts.	Grade 7, Module 3, Lesson 31 Grade 7, Module 4, Lessons 8, 17, 24, 26

## Reading Standards for Informational Text

### Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>RI.7.10</b> By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 6–8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.	Grade 7 Modules 1-4 <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i> considers this standard a Continuing Standard. Because it is fundamental to the learning design, it is addressed continually across all lessons and modules.

## Writing Standards

### Text Types and Purposes

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>W.7.1</b> Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.	Grade 7 Modules 1-4 <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i> considers this standard a Continuing Standard. Because it is fundamental to the learning design, it is addressed continually across all lessons and modules.
<b>W.7.1a</b> Introduce claim(s), acknowledge alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.	Grade 7, Module 3, Lessons 3, 4, 6, 11, 12, 15, 17, 21, 23, 26, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34
<b>W.7.1b</b> Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.	Grade 7, Module 3, Lessons 8, 11, 12, 15, 17, 21, 30, 33, 34
<b>W.7.1c</b> Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence.	Grade 7, Module 3, Lessons 16, 17, 21, 30, 33
<b>W.7.1d</b> Establish and maintain a formal style.	Grade 7, Module 2, Lesson 29 Grade 7, Module 3, Lessons 22, 30, 33, 36DD
<b>W.7.1e</b> Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.	Grade 7, Module 3, Lessons 28, 33

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>W.7.2</b> <p>Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.</p>	<p>Grade 7 Modules 1-4</p> <p><i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i> considers this standard a Continuing Standard. Because it is fundamental to the learning design, it is addressed continually across all lessons and modules.</p>
<b>W.7.2a</b> <p>Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.</p>	<p>Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 4, 5, 6, 8, 15, 23, 24, 33</p> <p>Grade 7, Module 4, Lessons 28, 30, 33, 35</p>
<b>W.7.2b</b> <p>Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.</p>	<p>Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 4, 6, 15, 16, 33</p> <p>Grade 7, Module 4, Lessons 33, 35</p>
<b>W.7.2c</b> <p>Use appropriate transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.</p>	<p>Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 18DD, 20, 24DD, 26DD</p> <p>Grade 7, Module 4, Lesson 33</p>
<b>W.7.2d</b> <p>Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.</p>	<p>Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 5DD, 6DD, 15DD, 20, 23DD, 35DD</p> <p>Grade 7, Module 3, Lessons 9DD, 10DD</p> <p>Grade 7, Module 4, Lessons 33, 37DD</p>
<b>W.7.2e</b> <p>Establish and maintain a formal style.</p>	<p>Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 20, 23DD, 28, 28DD, 29</p> <p>Grade 7, Module 4, Lesson 33</p>

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>W.7.2f</b> Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.	Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 4, 32 Grade 7, Module 4, Lessons 28, 33
<b>W.7.3</b> Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.	Grade 7 Modules 1-4 <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i> considers this standard a Continuing Standard. Because it is fundamental to the learning design, it is addressed continually across all lessons and modules.
<b>W.7.3a</b> Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.	Grade 7, Module 1, Lessons 6, 7, 8, 9, 29, 30
<b>W.7.3b</b> Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.	Grade 7, Module 1, Lessons 6, 7, 12, 17, 21, 25, 27, 28, 29, 30
<b>W.7.3c</b> Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another.	Grade 7, Module 1, Lessons 28, 30 Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 11DD, 12DD, 18DD, 24DD, 26DD Grade 7, Module 3, Lesson 16
<b>W.7.3d</b> Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.	Grade 7, Module 1, Lessons 3DD, 4DD, 6, 7, 15DD, 17, 25, 27, 28, 29, 30, 34DD Grade 7, Module 3, Lesson 1
<b>W.7.3e</b> Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.	Grade 7, Module 1, Lessons 29, 30

## Writing Standards

### Production and Distribution of Writing

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>W.7.4</b> Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.	Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 10, 16, 20, 23, 29, 31, 34, 35 Grade 7, Module 3, Lessons 21, 22, 30, 33, 35, 36, 36DD Grade 7, Module 4, Lessons 24, 32, 35, 36, 37
<b>W.7.5</b> With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.	Grade 7, Module 1, Lessons 22DD, 30DD, 32, 32DD, 33, 34, 34DD Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 21, 31, 33, 34, 35, 35DD Grade 7, Module 3, Lessons 10DD, 21, 22, 30, 30DD, 33, 34, 35, 36, 36DD Grade 7, Module 4, Lessons 32, 33, 34, 37, 37DD
<b>W.7.6</b> Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and link to and cite sources as well as to interact and collaborate with others, including linking to and citing sources.	Grade 7, Module 3, Lesson 33 Grade 7, Module 4, Lessons 34, 35, 36, 37

## Writing Standards

### Research to Build and Present Knowledge

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>W.7.7</b> Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation.	Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 2, 16 Grade 7, Module 4, Lessons 1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 9, 11, 12, 26, 27, 34

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>W.7.8</b> <p>Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.</p>	Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 2, 16 Grade 7, Module 4, Lessons 1, 2, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 25DD, 26, 26DD, 27, 27DD, 33, 34, 35, 36
<b>W.7.9</b> <p>Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.</p>	Grade 7 Modules 1-4 <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i> considers this standard a Continuing Standard. Because it is fundamental to the learning design, it is addressed continually across all lessons and modules.
<b>W.7.9a</b> <p>Apply grade 7 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history”).</p>	Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 20, 33, 34 Grade 7, Module 3, Lessons 10, 11, 28, 30
<b>W.7.9b</b> <p>Apply grade 7 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims”).</p>	Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 33, 34 Grade 7, Module 3, Lessons 10, 11

## Writing Standards

### Range of Writing

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<p><b>W.7.10</b> Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.</p>	<p>Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 2, 16 Grade 7, Module 4, Lessons 1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 9, 11, 12, 26, 27, 34</p>

## Speaking & Listening Standards

### Comprehension and Collaboration

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<p><b>SL.7.1</b> Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.</p>	<p>Grade 7 Modules 1-4 <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i> considers this standard a Continuing Standard. Because it is fundamental to the learning design, it is addressed continually across all lessons and modules.</p>
<p><b>SL.7.1a</b> Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.</p>	<p>Grade 7, Module 1, Lessons 7, 18, 24 Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 7, 19, 30 Grade 7, Module 3, Lessons 11, 29, 37 Grade 7, Module 4, Lessons 27, 31, 38</p>
<p><b>SL.7.1b</b> Follow rules for collegial discussions, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.</p>	<p>Grade 7, Module 1, Lessons 2, 5, 7, 18, 24, 30 Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 7, 19, 30 Grade 7, Module 3, Lessons 11, 29, 37 Grade 7, Module 4, Lessons 27, 31, 38</p>

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>SL.7.1c</b> Pose questions that elicit elaboration and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant observations and ideas that bring the discussion back on topic as needed.	Grade 7, Module 1, Lessons 7, 18, 24 Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 7, 19, 30 Grade 7, Module 3, Lessons 10, 11, 17, 19, 29, 37 Grade 7, Module 4, Lessons 27, 31, 38
<b>SL.7.1d</b> Acknowledge new information expressed by others and, when warranted, modify their own views.	Grade 7, Module 1, Lesson 7 Grade 7, Module 2, Lesson 30 Grade 7, Module 3, Lessons 29, 37 Grade 7, Module 4, Lesson 31
<b>SL.7.2</b> Analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how the ideas clarify a topic, text, or issue under study.	Grade 7, Module 1, Lessons 1, 2, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 20, 24 Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 17, 18, 20, 21, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 29 Grade 7, Module 3, Lessons 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 25, 26 Grade 7, Module 4, Lessons 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 21, 22, 24
<b>SL.7.3</b> Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.	Grade 7, Module 3, Lessons 8, 19, 21, 22, 23, 35

## Speaking & Listening

### Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>SL.7.4</b> Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, facts, details, and examples; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.	Grade 7, Module 1, Lesson 26 Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 12, 15 Grade 7, Module 4, Lessons 14, 17, 20, 21, 22
<b>SL.7.5</b> Include multimedia components and visual displays in presentations to clarify claims and findings and emphasize salient points.	Grade 7, Module 4, Lessons 15, 20, 21, 22
<b>SL.7.6</b> Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.	Grade 7, Module 1, Lessons 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35 Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35 Grade 7, Module 3, Lessons 11, 29, 37 Grade 7, Module 4, Lessons 18DD, 19DD, 20DD, 21, 22, 27, 31, 38

## Language Standards

### Conventions of Standard English

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>L.7.1</b> Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.	Grade 7 Modules 1-4 <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i> considers this standard a Continuing Standard. Because it is fundamental to the learning design, it is addressed continually across all lessons and modules.

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>L.7.1a</b> Explain the function of phrases and clauses in general and their function in specific sentences.	Grade 7, Module 1, Lessons 11DD, 25DD, 32DD, 34DD Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 11DD, 12DD, 18DD, 20, 24DD Grade 7, Module 3, Lessons 14DD, 15DD, 16DD, 17DD, 21DD
<b>L.7.1b</b> Choose among simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences to signal differing relationships among ideas.	Grade 7, Module 1, Lessons 18DD, 19DD, 22DD, 30DD, 34DD Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 20DD, 21, 23DD, 26DD Grade 7, Module 3, Lessons 21, 23DD, 24DD, 27DD, 28DD, 30, 30DD, 33, 35, 36DD, 37DD
<b>L.7.1c</b> Place phrases and clauses within a sentence, recognizing and correcting misplaced and dangling modifiers.	Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 16DD, 20, 21DD, 30DD
<b>L.7.2</b> Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.	Grade 7 Modules 1-4 <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i> considers this standard a Continuing Standard. Because it is fundamental to the learning design, it is addressed continually across all lessons and modules.
<b>L.7.2a</b> Use a comma to separate coordinate adjectives (e.g., <i>It was a fascinating, enjoyable movie but not He wore an old[,] green shirt</i> ).	Grade 7, Module 1, Lessons 23DD, 26DD, 28DD, 34DD Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 26DD Grade 7, Module 4, Lessons 2DD, 5DD, 6DD, 9DD, 33, 35, 36, 37, 37DD
<b>L.7.2b</b> Spell correctly.	Grade 7, Module 2, Lesson 20 Grade 7, Module 4, Lesson 37DD

## Language Standards

### Knowledge of Language

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<p><b>L.7.3</b> Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.</p>	<p>Grade 7 Modules 1-4 <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i> considers this standard a Continuing Standard. Because it is fundamental to the learning design, it is addressed continually across all lessons and modules.</p>
<p><b>L.7.3a</b> Choose language that expresses ideas precisely and concisely, recognizing and eliminating wordiness and redundancy.</p>	<p>Grade 7, Module 1, Lessons 3DD, 4DD, 9DD, 15DD, 28DD, 34DD Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 5DD, 15DD, 20, 23DD, 35DD Grade 7, Module 3, Lessons 4DD, 7DD, 8DD, 9DD, 10DD, 21, 28DD, 30, 33, 35, 36DD Grade 7, Module 4, Lessons 18DD, 19DD, 20DD, 31DD, 32DD, 33, 37DD</p>

## Language Standards

### Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<p><b>L.7.4</b> Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 7 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.</p>	<p>See L.7.4a-c</p>

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>L.7.4a</b> Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.	Grade 7, Module 1, Lessons 2, 5, 5DD, 6DD, 10DD, 11DD, 13DD, 16DD, 17DD, 20, 27DD, 28, 29DD, 31DD Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 2DD, 3DD, 4DD, 7DD, 13DD, 17DD, 19DD, 22DD, 24, 27DD, 28, 29DD, 31DD Grade 7, Module 3, Lessons 2DD, 3, 4, 5, 5DD, 11DD, 15, 18, 19DD, 20DD, 32, 34DD Grade 7, Module 4, Lessons 3, 3DD, 9, 16DD, 17DD, 18, 21DD, 23DD, 24DD, 26, 28DD, 30DD, 33DD
<b>L.7.4b</b> Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., <i>belligerent</i> , <i>bellicose</i> , <i>rebel</i> ).	Grade 7, Module 1, Lessons 2DD, 3DD, 6DD, 8DD, 10DD, 13DD, 16DD, 20DD, 29DD Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 1, 2DD, 3DD, 8DD, 13DD, 22DD, 25DD, 27DD Grade 7, Module 3, Lessons 1DD, 2DD, 5DD, 20, 6DD, 20DD, 26, 29DD, 32DD, 34DD Grade 7, Module 4, Lessons 3, 3DD, 6, 7DD, 8DD, 9, 10DD, 15DD, 17DD, 18DD, 21DD, 24DD, 30DD, 33DD
<b>L.7.4c</b> Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.	Grade 7, Module 1, Lessons 5DD, 8DD, 16DD, 24DD Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 4DD, 7DD, 17DD, 22DD, 27DD Grade 7, Module 3, Lessons 11DD, 32DD Grade 7, Module 4, Lessons 3, 3DD, 4DD, 8DD, 10DD, 15DD, 16DD, 17DD, 18, 30DD
<b>L.7.4d</b> Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).	Grade 7, Module 1, Lessons 5DD, 8DD, 16DD, 17DD, 24DD, 27DD Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 4DD, 7DD, 17DD, 24, 28, 27DD Grade 7, Module 3, Lessons 4, 11DD, 15, 32DD, 34DD Grade 7, Module 4, Lessons 8DD, 9, 10DD, 15DD, 16DD, 17DD, 18, 26, 30DD

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>L.7.5</b> Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.	See L.7.5a-c
<b>L.7.5a</b> Interpret figures of speech (e.g., literary, biblical, and mythological allusions) in context.	Grade 7, Module 1, Lessons 1DD, 12DD, 14DD, 21DD Grade 7, Module 2, Lesson 3 Grade 7, Module 3, Lessons 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 6DD, 9, 22DD Grade 7, Module 4, Lessons 7, 12DD, 14DD
<b>L.7.5b</b> Use the relationship between particular words (e.g., synonym/antonym, analogy) to better understand each of the words.	Grade 7, Module 1, Lessons 5DD, 20DD, 24DD, 27DD Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 1DD, 4DD, 7DD, 9DD, 17DD, 25DD, 29DD Grade 7, Module 3, Lessons 11DD, 12DD, 13DD, 19DD Grade 7, Module 4, Lessons 3, 3DD, 4DD, 10DD
<b>L.7.5c</b> Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., <i>refined</i> , <i>respectful</i> , <i>polite</i> , <i>diplomatic</i> , <i>condescending</i> ).	Grade 7, Module 1, Lessons 5DD, 27DD Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 4DD, 17DD Grade 7, Module 3, Lessons 5, 8, 18DD, 25DD Grade 7, Module 4, Lessons 1DD, 6, 13DD, 16DD, 28DD, 29DD
<b>L.7.6</b> Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.	Grade 7 Modules 1-4 <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i> considers this standard a Continuing Standard. Because it is fundamental to the learning design, it is addressed continually across all lessons and modules.



**WIT &  
WISDOM®**

# **Curiosity, Inquiry, Knowledge**

Connecticut Core  
Standards Correlation  
to *Wit & Wisdom*

**Grade 8 | January 2024**



#### ABOUT *WIT & WISDOM*

*Wit & Wisdom*® is a Kindergarten through Grade 8 English language arts (ELA) curriculum created by Great Minds. Founded in 2007, Great Minds PBC has evolved from an education advocacy start-up to a respected curriculum developer providing the highest quality materials and professional development to schools and districts nationwide. In pursuit of its goal to raise expectations for every student, Great Minds enlists educators to write curricula that use proven learning strategies to reward students' natural curiosity, build knowledge, and cultivate lifelong critical-thinking skills. Writing teams collaborate to ensure a consistent structure and vision for learning within and across all grade levels.

With *Wit & Wisdom*, every text a student explores is authentic and of the highest quality. Students use these texts at every turn—to learn, and eventually master, essential reading, writing, speaking, listening, grammar, and vocabulary skills. All students read and discuss grade-level texts, and the curriculum includes suggestions for supporting this learning at key moments in the lessons.

*Wit & Wisdom* is composed of four modules per grade level. Each artfully explores a specific topic to develop depth of understanding and inspire curiosity. Modules build students' knowledge of important topics in the arts, science, and social studies through the use of diverse and culturally relevant texts. The core of each module is a selection of literary works, informational texts, and visual art. Modules are made up of approximately 30 lessons that are covered in six to eight weeks. All modules integrate reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language instruction.

*Wit & Wisdom* was intentionally designed to be implemented alongside a high-quality, research-based foundational skills program therefore the majority of the foundational skills standards will fall into this category. With strategic placement of supplemental materials, students can be successful in achieving the proficiencies of the Connecticut Core Standards while benefiting from the rich texts and knowledge building of *Wit & Wisdom*. For more information on *Wit & Wisdom*'s alignment to the science of reading, please see [The Science of Reading and Wit & Wisdom](#) and [Examining Scarborough's Rope: Background Knowledge](#). A detailed analysis of the alignment between the Connecticut Core Standards, English Language Arts and *Wit & Wisdom* is provided in the table on the pages that follow this introduction.

An adoption of *Wit & Wisdom* brings to your classroom:

#### HIGH RATINGS

The independent, nonprofit reviewer EdReports.org gives *Wit & Wisdom* top ratings for text quality, building knowledge, and usability. *Wit & Wisdom* received a Tier 1 designation for all grades, Kindergarten through Grade 8, from the Louisiana Department of Education.

#### PROVEN RESULTS

Schools and districts nationwide are experiencing increased student engagement and growth with *Wit & Wisdom*. See their stories and data at <https://greatminds.org/research>. Data stories from districts can be found at <https://greatminds.org/case-studies>. Finally, we are proud to share *The Knowledge Map Project*, an initiative of the Institute of Educational Policy at Johns Hopkins University and Chiefs for Change. This study provided *Wit & Wisdom* with high marks, saying it contains “high-quality texts with extensive topical coverage,” and “makes especially good use of the visual arts.” Read more at <https://edpolicy.education.jhu.edu/knowledge-map/>.

#### ONGOING SUPPORT

Great Minds offers *Wit & Wisdom* curriculum-specific professional development that values educators’ experiences and unique contexts. Our professional development helps teachers build their content knowledge and instructional practices to guide them in how to develop habits of inquiry in their students through rich experiences with the curriculum’s complex texts. Ongoing support includes:

##### **Introducing *Wit & Wisdom***

- *Wit & Wisdom* Blog and Online Resources Implementation Guide
- Module Zero (GK–2, G3–5, G6–8)
- *Wit & Wisdom* Preparation Protocols
- On-Demand Professional Development and Implementation Support Videos

##### **Extending *Wit & Wisdom***

- Family Tip Sheets
- Multilingual Glossary
- Volume of Reading text list
- *Wit & Wisdom* assessment resources (Standards Trackers and Question Sets)
- The Art of *Wit & Wisdom* (lessons and vocabulary relating to the curriculum’s rich artwork)

## Reading Standards for Literature

### Key Ideas and Details

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<p><b>RL.8.1</b> Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</p>	<p>Grade 8, Module 1, Lessons 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 29</p> <p>Grade 8, Module 2, Lessons 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 30, 33, 34, 35, 36</p> <p>Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34</p>
<p><b>RL.8.2</b> Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.</p>	<p>Grade 8, Module 1, Lessons 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 13, 13DD, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 29, 29DD, 30</p> <p>Grade 8, Module 2, Lessons 8, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 33, 34, 35, 36</p> <p>Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 17, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 36</p>
<p><b>RL.8.3</b> Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.</p>	<p>Grade 8, Module 1, Lessons 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 29</p> <p>Grade 8, Module 2, Lessons 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27, 28, 29, 30, 34, 35, 36</p> <p>Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 20, 21, 22, 24</p>

## Reading Standards for Literature

### Craft and Structure

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<p><b>RL.8.4</b> Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.</p>	<p>Grade 8, Module 1, Lessons 1, 2, 3, 4, 4DD, 5, 10, 11DD, 14, 15, 16, 21, 22, 24DD, 29, 32DD, 33DD</p> <p>Grade 8, Module 2, Lessons 6DD, 7DD, 8, 8DD, 9, 10, 10DD, 11, 11DD, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 29, 30, 34, 35, 36</p> <p>Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 20, 21, 22, 23, 28, 29, 30,</p> <p>Grade 8, Module 4, Lessons 12DD, 4DD, 9DD, 0DD, 18DD, 20DD, 21DD, 24DD, 25, 30DD</p>
<p><b>RL.8.5</b> Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style.</p>	<p>Grade 8, Module 1, Lessons 3, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 30, 31, 32</p> <p>Grade 8, Module 2, Lessons 19, 26</p>
<p><b>RL.8.6</b> Analyze how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor.</p>	<p>Grade 8, Module 1, Lesson 10</p> <p>Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 29</p>

## Reading Standards for Literature

### Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<p><b>RL.8.7</b> Analyze the extent to which a filmed or live production of a story or drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script, evaluating the choices made by the director or actors.</p>	<p>Grade 8, Module 2, Lessons 21, 22, 25, 26, 34</p> <p>Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 18</p>

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>RL.8.8</b> Not applicable to literature.	n/a
<b>RL.8.9</b> Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new.	Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 24, 27

## Reading Standards for Literature

### Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>RL.8.10</b> By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.	Grade 8 Modules 1–4 <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i> considers this standard a Continuing Standard. Because it is fundamental to the learning design, it is addressed continually across all lessons and modules.

## Reading Standards for Informational Text

### Key Ideas and Details

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>RI.8.1</b> Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	Grade 8, Module 1, Lessons 11, 12, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30 Grade 8, Module 2, Lessons 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 12, 14, 31, 32, 33 Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, Grade 8, Module 4, Lessons 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 33

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>RI.8.2</b> Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.	Grade 8, Module 1, Lessons 11, 12, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32 Grade 8, Module 2, Lessons 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 12, 14, 31, 32, 34 Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 13, 15, 16, 17, Grade 8, Module 4, Lessons 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24
<b>RI.8.3</b> Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).	Grade 8, Module 1, Lessons 12, 23, 24, 25, Grade 8, Module 2, Lessons 1, 2, 4, 12, 31, 32, 33 Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 13, 14 Grade 8, Module 4, Lessons 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 20, 21, 23

## Reading Standards for Informational Text

### Craft and Structure

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>RI.8.4</b> Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.	Grade 8, Module 1, Lessons 11, 12, 12DD, 13DD, 23, 23DD, 24, 25, 27DD, 32DD, 33DD Grade 8, Module 2, Lessons 1, 2DD, 3, 4, 4DD, 12, 12DD, 31, 32 Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 12, 14, 14DD, 15DD Grade 8, Module 4, Lessons 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 3DD, 10DD, 15DD, 17DD, 19DD, 20DD
<b>RI.8.5</b> Analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept.	Grade 8, Module 1, Lesson 27 Grade 8, Module 2, Lessons 1, 3 Grade 8, Module 4, Lessons 1, 14, 19, 20, 21

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>RI.8.6</b> Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.	Grade 8, Module 1, Lesson 24 Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 12, 14 Grade 8, Module 4, Lessons 7, 11, 12, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 24

## Reading Standards for Informational Text

### Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>RI.8.7</b> Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using different mediums (e.g., print or digital text, video, multimedia) to present a particular topic or idea.	Grade 8 Modules 1-4  <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i> considers this standard a Continuing Standard. Because it is fundamental to the learning design, it is addressed continually across all lessons and modules.
<b>RI.8.8</b> Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced.	Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 13, 14, 15, 16 Grade 8, Module 4, Lessons 20, 23
<b>RI.8.9</b> Analyze a case in which two or more texts provide conflicting information on the same topic and identify where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation.	Grade 8, Module 4, Lessons 5, 20, 23, 24

## Reading Standards for Informational Text

### Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<p><b>RI.8.10</b> By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction at the high end of the grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.</p>	<p>Grade 8 Modules 1-4 <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i> considers this standard a Continuing Standard. Because it is fundamental to the learning design, it is addressed continually across all lessons and modules.</p>

## Writing Standards

### Text Types and Purposes

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<p><b>W.8.1</b> Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.</p>	<p>Grade 8 Modules 1-4 <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i> considers this standard a Continuing Standard. Because it is fundamental to the learning design, it is addressed continually across all lessons and modules.</p>
<p><b>W.8.1a</b> Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.</p>	<p>Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 26, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35</p>
<p><b>W.8.1b</b> Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.</p>	<p>Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 17, 26, 31, 34, 35</p>
<p><b>W.8.1c</b> Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.</p>	<p>Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 6, 8, 9, 18, 19, 20, 22, 26, 31, 32, 35</p>

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>W.8.1d</b> Establish and maintain a formal style.	Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 29, 30, 31
<b>W.8.1e</b> Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.	Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 13, 30, 31, 35
<b>W.8.2</b> Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.	Grade 8 Modules 1-4 <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i> considers this standard a Continuing Standard. Because it is fundamental to the learning design, it is addressed continually across all lessons and modules.
<b>W.8.2a</b> Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.	Grade 8, Module 2, Lessons 5, 9, 10, 11, 15, 18, 21, 27, 28, 31, 32 Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 16, 27 Grade 8, Module 4, Lessons 12
<b>W.8.2b</b> Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.	Grade 8, Module 1, Lessons 16, 18 Grade 8, Module 2, Lessons 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 25, 26, 32, 34, 35, 36, 37 Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 5, 6, 8, 16, 27, Grade 8, Module 4, Lessons 12
<b>W.8.2c</b> Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.	Grade 8, Module 2, Lessons 13, 15, 36, 37 Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 16, 27 Grade 8, Module 4, Lessons 12

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>W.8.2d</b> Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.	Grade 8, Module 1, Lesson 28 Grade 8, Module 2, Lessons 5, 25, 26 Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 16, 27
<b>W.8.2e</b> Establish and maintain a formal style.	Grade 8, Module 2, Lessons 23, 26 Grade 8, Module 3, Lesson 16
<b>W.8.2f</b> Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.	Grade 8, Module 2, Lessons 25, 26, 36, 37 Grade 8, Module 4, Lessons 12
<b>W.8.3</b> Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.	Grade 8 Modules 1-4 <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i> considers this standard a Continuing Standard. Because it is fundamental to the learning design, it is addressed continually across all lessons and modules.
<b>W.8.3a</b> Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.	Grade 8, Module 1, Lessons 12, 13, 14, 17, 29 Grade 8, Module 2, Lesson 16
<b>W.8.3b</b> Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.	Grade 8, Module 1, Lessons 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 21, 29, 31 Grade 8, Module 2, Lessons 14, 16

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>W.8.3c</b> Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence, signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another, and show the relationships among experiences and events.	<i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i> addresses this standard in Grade 7. Grade 7, Module 1, Lessons 28, 30 Grade 7, Module 2, Lessons 11DD, 12DD, 18DD, 24DD, 26DD Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 16
<b>W.8.3d</b> Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.	Grade 8, Module 1, Lessons 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 15, 17, 21, 29, 31 Grade 8, Module 2, Lessons 3, 14, 16
<b>W.8.3e</b> Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.	Grade 8, Module 1, Lessons 12, 13, 14, 17

## Writing Standards

### Production and Distribution of Writing

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>W.8.4</b> Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.	Grade 8, Module 1, Lessons 7, 21, 31, 32 Grade 8, Module 2, Lessons 5, 16, 32, 37 Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 5, 36 Grade 8, Module 4, Lessons 8, 27, 28
<b>W.8.5</b> With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.	Grade 8, Module 1, Lessons 11, 17, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32 Grade 8, Module 2, Lessons 8, 34, 37DD Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 10, 24, 26, 33, 35, 36, 35DD, 36DD Grade 8, Module 4, Lessons 16, 26, 27, 31

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>W.8.6</b> Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently as well as to interact and collaborate with others.	Grade 8, Module 1, Lesson 22 Grade 8, Module 4, Lessons 9, 32, 33

## Writing Standards

### Research to Build and Present Knowledge

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>W.8.7</b> Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.	Grade 8, Module 2, Lesson 1 Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 1, 8 Grade 8, Module 4, Lessons 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 24, 25, 27, 33
<b>W.8.8</b> Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.	Grade 8, Module 2, Lesson 1 Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 1, 8 Grade 8, Module 4, Lessons 3, 5, 10, 13, 15, 16, 18, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 33
<b>W.8.9</b> Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.	Grade 8 Modules 1-4 <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i> considers this standard a Continuing Standard. Because it is fundamental to the learning design, it is addressed continually across all lessons and modules.
<b>W.8.9a</b> Apply grade 8 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new”).	Grade 8, Module 1, Lesson 16 Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 5, 8, 27, 31

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<p><b>W.8.9b</b> Apply grade 8 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound, and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced”).</p>	<p>Grade 8, Module 3, Lesson 16 Grade 8, Module 4, Lesson 27</p>

## Writing Standards

### Range of Writing

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<p><b>W.8.10</b> Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.</p>	<p>Grade 8, Module 1, Lessons 2, 3, 19, 23, 27 Grade 8, Module 2, Lessons 1, 6, 7, 11, 12, 14, 17, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 28, 29, 30, 33 Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 18, 19, 22, 23, 24, 25 Grade 8, Module 4, Lessons 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 33</p>

## Speaking & Listening Standards

### Comprehension and Collaboration

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<p><b>SL.8.1</b> Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.</p>	<p>Grade 8 Modules 1-4 <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i> considers this standard a Continuing Standard. Because it is fundamental to the learning design, it is addressed continually across all lessons and modules.</p>

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>SL.8.1a</b> Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.	Grade 8, Module 1, Lessons 15, 20, 27 Grade 8, Module 2, Lessons 24, 33 Grade 8, Module 3, Lesson 11, 26 Grade 8, Module 4, Lesson 9
<b>SL.8.1b</b> Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.	Grade 8, Module 1, Lessons 15, 20, 27 Grade 8, Module 2, Lessons 24, 33 Grade 8, Module 3, Lesson 11, Grade 8, Module 4, Lessons 9, 24
<b>SL.8.1c</b> Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas.	Grade 8, Module 1, Lessons 15, 20, 27 Grade 8, Module 2, Lessons 24, 33 Grade 8, Module 3, Lesson 11, 26, 32 Grade 8, Module 4, Lessons 9, 24
<b>SL.8.1d</b> Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.	<i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i> addresses this standard in Grade 7. Grade 7, Module 1, Lesson 7 Grade 7, Module 2, Lesson 30 Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 29, 37 Grade 8, Module 4, Lessons 31
<b>SL.8.2</b> Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation.	Grade 8, Module 1, Lessons 4, 9, 18, 19 Grade 8, Module 2, Lessons 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 1, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 25, 26, 33, 34 Grade 8, Module 3, Lesson 18 Grade 8, Module 4, Lessons 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 24, 33

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<p><b>SL.8.3</b></p> <p>Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and relevance and sufficiency of the evidence and identifying when irrelevant evidence is introduced.</p>	<p>Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 6, 9, 11, 17, 29, 32, 34</p>

## Speaking & Listening

### Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<p><b>SL.8.4</b></p> <p>Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning, and well-chosen details; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.</p>	<p>Grade 8, Module 1, Lessons 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 33</p> <p>Grade 8, Module 3, Lesson 17</p> <p>Grade 8, Module 4, Lessons 24, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32</p>
<p><b>SL.8.5</b></p> <p>Integrate multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest.</p>	<p>Grade 8, Module 1, Lessons 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 33</p> <p>Grade 8, Module 3, Lesson 28</p> <p>Grade 8, Module 4, Lessons 9, 10, 129, 30, 31, 32</p>
<p><b>SL.8.6</b></p> <p>Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.</p>	<p>Grade 8, Module 1, Lessons 15, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 27, 33</p> <p>Grade 8, Module 2, Lessons 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 33</p> <p>Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 26, 29</p> <p>Grade 8, Module 4, Lessons 9, 24, 33</p>

## Language Standards

### Conventions of Standard English

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<p><b>L.8.1</b> Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.</p>	<p>Grade 8 Modules 1-4 <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i> considers this standard a Continuing Standard. Because it is fundamental to the learning design, it is addressed continually across all lessons and modules.</p>
<p><b>L.8.1a</b> Explain the function of verbals (gerunds, participles, infinitives) in general and their function in particular sentences.</p>	<p>Grade 8, Module 4, Lessons 1DD, 2DD, 4DD, 7DD, 8DD, 13DD, 14DD, 16DD, 21DD, 22DD, 23DD, 24DD</p>
<p><b>L.8.1b</b> Form and use verbs in the active and passive voice.</p>	<p>Grade 8, Module 1, Lessons 10, 11 Grade 8, Module 2, Lessons 16, 21DD, 23DD, 24DD, 25, 25DD, 26, 26DD, 32, 37, 37DD Grade 8, Module 4, Lessons 26DD, 27DD</p>
<p><b>L.8.1c</b> Form and use verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive mood.</p>	<p>Grade 8, Module 1, Lessons 2DD, 5DD, 8DD, 9DD, 10, 21 Grade 8, Module 2, Lessons 14DD, 15DD, 16DD, 37, 37DD Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 11DD, 13DD, 16DD, 17DD, 23DD, 25DD, 26DD, 27DD, 29DD, 36DD Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 16, 27, 31 Grade 8, Module 4, Lesson 27, 32DD</p>
<p><b>L.8.1d</b> Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.</p>	<p>Grade 8, Module 1, Lessons 8DD Grade 8, Module 2, Lessons 14DD, 15, 15DD, 16, 16DD, 25, 25DD, 26, 26DD, 37, 37DD Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 16, 27, 31, 36 Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 17DD, 29DD, 36DD</p>

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>L.8.2</b> Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.	Grade 8 Modules 1-4 <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i> considers this standard a Continuing Standard. Because it is fundamental to the learning design, it is addressed continually across all lessons and modules.
<b>L.8.2a</b> Use punctuation (comma, ellipsis, dash) to indicate a pause or break.	Grade 8, Module 1, Lessons 18DD, 19DD, 20DD, 22DD Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 5, 36 Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 1DD, 3DD, 5DD, 35DD
<b>L.8.2b</b> Use an ellipsis to indicate an omission.	Grade 8, Module 2, Lessons 31DD, 32, 32DD, 33DD, 37DD
<b>L.8.2c</b> Spell correctly.	Grade 8, Module 2, Lessons 1DD, 32 Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 31, 36 Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 30DD, 31DD, 32DD

## Language Standards

### Knowledge of Language

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>L.8.3</b> Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.	Grade 8 Modules 1-4 <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i> considers this standard a Continuing Standard. Because it is fundamental to the learning design, it is addressed continually across all lessons and modules.

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<p><b>L.8.3a</b></p> <p>Use verbs in the active and passive voice and in the conditional and subjunctive mood to achieve particular effects (e.g., emphasizing the actor or the action; expressing uncertainty or describing a state contrary to fact).</p>	<p>Grade 8 Module 1 Lesson 11</p> <p>Grade 8 Module 2 Lesson 24DD, 32</p> <p>Grade 8 Module 3 Lesson 16DD, 17DD, 25DD, 26DD, 27, 27DD, 29DD</p> <p>Grade 8 Module 4 Lesson 25DD, 26DD, 27DD, 30DD, 31DD, 32DD</p>

## Language Standards

### Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<p><b>L.8.3</b></p> <p>Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.</p>	<p>Grade 8 Modules 1-4</p> <p><i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i> considers this standard a Continuing Standard. Because it is fundamental to the learning design, it is addressed continually across all lessons and modules.</p>
<p><b>L.8.3a</b></p> <p>Use verbs in the active and passive voice and in the conditional and subjunctive mood to achieve particular effects (e.g., emphasizing the actor or the action; expressing uncertainty or describing a state contrary to fact).</p>	<p>Grade 8, Module 1, Lesson 11</p> <p>Grade 8, Module 2, Lesson 2</p> <p>Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 16DD, 17DD, 25DD, 26DD, 27, 27DD, 29DD</p> <p>Grade 8, Module 4, Lesson 32, 25DD, 26DD, 27DD, 30DD, 31DD, 32DD</p>

## Language Standards

### Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<p><b>L.8.4</b></p> <p>Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on grade 8 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.</p>	<p>See L.8.4a-c</p>

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<p><b>L.8.4a</b></p> <p>Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.</p>	<p>Grade 8, Module 1, Lessons 4DD, 11DD, 12, 12DD, 13DD, 15, 23, 27DD, 32DD, 33DD</p> <p>Grade 8, Module 2, Lessons 1, 2DD, 2, 3, 4, 6, 6DD, 7DD, 8, 8DD, 9, 10, 10DD, 11DD, 12, 12DD, 13, 17, 18, 18DD, 19, 20, 22, 22DD, 23, 25, 27, 29, 30, 31, 32, 34DD</p> <p>Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 1, 2, 2DD, 3, 4, 6DD, 7, 9, 10, 10DD, 11DD, 14, 14DD, 15DD, 18DD, 19DD, 20, 20DD, 21, 21DD, 22, 23, 24DD, 30DD, 33DD</p> <p>Grade 8, Module 4, Lessons 4, 5, 7, 10, 13, 15, 17, 19, 21, 3DD, 10DD, 15DD, 17DD, 19DD, 20DD, 28DD, 29DD,</p>
<p><b>L.8.4b</b></p> <p>Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., <i>precede</i>, <i>recede</i>, <i>secede</i>).</p>	<p>Grade 8, Module 1, Lessons 3DD, 4DD, 12DD, 13DD</p> <p>Grade 8, Module 2, Lessons 10DD, 20DD, 22DD, 29DD</p> <p>Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 7DD, 10DD, 12DD, 14DD, 18DD, 20DD, 21DD, 22DD, 30DD</p> <p>Grade 8, Module 4, Lessons 1, 10, 17, 6DD, 17DD, 28DD, 29DD, 30DD, 31DD, 32DD</p>
<p><b>L.8.4c</b></p> <p>Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.</p>	<p>Grade 8, Module 1, Lessons 3DD, 4DD, 11DD, 13DD, 15DD, 23DD, 24DD, 27DD, 29DD</p> <p>Grade 8, Module 2, Lessons 1, 1DD, 4, 6DD, 7DD, 10DD, 12DD, 20DD, 29DD, 30DD</p> <p>Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 1, 2, 3, 6, 6DD, 7DD, 8, 9, 9DD, 10DD, 12, 12DD, 15DD, 18, 18DD, 19, 20DD, 21, 21DD, 22, 22DD, 30, 30DD, 31DD</p> <p>Grade 8, Module 4, Lessons 2, 5, 10, 12, 13, 3DD, 10DD, 15DD, 17DD, 19DD, 20DD</p>

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>L.8.4d</b> Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).	Grade 8, Module 1, Lessons 3DD, 4DD, 11DD, 12, 12DD, 13DD, 15, 23, 23DD, 27DD Grade 8, Module 2, Lessons 1, 4, 6DD, 7DD, 10DD, 12, 12DD, 13, 20DD, 22DD, 29DD, 31 Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 1, 2, 3, 6DD, 10, 10DD, 14, 18DD, 20, 21DD, 30DD Grade 8, Module 4, Lessons 2, 10, 17, 3DD, 10DD, 15DD, 17DD, 19DD, 20DD
<b>L.8.5</b> Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.	See L.8.5a-c
<b>L.8.5a</b> Interpret figures of speech (e.g., verbal irony, puns) in context.	Grade 8, Module 1, Lessons 4, 8DD, 21DD Grade 8, Module 2, Lessons 9DD, 10, 11, 14, 15, 18, 19, 20, 22, 29 Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 2, 3, 4, 4DD, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 19, 20, 20DD, 22, 28, 29, 30 Grade 8, Module 4, Lessons 18, 20, 22, 5DD, 6DD, 11DD
<b>L.8.5b</b> Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words.	Grade 8, Module 1, Lessons 1, 1DD, 23DD, 27DD, 29DD Grade 8, Module 2, Lessons 1, 2DD, 10, 13DD, 17, 18DD, 27, 31 Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 20, 23, 29, 30 Grade 8, Module 4, Lessons 1, 5, 6, 11, 12, 15, 17, 21, 5DD, 6DD, 11DD
<b>L.8.5c</b> Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., <i>bullheaded, willful, firm, persistent, resolute</i> ).	Grade 8, Module 1, Lessons 15DD, 24DD Grade 8, Module 2, Lessons 2DD, 4DD, 15, 19, 30DD, 31, 32 Grade 8, Module 3, Lessons 2, 2DD, 7DD, 9DD, 10, 14, 15DD, 21 Grade 8, Module 4, Lessons 15DD, 21

Connecticut Standards	Aligned Components of <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i>
<b>L.8.6</b> Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.	Grade 8 Modules 1-4 <i>Wit &amp; Wisdom</i> considers this standard a Continuing Standard. Because it is fundamental to the learning design, it is addressed continually across all lessons and modules.

## 9. Standards for Mathematical Practice

The Standards for Mathematical Practice (MP) describe the types of thinking and behaviors in which students engage as they do mathematics. Throughout the curriculum, the Teacher Guide identifies lessons and activities in which to observe the different MPs.

Some instructional routines are generally associated with certain MPs. For example:

- The *Card Sort* routine often asks students to reason abstractly and quantitatively (MP2) and to look for and make use of structure (MP7).
- The *Information Gap* routine often requires students to make sense of problems and persevere in solving them (MP1) as well as attend to precision (MP6) in their language as they ask questions of their partner.
- The *Math Talk* routine offers opportunities to look for and make use of structure (MP7) and look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning (MP8) as students explain the strategies they use and apply strategies as they develop fluency.
- The *Which Three Go Together?* routine also offers opportunities for attending to precision when describing why something doesn't belong (MP6).

The unit-level Mathematical Practice chart is meant to highlight lessons in each unit that showcase certain MPs. This chart identifies potential opportunities, in the text, to observe students engaging with the different MPs. Students also may exemplify MPs in activities not included here. Some units, due to their size or the nature of their content, have fewer predicted chances for students to engage in a particular MP, indicated in the chart by a dash.

Grade 6	MP1	MP2	MP3	MP4	MP5	MP6	MP7	MP8
Unit 1 Lessons	1, 11, 12, 15	4, 15	1–3, 9, 19	12, 19	1, 19	1, 2, 6, 11, 13, 15–19	1, 3, 6–8, 10, 11, 13–15, 18	4, 5, 9, 17, 18
Unit 2 Lessons	1, 13–17	5, 6, 9, 12, 13, 15	2, 10	17	16	1, 2, 5–8, 10, 11, 13–15	1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 11	5
Unit 3 Lessons	8, 9, 14, 17	1, 4, 5, 7–9, 11, 12	1, 5	4, 17	–	6, 8–14, 16	3, 5–7, 11, 13, 16	2, 6, 13, 15, 16
Unit 4 Lessons	8, 9, 15, 16	1–4, 6, 7, 9, 12, 16	13, 16, 17	13, 17	6, 8	1, 3, 6–8, 11–13	1, 8, 10, 11, 13	5, 10, 14
Unit 5 Lessons	10, 11, 14	4, 9, 11–14	8	1, 13	–	1, 6–8, 10–15	2–8, 12–14	5
Unit 6 Lessons	6	5, 7, 9, 10, 16, 17, 19	4, 6, 11, 13, 14, 19	–	–	1, 4–7, 9, 11, 13, 16, 19	2–5, 8–13, 15, 18, 19	4, 6–8, 12
Unit 7 Lessons	7, 12, 18	1, 2, 5, 6, 8–10, 13, 16, 17	3, 4, 10	–	–	3–5, 7, 12, 19	1–3, 8, 11, 15, 16	14
Unit 8 Lessons	17	1, 2, 5, 9, 13, 15, 16, 18	2, 4, 12	18	3	2, 7, 8, 10, 17	2, 5, 6, 8–10, 14, 16	11

Grade 7	MP1	MP2	MP3	MP4	MP5	MP6	MP7	MP8
Unit 1 Lessons	1, 8, 13	7, 8	1, 3, 4, 12	13	2, 3, 5, 7	1, 4, 11, 12	2–6, 9–12	2, 5,
Unit 2 Lessons	7, 9, 15	3–6, 10–12	7, 10, 14	1, 11, 14, 15	–	1, 4, 5, 8, 9, 11, 13	2, 3, 6, 8, 10, 12, 13	4–6
Unit 3 Lessons	4, 5, 10, 11	4, 5, 9, 10	2, 5, 8, 10	1, 6, 11	2, 7	2, 4, 7, 9, 10	3, 6, 8, 9	1, 3, 5
Unit 4 Lessons	2, 3, 6, 7, 10, 12, 14, 15	2, 4, 5, 8, 11, 16	1, 3, 5, 7, 11, 12, 14, 16	13	–	5–10, 12, 15	2–6, 8–10, 14	1, 4, 8–10
Unit 5 Lessons	1, 4, 10, 12	1, 2, 4, 6–9, 12, 14–16	1, 5, 7, 13, 15, 16	17	–	2, 7, 10, 11, 14	3, 5, 10, 11, 13, 15	2, 3, 5, 6
Unit 6 Lessons	1, 4, 5, 9, 11, 12, 17,	4, 5, 11, 14, 22	2, 3, 6, 7, 10, 12, 13, 16, 19–21	2, 17, 22	–	3, 6, 8, 9, 13, 15, 17, 18, 20–22	2, 4–7, 10, 14, 16, 18–21	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20–22
Unit 7 Lessons	2, 4, 6, 11	15	1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 11, 12, 15	16	3	3, 4, 9, 10	1, 4, 5, 7, 9, 13, 14	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20–22
Unit 8 Lessons	8, 14, 19, 20	2, 3, 9, 15	2, 5, 7, 11, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20	6, 7	7, 10	4, 6, 10, 16, 18, 19	2, 8, 13, 15, 17	2–5

Grade 8	MP1	MP2	MP3	MP4	MP5	MP6	MP7	MP8
Unit 1 Lessons	1, 6, 13	–	2, 11–14	–	7, 11	1–4, 6, 10	1, 3, 5, 8–10, 15–16	8, 15
Unit 2 Lessons	3, 5, 13	13	2, 6–8, 13	13	3, 4	1, 4–7	1, 2, 4, 8, 10–12	6, 9–12
Unit 3 Lessons	3, 5	1, 4–9, 12, 15	10, 12, 14	2, 3, 8	–	1, 3, 9, 11, 12	2, 6, 8, 14	7, 9, 10, 13
Unit 4 Lessons	11, 15	2, 9, 10, 12, 15, 16	1, 3–5, 14	16	–	4, 15	3, 6–8, 13, 14	1, 7
Unit 5 Lessons	1, 4, 10, 15, 19–21	3–8, 10, 11, 17, 18	6, 14–17	5, 6, 9–13	7	2, 5, 6, 11, 12, 21	2, 13, 14, 16, 19, 20	3, 22
Unit 6 Lessons	1, 9	1, 3, 4, 6–9, 11	5, 10	2, 4–6, 8, 10, 11	2, 11	3, 5–7, 9	1, 2, 4, 7, 9	–
Unit 7 Lessons	1, 14	2, 10–12, 14–16	4, 13, 15	12, 16	–	1, 7–9, 11, 14–16	4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13	1–6, 8
Unit 8 Lessons	1, 8, 12, 18	3, 4, 11, 14	5, 6	18	2	3, 7, 9, 12, 13, 15, 16	1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 10, 13, 14, 17	7, 16, 17

A list of opportunities to use particular MPs is never exhaustive. Some activities lend themselves to the use of a particular MP more than others. Rather than requiring use of the MPs, leave room to be surprised by how students use them to make sense of the mathematics, especially as students become more flexible in making their thinking visible.

## How to Use the Mathematical Practices Chart

No single task is sufficient for assessing students' engagement with the Standards for Mathematical Practice. Consider these options for assessing students:

- Provide students the list of learning targets to self-assess their use of the MPs.
- Assign students to create and maintain a portfolio of work that highlights their progress in using the MPs throughout the course.
- Monitor collaborative work, and note students' engagement with the MPs.

Assess the MPs formatively, because students' use of them is part of a process for engaging with mathematical content. For example, if most students do not use appropriate tools strategically (MP5), then in future lessons, plan to select and highlight work from students who have chosen different tools.

Since the MPs in action take many forms, a list of learning targets for each MP supports teachers and students in recognizing when engagement with a particular MP is happening. The intent of the list is not that students check off every item. Rather, the "I can" statements are examples of the types of actions possible when students engage with a particular MP.

## Standards for Mathematical Practice Student-Facing Learning Targets

### MP1 I Can Make Sense of Problems and Persevere in Solving Them

- I can ask questions to make sure I understand the problem.
- I can restate the problem in a different way.
- I can keep working when I'm having a hard time, and try again.
- I can show at least one attempt to investigate or solve the problem.
- I can check that my solution makes sense, in more than one way.

### MP2 I Can Reason Abstractly and Quantitatively

- I can think about and represent numbers in many ways.
- I can define variables and identify constraints in a problem.
- I can think about what the numbers in a problem mean and how to use them to solve the problem.
- I can make connections between real-world situations and mathematical representations

### MP3 I Can Construct Viable Arguments and Critique the Reasoning of Others

- I can explain or show my reasoning in a way that makes sense to others.
- I can listen to and read the work of others and offer feedback to help clarify or improve their work.
- I can explain my reasoning for why something is true

### MP4 I Can Model with Mathematics

- I can think of mathematical questions to ask about a situation.
- I can identify the questions and information that are essential to solve a problem.
- I can collect data or explain how to collect it.
- I can model a situation, using a representation such as a drawing, an equation, a table, or a graph.
- I can use a mathematical model to draw conclusions about a situation.
- I can interpret and report on the results of a model, in the context of the situation.

### MP5 I Can Use Appropriate Tools Strategically

- I can choose a tool that will help me make sense of a problem. These tools might include a protractor, a ruler, patty paper, a graph, a table, a calculator, geometry software, or external resources.
- I can use or experiment with tools to help explain my thinking.
- I know how to use a variety of math tools to solve a problem.

### MP6 I Can Attend to Precision

- I can use units or labels appropriately.
- I can communicate my reasoning, using mathematical vocabulary and symbols.
- I can explain carefully so that others understand my thinking.
- I can decide if an answer makes sense for a problem.

### MP7 I Can Look for and Make Use of Structure

- I can connect problems I have solved to new problems.
- I can compose and decompose numbers, expressions, and figures to make sense of the parts and the whole.
- I can make connections between multiple mathematical representations.
- I can make use of patterns to solve a problem.
- I can make use of structure to create a different representation to solve a problem.

### MP8 I Can Look for and Express Regularity in Repeated Reasoning

- I can identify and describe patterns and things that repeat.
- I can notice what changes and what stays the same when working with diagrams or expressions, performing calculations, examining graphs, or interacting with geometric figures.
- I can use patterns to write a general rule.

# Patricia Nicolari

## OBJECTIVE

To continue working with youth in a leadership capacity by combining my years of experience in public education as a teacher and administrator, and my experience working in a nonprofit with programs that impact marginalized youth.

## PHILOSOPHY

Of the belief all students are capable of learning and meeting with academic success if the atmosphere is safe and affirming, free from bullying and harassment, the curriculum is engaging, and the staff appreciate and respect the diversity of youth regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, ability, or socioeconomic status.

## LOCATION

New Haven, CT

## PHONE

203.901.7447

## EMAIL

[pnicolari@proudacademyct.org](mailto:pnicolari@proudacademyct.org)

## WEBSITE

[ProudAcademyCT.org](http://ProudAcademyCT.org)

## EXPERIENCE

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JUNE 2021 - PRESENT

Founder | [Proud Academy, Inc](#) | New Haven, CT

- The goal of the nonprofit is to open and operate a charter school for grades 6-12.
- Established nonprofit status, assisted in drafting bylaws, filed articles of incorporation and annual report to the State, recruited board members, recruited and engaged community volunteers, friend-raise/fund-raise, maintain an ongoing and active community presence, assists in developing board agenda, secure a building site, hire staff, assist with budget preparation.

JAN 2018 - DEC 2022

Professor | [Western Connecticut State University](#) | Danbury, CT

- Supervised student teachers in health education; taught Concepts of Diseases.

AUG 2011 - OCT 2021

Director of Youth Mentoring | [Children's Community Programs of CT](#) | New Haven, CT

- Recruited and trained volunteer mentors, matched mentors with disengaged youth involved with Department of Children and Families and juvenile justice, established pro-social and academic goals for success, monitored and adjusted goals, supported the match, engaged parental involvement, assisted in grant-writing, helped establish agency accreditation.

JAN 2009 - AUG 2011

Educational Consultant/Teacher/Principal | [Children's Community Programs of CT](#) | Bridgeport, New Haven, Stratford, CT

- Interim administrator for K-12 special education school in Stratford; classroom teacher of all high school subjects for an AIC (Alternative to Incarceration) Education Program in Bridgeport CT; Academic

## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Juvenile Review Board, Volunteer  
(2020 - 2023)

Governor's Prevention Partnership,  
Volunteer - LGBTQ+ Mentoring  
(2020 - 2022)

The Fitting Room, Board Member  
Finding careers for youth at risk.  
(2013 - 2017)

Manifest Your Destiny Foundation,  
Presenter  
(2013 - 2014)

GLSEN CT, Board Member  
(1997 - 2003)

Greater Valley Chamber of  
Commerce, WIN (Women in  
Networking)  
(2023 - Present)

Youth Mentoring Volunteer for  
LGBTQ+ Youth  
(2024 - Present)

National Alliance for LGBTQ+  
Schools, Founder  
(2022- Present)

## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT/MEDIA

- Scripps News National
- Pink News (London, UK)
- NBC News, CT
- NPR, local and national
- WPKN-Bridgeport
- New Haven Register
- Hartford Courant
- CASA - Guest Speaker
- SCSU, podcast guest

consultant/life coach for 18-24 year old involved with criminal justice/probation.

JAN 2004 - DEC 2009

**Administrator | Ansonia Public Schools | Ansonia, CT**

- Alternative School Principal for grades 7-12, enrolled students not meeting with academic or behavioral success in the traditional public school, hired/evaluated teachers and staff, presented workshops, PPT chairperson, reviewed IEP and 504 plans, set school schedule, prepared budget, supported teachers academically and emotionally in a very challenging educational environment.

JAN 2004 - DEC 2009

**Teacher | Ansonia Public Schools | Ansonia, CT**

- Health/physical education/life skills K-12, developed curriculum.
- Division Chair-Math, Science, Physical Education/Health.
- Peer Mediation Coordinator, trained student peer mediators, conducted mediations for 7 years (suspension rates declined by 50%).
- State of CT, Department of Education- Health CADRE Member, trainer of trainers for health teachers throughout the state, Instructional Leadership Team.
- NEASC co-chair for accreditation, coordinated self-study, liaison to the commission staff.
- Volleyball coach- 15 years.
- First teacher to come OUT as LGBTQ+ educator, 1997.

## EDUCATION

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**Southern Connecticut State University | New Haven, CT**

- Sixth-Year, Administration and Supervision | 1988
- Sixth-Year, Educational Foundations | 1986
- Masters of Science, Community Health | 1984
- Bachelor of Science, Physical Education | 1979

## CERTIFICATIONS

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092 Administration and Supervision (current)

## RECOGNITION

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Teacher of the Year, Ansonia Public Schools (2003-2004), Featured in: *One Teacher in 10*, Book by Kevin Jennings (2005), Teacher Magazine (2002), Dorothy Award, LGBTQ+ Community Leader (2008), SIECUS (2008), CT Voice Honors (2022), Featured in story on Global LGBTQ+ Leaders in: *A Year of Pride and Joy*, short essays compiled by Helen Brown (2024)

**ROBERT J. RADER**  
111 Lexington Road  
Glastonbury, Connecticut 06033  
C-860-712-4749  
[rob.rader18@gmail.com](mailto:rob.rader18@gmail.com)

Retired, July 2022. Seeking to add my experience and skills to worthy causes. I have a passion for high-quality education, diversity and social justice.

**EXPERIENCE:**

**JAN. 1996-JULY 2022 CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION OF BOARDS OF EDUCATION  
(CABE) Executive Director**

Responsible for the administration of CABE's activities, services and programs under applicable laws, policies and bylaws of the Association. I provide leadership in developing the purposes, goals and objectives of the Association as it serves the interests of the local and regional boards of education in Connecticut. I supervise a staff of 15 plus consultants who operate our superintendent search service, provide public relations services for CABE and our members and provide help to our policy services department.

**Under my leadership, CABE:**

- increased its financial resources. Our reserves have grown from approximately \$150,000 in 1996 to over \$1,250,000 in 2022. Our revenue has grown from approximately \$1,250,000 to over \$2,300,000
- bought and refurbished most of the condominium building in which we are located. This is the first time in its 116-year history that the Association has had a “home of its own”
- brought bookkeeping and accounting functions back inside the Association office and ensured that the financial function operated effectively
- more than doubled the number of its business affiliates
- created an Educational Affiliate program, enabling non-school district organizations to affiliate with CABE. Today, we have all of the State’s Regional Educational Service Centers and other organizations as members
- increased the publication of the CABE Journal from six to eleven times a year and published many articles and editorials that are informative and helpful to our members
- elevated CABE's profile before the Legislature, the Executive Branch and the State Board of Education
- provided orientation and other workshops to whole boards, candidates for boards, superintendents and board members. Subjects included roles and responsibilities, goal setting, the superintendent search process, leadership and trends in public education
- strengthened coalitions with other educational groups. CABE has worked with the state superintendents' association on our joint annual convention that has expanded greatly over the years. It is the premier professional development workshop for education leaders in the State. We have also developed board/superintendent roles and responsibilities and leadership team assessment documents that, we believe, are the first in the nation. CABE continues to work with teachers unions, the PTA and other relevant groups on issues of shared concerns

- added superintendent and administrator search service and CABEMeeting (paperless board meetings services to CABE programs
- updated the CABE office, including its technology, to provide better and more immediate services to members
- strengthened the Association's image before the public by increased media and public relations visibility

**I have also served on:**

- the Connecticut Business and Industry Association's Advisory Committee concerned with School-to-Career issues
- Connecticut Commission on Children's Prevention Committee
- the State Board of Education Long-Range Planning Committee
- the Connecticut Child Crisis and Safety Committee
- the Glastonbury Education Foundation Board of Directors
- the Governor's Prevention Partnership Board of Directors and President/CEO Search Committee
- the Governor's Early Childhood Policy and Research Council and its Guiding Committee on Quality Rating Improvement System
- the Connecticut Academy for Education in Math, Science and Technology Board of Directors (Today I am a Fellow of the Academy.)
- the Commission for the Advancement of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills and Careers

**Other Leadership Positions**

In 2006-07, I served as chair of the National School Boards Association's Executive Directors' Liaison Committee. In this role, I represented the states' executive directors before the NSBA Board of Directors and the Association's membership. In this capacity, I served on several internal committees and provided creative ideas on developing closer relationships between NSBA and the state affiliates. In addition, in 2005, I had the idea for and helped write and edit a handbook for state school boards' associations' boards of directors and helped present it at the 2006 NSBA Leadership Conference. I have updated the booklet twice.

I am a past president of the Connecticut Society of Association Executives and was co-chair of its last executive director search. I was the 2008 recipient of the CSAE Executive of the Year Award.

**MARCH 1981-JAN. 1996 NEW YORK STATE SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION**

***JAN. 1992-JAN. 1996 Counsel for and Director of Policy and Employee Relations Services***

I was responsible for creating, developing, marketing and administering services used by school boards in directing and governing their districts. Among those services:

- presenting frequent speeches and in-service workshops on management and governance issues
- tailoring policy manuals to individual districts
- editing, coordinating and marketing Law and Management Policies for Schools, a four-volume reference manual; School Law, a popular handbook on laws and regulations affecting school

districts; The Sunshine Laws, information on the Open Meetings and Freedom of Information Laws; TRENDS Guide to Negotiations; and other Association publications

- auditing policy manuals for compliance with laws and regulations
- writing and editing policy and employee relations articles
- analyzing collective bargaining contracts ad developing superintendent and teacher contract databases
- serving as chief negotiator for school boards in collective bargaining negotiations

In addition, I served as the staff liaison to the Board of Directors' Policy Committee and was staff liaison to the Ad Hoc Committees on Employee Relations, Ethical Principles and Violence in Schools. I also lobbied on various association concerns before the State Legislature and state agencies.

#### **JAN. 1988-JAN. 1992**

##### ***Director; Policy Employee and Risk Management Services***

Built policy services described above and provided assistance to school districts in the area of insurance risk management, including speaking and writing articles on risk management concerns.

#### **JUNE 1986-JAN. 1988**

##### ***Director Risk Management Services***

I coordinated the work of the N.Y.S. School Services Foundation which was established as the management arm of a program intended to provide insurance coverage (through a captive insurance company) to school districts. Worked with the service provider; actuary; counsel; and auditor in attempting to establish the program.

#### **SEPT. 1984-JAN. 1986**

##### ***Legislative Representative***

As a lobbyist, I was responsible for employee relations, pensions, civil service and insurance. Lobbied successfully for changes in the Insurance Law which now allows school districts to form their own insurance programs.

#### **MARCH 1981-SEPT. 1984**

##### ***Assistant Counsel***

Provided legal advice, wrote articles and spoke on various legal issues of concern to school boards.

#### **NOV. 1980- MARCH 1981**

BUREAU OF LAW REPORTING, New York State Court of Appeals Assistant Legal Editor

#### **BAR ADMISSIONS:**

NEW YORK STATE BAR (now retired from the practice of law in NY)  
U.S. DISTRICT COURTS for Northern, Southern, Eastern Districts of New York

#### **EDUCATION:**

ALBANY LAW SCHOOL OF UNION UNIVERSITY J.D. Degree, June, 1980

CORNELL UNIVERSITY: N.Y.S. School of Industrial and Labor Relations B.S., May, 1976  
INSURANCE INSTITUTE OF AMERICA Associate in Risk Management (ARM) Degree,  
February, 1988

AMERICAN SOCIETY OF ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVES Certified Association Executive,  
November, 1995;  
eCORNELL UNIVERSITY Certificate of Diversity and Inclusion; 2021.

**ORGANIZATIONS:**

American Society of Association Executives; New York State Bar Association; Connecticut Society of Association Executives; Member of the Anti Defamation League's Connecticut Region Board of Directors.

**PERSONAL:**

Married, three children

**REFERENCES:**

Available on request

# CATHIE L. HILLIAN

245 Guernseytown Road, Watertown, CT 06795 | (H) (860)417-3788 | (C) (203) 910-4832 | cathielhillian@gmail.com

## Professional Summary

Versatile professional counselor and director with over 16 years of experience teaching, counseling, and consulting with students, parents, and colleagues. Enthusiastic and dynamic leader with experience developing and implementing a counseling program designed to meet the needs of students coping with various social, educational, and emotional issues. Warm, accepting, and positive attitude with the ability to relate to and effectively communicate with people of all ages, genders, and cultural backgrounds.

## Skills

- Policy & Procedure writing
- Adept at conflict resolution
- Adept at treatment and discharge planning
- Skilled in intake interviewing
- Biopsychosocial assessments
- Gender Responsive
- Culturally sensitive
- Trauma informed
- Strong Knowledge of crisis intervention techniques
- Highly dependable
- Strong leadership skills
- Interpersonal & Communication Skills
- Organizational Skills and Techniques
- Planning and Coordination
- Training and Development

## Experience

### Board of Education Member

02/2022 - Current

#### Watertown Public Schools – Watertown, CT

- Interviewed, supervised and motivated staff members to achieve optimal productivity.
- Monitored and evaluated educational programs to maintain high-quality performance objectives and standards.
- Kept school in full compliance with established policies, legal requirements and student safety standards.
- Collaborated with superintendent to develop functional budgets within allocated funds.
- Oversaw school expenditure for students to receive maximum educational benefits.
- Reviewed and adapted policies and procedures

### Associate Director Of Counseling

10/2018 - Current

#### Miss Porter's School – Farmington, CT

- Provide on-going therapy for students, of a culturally diverse background, that are self-referred or referred by teachers, House Directors or parents to receive counseling.
- Effectively manage crisis situations and make appropriate clinical recommendations and referrals as needed.
- Communicate with outside professionals and providers involved in current students involved in counseling.
- Act as a liaison between students, teachers and parents when appropriate.
- Facilitate a groups for students and develop additional groups to run for students as needed.
- Facilitate mediations between students when needed and appropriate.
- Organize outside programs to come in for students.
- Make referrals to outside providers when appropriate and necessary.
- Maintain and continue to develop policies and protocols for counseling services and department.
- Developed team communications and information for weekly Student Support Team meetings.

### Lead Counselor

07/2006 - 09/2018

#### Westover School

- Provide on-going therapy for students, of a culturally diverse background, that are self-referred or referred by teachers, dorm parents or parents to receive counseling.
- Effectively manage crisis situations and make appropriate clinical recommendations and referrals as needed.
- Communicate with outside professionals involved in current students involved in counseling.
- Act as a liaison between students, teachers and parents when appropriate.
- Facilitate a " Peer Support" group weekly for students and develop additional groups to run for students as needed.
- Organize outside programs to come in for students.

- Maintain and continue to develop protocols for counseling services and department.
- Communicate with outside professionals about applicants and work with admissions to determine appropriate candidates for the school.
- Active member of the SAT team, meeting weekly to discuss different clinical related topics that can arise with students.
- Consult with and advise student proctors on how to resolve and mediate conflicts that arise in the dormitory

### **Director of Diversity and Inclusion**

08/2014 - 08/2016

#### **Westover School**

- Seek out and promote educational workshops and conferences that will empower faculty and students to successfully navigate issues of diversity.
- Provide diversity-themed professional development opportunities within the school community Serve as club advisor for WALSA (Westover's African-American and Latina Student Association)
- Act as liaison to and develop strong relationships with the various diversity and inclusion-related groups in the school, and respond to diversity- and equity-related issues among the student body as they arise.
- Work closely with the Admissions Office in the development of increasingly effective methods for recruiting, welcoming and retaining students of diverse backgrounds.
- In collaboration with the Rasin Center for Global Justice, Assistant Head of School, and Head of School, improve effectiveness and success in recruiting and retaining diverse faculty and staff.

### **MST Clinical Supervisor**

08/2013 - 08/2014

#### **NAFI**

- Oversee clinical programming and 3 Master's Level Clinicians
- Carry a case load of three
- Oversee billing
- Monitors and participates in MST adherence data collection
- Advocates for the team regarding agency policies and procedures
- Collaborates with consultant/system supervisor and MST program manager on continuous quality improvement
- Develops and maintains strong working relationships with all community stakeholders
- Facilitates clinicians' development of strong relationships with community stakeholders
- Oversee intake, screening, admission process, treatment planning, and aftercare planning
- Participates in hiring clinical staff and overseeing other personnel issues (e.g. annual evaluations) for the MST clinicians on the team
- Discusses all cases with clinicians in group supervision each week
- Effectively manages group structure and process (including team-building and teaching strategies)
- Facilitates clinician's acquisition and implementation of the conceptual and behavioral skills required

### **Education**

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#### **Master of Education: Clinical Mental Health Counseling**

2006

#### **Springfield College - Springfield, MA**

- Dean's List

#### **B.S: Recreational Management**

2003

#### **Springfield College - Springfield, MA**

- Academic Athletic Award
- Team representative for Springfield College's Athletes Academic Committee

#### **Certifications: CT Professional Counselor Licensed; Dialectical Behavioral Therapy; Multisystemic Therapy; Voices facilitator**

### **Additional Experiences**

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- CABE/CAPPS Convention 2022 (Groton, Connecticut)
- National Association of Independent Schools People of Color Conference 2015 (Tampa, Florida)
- National Diversity Practitioners Conference 2019 (Potomac, Maryland)

### **References**

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- Professional and Personal References Available Upon Request

## EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION & ENHANCEMENT

Visionary, results-driven education leader committed to closing the achievement gap for all students across our county. Effectively empower staff; facilitate an environment of evidence-based, data driven practices; and ensure continuous improvement, support and accountability. Strategically align people, time, and resources to drive student/school community breakthrough student achievement results. Core competencies include:

• Team Leadership	• Intervention Programs	• Training & Development
• Student Achievement	• Early Literacy	• Strategic Planning
• Community Building/Relations	• Process Improvement	• Curriculum Development
• Performance Enhancement	• Data Collection & Analysis	• Change Management

## EDUCATION / CERTIFICATIONS

**6<sup>th</sup> year MA**, Educational Leadership, UConn, NEAG School of Education

**MA**, Elementary Education, Sacred Heart University

**BS**, Accounting, Florida Atlantic University

KIPP (Knowledge is Power Program) Leaders in Training Program, University of California at Berkeley

- 092 – Intermediate Administrator and Supervisor
  - TEAM Mentor
  - Valor Circle Trainer

## CAREER SUMMARY

### Partners for Educational Leadership

Program Coordinator

2022- present

- Design and facilitate leadership development programming
- Design and facilitate Diversity, Inclusion, Equity, and Belonging professional learning experiences
- Directly coach leaders to help them design leadership actions to deliver on organizational strategy
- Engage district and school teams in strategy development processes designed to create plans worthy of high aspirations for all students

### Excellence Community Schools

Chief Academic Officer

2021 to 2022

- Recruit, manage, and build the capacity of a team of leaders who directly support schools and lead their efforts to ensure quality instructional leadership across the system
- Collaborate with the school leadership teams to establish instructional priorities by school site and coordinate the deployment of resources to ensure high-quality implementation of school educational design, including standards, assessments, instructional guidelines, and school culture
- Develop a plan for the management and accountability of academic priorities that results in the improvement of student outcomes
- Develop ongoing training, coaching, and professional development programs for school leaders and teachers to ensure each school is staffed with high-quality instructional staff
- Develop, lead, and implement the academic vision for ECS
- Interpret student performance data to identify areas for development and develop data-driven strategies and approaches to address gaps in instruction and learning
- Provide leadership and support on adopting and implementing research-proven, standards-based instructional practices and aligned curriculum and assessment materials
- Drive collaboration across schools

## UP Education Network

### **Chief Academic Officer/Chief Equity Officer**

2018 to 2021

- Recruit, manage, and build the capacity of a team of leaders who directly support schools and lead their efforts to ensure quality instructional leadership across the system
- Ensure equitable and rigorous learning environments in all UP classrooms
- Create and foster a working environment committed to equity while leading through UP's equity framework
- Collaborate with the school leadership teams to establish instructional priorities by school site and coordinate the deployment of resources to ensure high-quality implementation of school educational design, including standards, assessments, instructional guidelines, and school culture
- Develop a plan for the management and accountability of academic priorities that results in the improvement of student outcomes
- Collaborate with the data team to ensure UP has the systems and dashboards needed to track, report, and aggregate/disaggregate student performance data
- Develop ongoing training, coaching, and professional development programs for school leaders and teachers to ensure each school is staffed with high-quality instructional staff
- Develop, lead, and implement the academic vision for UP
- Develop and refine the UP Education model and approach, balancing consistency across UP schools with the unique needs of each campus and region
- Interpret student performance data to identify areas for development and develop data-driven strategies and approaches to address gaps in instruction and learning
- Provide leadership and support on adopting and implementing research-proven, standards-based instructional practices and aligned curriculum and assessment materials
- Drive collaboration across schools
- Develop and oversee Leadership Training Programs (Future school leaders, teacher leaders and model teachers)

**Residency Program for School Leadership, CT**

2012 to 2018

**Director/Leadership Coach/Seminar Facilitator**

- Develop and oversee turnaround principal leadership program content
- Build and maintain strong relationships with district partners
- Recruit, supervise, develop and empower a portfolio of turnaround principals in resident and new school principals in Connecticut urban districts to successfully achieve program goals and improve academic outcomes for students
- Collaborate with mentor principals to create and monitor progress of learning goals for resident principals
- Formally assess resident principal's growth in key areas of instructional leadership
- Guide residents in the coaching and development of teachers
- Facilitate Residency Program seminars: Personal Organization, Leading Effective PD, Creating a Coaching Model, Observation & Feedback, Guided Reading, Close Reading, Looking at Student Work, Crucial Accountability Conversations, Entry Planning and Change Management

**Literacy is Freedom, LLC** **Literacy is Freedom website**

2009 to Present

*An organization committed to supporting districts, leaders, schools, teachers, and communities in closing the literacy achievement gap across our country. (Nashville, Los Angeles, New Orleans, San Francisco, New York & Cleveland, Connecticut)*

**Founder / CEO / Consultant**

## Instructional Coaching of Leadership Teams:

- Instructional coaching that includes co-observations, identification of school trends, planning and write-ups of feedback conversations with teachers and clear actionable next steps for all stakeholders
- Provide real-time feedback to leadership team members while coaching teachers
- Develop robust, sustainable infrastructures to ensure high quality literacy instruction
- Set clear, measurable, motivating end of year, mid-year and 6-8 weeks reading and writing goals for every grade
- Plan and support the implementation of highly effective data team meetings
- Determine, plan and present differentiated professional development sessions
- Suggest curricular materials to successfully meet the CCSS demands
- Executive coaching & strategic planning

## Professional Development for teachers:

- One-one and small group CCSS unit and lesson planning
- Model various types of whole and small group lessons
- Differentiate professional development sessions that include:
  - Reader's Workshop•Writer's Workshop•Guided Reading•CCSS Text Complexities•Understanding the Demands of Non-fiction Texts•Close Reading•Written Response to Text•Administering Formative Reading and Writing Assessments•Analyzing Formative Reading and Writing Assessments to Drive Instruction

**Amistad Academy Elementary School, New Haven, CT**

2006 to 2011

**Founding Principal**

- Supervised teaching staff; providing constructive feedback through class observations, teaching evaluations and individual coaching
- Identified and prioritized professional development needs through careful analysis of student data, teacher growth areas, and school needs
- Developed and facilitated professional development for teachers in the following areas: Reading, Student Assessment, Analyzing Student Work, Classroom and School Culture, Student Engagement
- Recruited and hired all staff
- Provided a structured, positive academic and social environment for staff and students
- Set clear, measurable, motivating goals at the beginning of the year for every grade/subject
- Structured and ran highly effective data days and achievement meetings
- Designed parent engagement
- Taught several intervention classes to struggling readers

## VP Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

*Over a decade of success as a diversity, equity, and inclusion practitioner / educator.*

Accomplished DEI executive, facilitator, and advisor; moderated conversations with leading DEI professionals and thought leaders, such as Ibram X. Kendi (How to be an antiracist), Heather McGee (The Sum of Us), Nikole Hannah-Jones (1619 Project), and Kenji Yoshino (Allyship for All). LGBTQ activist and openly gay educator with demonstrated expertise in character and leadership development from the perspective of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Recognized for spearheading professional development initiatives to increase understanding of race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, socio-economic diversity, environmental justice, and the intersections of various identities. Author of numerous books and articles on DEI; recently published a new book, Independent Queers: LGBTQ Educators in Independent Schools Speak Out. Stellar record of improving hiring and retention rates of people of color and supporting students, teams, and leaders by evaluating data and creating initiatives, as well as navigating the enormous challenges of organizational transformation with empathy, clarity, and joy.

- Rich experience in leading global and internal workshops, seminars, and training, building and managing programs, and presenting at DEI conferences and webinars with large audiences.
- Transformative DEI leader with track record of managing data-driven initiatives to improve the overall function of policies, practices, and internal culture.
- Distinguished for collaborating with several nonprofits, corporate, artistic, and educational institutions to help them optimize training, learning, development, and strategic initiatives in order to represent diverse talent.

### Areas of Expertise

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion | Strategic Planning & Execution | D&I Programs Development | Community Engagement  
Recruitment & Retention | Team Leadership | Mentoring, Training, & Coaching | Cross-functional Collaboration | Global Partnerships  
Employee Empowerment | Environmental Justice | Change Management | Global & Social Issues Mitigation | Marketing & Branding

### Professional Experience

Philip McAdoo, Diversity and Inclusion Consulting LLC.  
Senior Advisor and Lead Consultant | 2018 to Present

Provide best-in-class service to several key clients, such as Under Armour, Restore America's Estuaries (RAE), Disney Theatrical Group, Associated Colleges of the South, Milton Academy, Sidwell Friends School, Alliance Theatre, and others. Create an entry plan and orientation programs on implicit bias, DEI training, leadership development, affinity, and employee resource group support.

- Contributed to improving diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice (DEIJ) in grantmaking, project design, and implementation in the coastal sector by acting as the Senior Advisor to the Inclusive Coasts Initiative at RAE.
- Secured multiple contacts around diversity and equity initiatives on behalf of Sidwell Friends School.
  - Enhanced skillset and knowledge of new / incumbent staff on gender, race, and sexual orientation through training and mentoring.
  - Developed dataset around D&I initiatives and applied it to multiple segments.
- Addressed needs of diverse populations by recommending strategic plans and expanding D&I programs.
  - Developed employees and advocated cultural responsiveness through training, curriculum development, and transition planning.
  - Supported parents, students, faculty members, and staff affinity groups with an aim to increase understanding of social and emotional needs of "person of color" and people from diverse backgrounds.
- Established an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Ambassador Program for Disney's Broadway and touring companies.

Earthjustice – Washington, DC  
VP of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) | 2019 to 2022

Delivered executive-level advice to top leadership on D&I topics and issues. Leveraged leadership skills to steer a competent team of four for seamless operations while successfully administering budget of \$1M. Collaborated with HR on improving existing policies impacting 450 employees across 14 offices located across the country. Enabled staff to engage in best DEI practices by building Employee Resource Group (ERG) that supported advocacy and provided resources.

- Launched and implemented a Community, Accountability, Respect, and Empathy (CARE) model that served as a guideline around DEI work and drove shift in DEI conversations.
- Developed and maintained over a million dollars budget for organizational diversity work and support.

- Examined policies and practices associated with experiences of people of color, equitable hiring, pay structure, and gaps through proactive management of independent DEI assessment.
- Designed and executed diverse hiring / retention practices concurrently led efforts to identify and hire people of color, which resulted in increasing the percentage of people of color from 35% to 46%.

## Sidwell Friends School – Washington, DC Director of Equity, Justice, and Community | 2015 to 2018

Led high-impact initiatives to achieve strategic institutional goals related to diversity and multiculturalism. Partnered with diversity practitioners to create key policies and launch initiatives. Devised and deployed new transgender, non-conforming, and recruitment policies. Filled gaps and supported students after careful evaluation / analysis of graduate and alumni data.

- Chaired Board of Trustees D&I Council and a team of 12 (including senior admin team and 3 coordinators) with a keen focus on leading committees for each school division.
- Enhanced knowledge and encouraged conversations on race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, and socio-economic diversity by driving:
  - a \$75K professional development initiative for faculty and staff
  - a \$30K-\$40K annual program for students and families
- Developed Native American education and equity program with Michelle Obama as guest speaker.
- Hired and retained people of color and remediated issues through extensive study.
  - Recruited 5 additional teachers of color.
  - Raised awareness by involving key stakeholders like 1,200 students, parents, 30 members of board of trustees, ~30,000 alumni, 250+ staff members, school administrators, HR team, and diverse leaders.

## Families First – Atlanta, GA Education Coach and Advocate | 2013 to 2015

Identified and overcame educational challenges faced by children, delivering support, services, and access to opportunities. Created and implemented alternative programming and school curriculum for youth in foster care.

- Provided educational coaching by organizing and leading workshops for 100 homeless families.
- Liaised with school systems and other related organizations to fulfill the needs of 25 children at any time.

## Additional Experience

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Director of Diversity at Pace Academy | Founder and Director at Summer of Excellence | Program Director at Keeping Pace  
Adjunct Professor at Antioch University and California Institute of Integral Studies  
Volunteer Program Coordinator at Ubuntu Education Fund | Professional Actor / Teaching Artist at Rent on Broadway  
Professional Actor/Mufasa/Mufasa, Pumba, Banzai Understudy at The Lion King on Broadway

## Education & Credentials

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Doctor of Education, Educational Leadership (Specialty in Diversity & Inclusion) | University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA  
Master of Arts, Transformative Leadership | California Institute of Integral Studies, San Francisco, CA  
Bachelor of Arts, Communication Studies | University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC  
LGBTQ Executive Leadership Program (Deferred) | Stanford Graduate School of Business, Stanford, CA

## Select Publications & Presentations

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Speaker: National Anti-Racism Teach-In, 2020, 2021  
Featured in *Teaching the Teachers: LGBTQ Issues in Teacher Education*, Information Age Publishing, 2019  
Independent Queers: *LGBTQ Educators in Independent Schools Speak Out*, Mascot Publication, 2019  
Race, a polarizing force. In *Case Studies of Inclusive Educators and Leaders*, Word & Deed Publishing, 2018  
Every Child Deserves... Written by Zaden and His Two Dads, BookBaby, 2017  
How does race impact the identity of LGBTQ people of color in independent schools? POCC, 2016  
Out and Visible – A study of openly gay and lesbian teachers in independent schools, AERA, 2016  
Carney, Sandoe & Associates: *FORUM/Diversity Presenter and Faculty*, 2017, 2018, 2019

**Maria Kokiasmenos**  
142 Fairview Terrace, Glastonbury, CT 06073  
(860) 202-1843(c) (860) 430-2938(h)

#### EXPERIENCE

<b>The Hartford Fire Insurance Company</b>	Hartford, CT
Vice President, Associate General Counsel, Head of Claims Law	2019-present
Assistant Vice President, Assistant General Counsel	2013-19
Counsel	2011-13

Lead legal team responsible for supporting Claims and TPA organizations. Member of Claims senior leadership team. Counsel clients regarding financial, reputational, regulatory, and legal risk of proposed initiatives and suggest risk mitigation. Draft and negotiate vendor contracts. Advise clients regarding usage, sharing, and ownership of data. Lead and develop team of senior lawyers and paralegals. In prior roles, managed insurance coverage and ERISA litigation, including unanimous win at U.S. Supreme Court. Successfully advocated for company sponsorship of diversity pipeline organization (Just the Beginning).

<b>Axinn, Veltrop &amp; Harkrider LLP</b>	Hartford, CT
Associate, 2007-2011	

Represented clients in product liability, coverage, securities, and contract litigation.

<b>Day Pitney LLP</b>	Hartford, CT
Associate, 2005-2007; Summer Associate, 2004	

Represented pharmaceutical, consumer, and auto clients in product liability litigation.

#### EDUCATION

<b>Georgetown University Law Center</b>	Washington, DC
J.D., 2005	

Articles & Notes Editor, *Georgetown Journal of Gender & The Law*

<b>New York University</b>	New York, NY
B.A., English and American literature, <i>cum laude</i> , 1999	

National Merit Scholar, NYU Scholar, Thomas J. Watson-IBM Scholar, Dean's List

#### VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

<b>Election Protection/Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law</b>	Washington, DC
Volunteer Call Center Lead, 2020 election	

Counseled hotline volunteers, acted as intermediary between volunteers and staff leadership. On Election Day, served as lead for several states and contacted election officials directly to address problems such as broken machines, long lines, and interference.

<b>YWCA Hartford Region</b>	Hartford, CT
Member, Board of Directors, 2013-2020; Chairwoman, 2017-2019	

Lead Board in all governance, finance, and oversight functions. Ran board and executive committee meetings, provided board leadership on strategy and priorities. Developed junior board members for leadership positions. Conducted search for and hired CEO. Supervised and counseled CEO, including performance review.

#### AWARDS

Connecticut Law Tribune "New Leader in the Law" 2013

## PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY:

Passionate, life-long educator, learner, & leader with extensive experience in curriculum design, educational technology, & dynamic, personalized learning experiences.

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

### **Mathematics Instructor**

**August 2024~ Current**

- Φ Mentor a group of 3 math teachers in the areas of classroom culture, curriculum design, and the use of informal data to develop academic and social-emotional interventions for ninth and tenth graders.
- Φ Lead the math department in aligning the school pre-algebra curriculum to the Common Core State Standards for Math and use diagnostic data to spiral prerequisite skills into grade-level content.
- Φ Co-teach with mentees to model and leverage evidence- and research-based strategies.
- Φ Develop a school-wide restorative approach to discipline.
- Φ Create common assessments to promote rigor and equity for all students.

### **Mathematics Educator, Hartford Public Schools**

**August 2011~ June 2023**

- Φ Develop management, organizational, intervention, and feedback systems and procedures, resulting in a 7% increase in instructional time and a 40% reduction in behavior referrals.
- Φ Design, implement, evaluate, and edit student-centered curriculum, lesson plans, assessments, and culture-building activities, resulting in 97% positive responses on teacher-administered surveys.
- Φ Collect and analyze assessment data to identify learning needs and design interventions, resulting in an annual average increase in student achievement on state and local assessments of 13 percentage-points.
- Φ Continuously respond to feedback using self-reflection, coaching cycles, surveys, and peer observations, resulting in an 18% increase in annual teacher evaluation scores.
- Φ Self-learn and utilize Google Workspace for Education, other Learning Management Systems, and e-learning authoring software, creating a no-code classroom application, efficient online learning spaces, and engaging instructional videos/other materials for self-paced learning, leading to a 5% increase in student achievement despite the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Φ Seek and develop community and family partnerships, resulting in six sponsored annual field trips and a 32% increase in family participation in school activities and events.
- Φ Prioritize and manage multiple roles and responsibilities by leveraging organizational systems and being attentive to detail.

## LEADERSHIP

### **Tutoring Program Coordinator**

Managed a team of teachers in using data to identify students in need and developing an after-school tutoring program for targeted intervention.

### **Hartford Foundation for Public Giving Grant Recipient**

As Family, Community, and School Engagement Committee Chair, applied and received a grant for improving family and community engagement in our school. Led a team of staff and students in planning and facilitating events such as November Numbers Night, Literacy Night, Parent learning series, and student/family focus groups designed to collaboratively address challenges and create positive change.

### **Grade-level Team Leader**

Collaborated with colleagues to advance cross-curricular learning experiences, social-emotional development/advocacy, and academic differentiation for various learning needs using Microsoft 365, resulting in 6 new extracurricular activities and 2 monthly, school-wide social activities.

### Member of Instructional Leadership Team

Designed and facilitated professional learning sessions for school staff and developed school-wide safety, behavioral, and intervention systems and processes.

### Professional Learning Community (PLC) Facilitator

Planned and facilitated bi-monthly meetings of a Professional Learning Community focused on equity and access for all students. Led professional learning sessions for other educators on bias and cultural norms.

### Mathematics Leadership Team

Increased teacher attendance at professional forums and teacher input in district curriculum by 20% and realigned the high school math curriculum to increase pass rates for Algebra I from 29% to 50%.

### Mathletes Coordinator

Designed a Mathletes program based on a need for enrichment & intervention in the mathematics curriculum, planned and implemented weekly math activities and lessons after school, and organized & facilitated biannual intra-district math competitions, increasing participation from 30 to 200 students and 3 to 10 schools over 3 years by forming partnerships and securing sponsorship of the program by local organizations.

### Class of 2015 Faculty Advisor

Facilitated and supported student class council, increasing membership by 200% and raising over \$15,000 in three years for senior events.

## SKILLS

Fast, self-motivated learner  
Active listening & empathy  
Conflict resolution & restorative practices  
Organizational systems  
Building relationships  
Google Suite & Microsoft 365  
Online learning and management systems  
Screen recording and video editing  
Adult & youth learning theory & development  
Differentiated learning experiences  
Intermediate fluency in Spanish & Mandarin Chinese  
Data synthesis & analysis

## INTERESTS

Reading historical fiction  
Grassroots community organizing  
Coding and application/software development  
Carpentry  
Games, puzzles, & challenging my brain  
Youth leadership development  
Gardening  
Activism & change-making  
Travel and culture studies  
Hiking and strength training  
Justice and saving lives  
Singing and playing music

## EDUCATION

6<sup>th</sup> Year Degree – UConn Administrator Preparation Program

**University of Connecticut**

***CT Dept. of Ed. Intermediate Administration/Supervision (092) Licensure Recipient***

M.Ed. – Educational Leadership and Policy Studies

**Boston University**

***Coleman Graduate Scholarship & BU Graduate Merit Scholarship Recipient***

**BS:** Mathematics with Teaching Concentration

**University of Massachusetts Amherst**

**BA:** Chinese Language and Literature

***Commonwealth Honors College Scholarship Recipient***

## CERTIFICATES/HONORS

- ❖ Certified Community Association Manager
- ❖ Certified School Administrator/Supervisor
- ❖ Alfred E. Burr Community School Teacher of the Year
- ❖ Certified Mathematics Educator, Grades 7-12
- ❖ Certificate in Asian American Studies

CAMICB/State of CT  
CT Dept. of Ed.  
Hartford Public Schools  
CT Dept. of Ed  
University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Stephen G. Ray Jr., MDiv, Ph.D., D.D.  
1912 Chapel St  
New Haven, CT 06515  
773-263-9076

## **Professional Experience**

### United Church on the Green

Senior Minister, June 2023 to present

### Seminary of the Southwest

Crump Visiting Professor and Black Religious Scholars Group Scholar in Residence, July 2022 – June 2023

### Chicago Theological Seminary

President, February 2018 – August 2021

### Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary

Interim Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Academic Dean, Fall 2013

Neal F. and Ila A. Fisher Professor of Systematic Theology, June 2008 – January 2018

### Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia

Associate Professor of African-American Studies and Director of the Urban Theological Institute, June 2005 – May 2008

### Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary

Associate Professor of Theology and Philosophy, May 1999 to June 2005.

### Hartford Seminary

Lecturer, Summer 1998.

### Yale Divinity School

Lecturer, United Church of Christ Polity, 1995-1996; 1996-1997.

### Farmington Historical Society

Consulting scholar, "Black and White in A New England Town, 1996 - 1998.

### The Hartford Black History Project

Project Historian, 1995-1997; Curator, "A Struggle From the Start": museum exhibitions at the Connecticut Historical Society and the Charter Oak Cultural Center, 1996.

## **Education**

Ph.D. Religious Studies-African-American Studies Joint Degree Program, Yale University,

2000.

M.Div. *summa cum laude*, Yale Divinity School, 1993.

B.S. Charter Oak State College, Newington, Connecticut, 1989.

Certificate, Hartford Seminary Black Ministries Certificate Program, 1986.

### **Guild Activities**

American Academy of Religion

member, 1993-present

member, Theological Education Steering Committee 2009 - 2012

co-chair, Black Theology Group 2005-2010

Theology of Martin Luther King Group 2011 – 2015

Tillich: Issues in Theology, Religion, and Culture 2015 - 2018

steering committee member, Christian Systematic Theology Section 2005 - 2010

Liberal Theologies Consultation 2004- 2007

Theology of Martin Luther King Consultation 2009 – 2015

Tillich: Issues in Theology, Religion, and Culture 2010 - 2018

Society for the Study of Black Religion

President, 2016 - 2020

Executive Director, 2008 - 2015

Workgroup on Constructive Theology

Co-chair, 2008 – 2016

member, 2000 – 2016

Black Religious Scholars Group

Executive Committee, 2002 – 2007.

### **Grants Received**

2003 Wabash Summer Grant Program: *A Solomonic Dilemma: Must Sin-Talk Be Cleaved?* - an investigation of the theoretical and rhetorical cleavage between discourses about sin in its personal and social dimensions.

2007 Wabash Center Mid-Level Grant Program: *Knowing Too Much, Understanding Too Little: Overcoming Alienation and Presumed Epistemic Privilege as Learning Barriers in Courses About the Black Christian Tradition.*

### **Mentoring Leadership**

#### Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion

leadership team 2006-07 Wabash Center Workshop for Pre-Tenure Theological School Faculty.

leadership team 2009-10 Wabash Center Workshop for Pre-Tenure Faculty of African Descent.

leadership team 2013-14 Wabash Center Workshop for Pre-Tenure Theological School Faculty

Director of 2017 – 18 Wabash Center Workshop for Early Career Theological School Faculty

#### Forum for Theological Exploration (formerly Fund for Theological Education)

leadership team 2009 Fund for Theological Education Summer Conference

leadership team 2010 Fund for Theological Education Summer Conference

## **Honors**

Yale Divinity School, Hooker Fellowship for Excellence in Theological Studies, 1993.  
Distinction in Theological Education Award, 2018  
United Lutheran Seminary, Doctor of Divinity *honoris causa*, 2021.  
Distinguished Alumni, Yale Divinity School, 2019.  
General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (UMC), Exemplary Teaching Award, 2017.  
Martin Luther King, Jr. International Collegium of Scholars, Morehouse College, 2008.  
Award of Excellence for Column, The Associated Church Press, 2006.  
Village Award, West Louisville Choir Academy, 2003.  
Kentuckiana Metroversity, Distinguished Teacher of Adult Learners, 2002.  
Charter Oak State College, Distinguished Alumni Award, 1998.

## **Publications**

### Books:

*Silenced By the Night: A Constructive Reenstrual of the Protestant Doctrine of Sin.* Ph.D. thesis, Yale University, 2000.  
*Do No Harm: Social Sin and Christian Responsibility*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press 2002  
contributor, *Constructive Theology: A Contemporary Approach to Classical Themes*, Serene Jones and Paul Lakeland eds. Minneapolis: Fortress Press 2004.  
Co-author (with Stacey Floyd-Thomas *et al*), *Black Church Studies: An Introduction*. Nashville: Abingdon Press 2007.  
Edited with new introduction, *We Have Been Believers: An African-American Systematic Theology 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition*. James H. Evans, Jr. (author). Minneapolis: Fortress Press 2012.  
Co-author (with Laurel C. Schneider), *Awake to The Moment: An Introduction to Constructive Theology*. Louisville, KY: WJK Press 2016.

### Exhibition Catalog:

*A Struggle from the Start: The Black Community of Hartford, 1639-1960* Hartford: The Connecticut Historical Society 1996.

### Chapters:

“As If Christ Lives: Christology and the Unfinished Business of the UCC,” in *Who Do You Say That I Am: The Meaning of Jesus in the United Church of Christ*, Scott Paeth ed. Cleveland: United Church Press 2006.  
“The End of Man: Human Rights, Christian Theology and The Rights of Human Persons,” in *Human Rights: Christian Influences and Issues*, Frances Adeney and Arvind Sharma eds. Albany, NY: SUNY Press 2007.  
“E-racing the Faith While Black,” in *Being Black, Teaching Black: The Role of Black Church*

*Studies in the Academy*. N. Lynne Westfield ed. Nashville: Abingdon Press 2008.

“Embodying Redemption,” in *Bonhoeffer and King: Receiving Their Legacies for Christian Social Thought*. Willis Jenkins and Jennifer McBride, eds. Fortress Press 2010.

Preface to *Hope on the Brink: Understanding the Emergence of Nihilism in Black America*. Lewis Brogdon. Cascade Books 2013.

“An Unintended Conversation Partner: Tillich’s Account of the Demonic and Critical Race Theory,” in International Yearbook of Tillich Research, 2014. “Structures of Sin,” in *The T&T Clark Companion to the Doctrine of Sin*. Keith L. Johnson and Kevin Lauber, eds. Bloomsburg Publishing, 2016.

“Why Black Lives Matter,” in *Race in America: How a Pseudo-Scientific Concept Shaped Human Interaction*. Patricia Reid-Merritt, editor. Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2017.

“Black Lives Matter as Enfleshed Theology,” in *Enfleshed Theology: Embodiment, Discipleship, and Politics in the work of M. Shawn Copeland*. Michele Saracino and Robert J. Rivera eds., Fortress (Academic 2018).

#### Articles:

##### Peer Reviewed

“Truth or Tale: African-American Women’s Experience as Theological Source.” *PRISM - A Theological Journal of the United Church of Christ*, Spring 1996.

“The Remembrance of Integrity African-American New England Congregationalists and the Politics of History.” *PRISM - A Theological Journal of the United Church of Christ*, Spring 1999.

“Contending for the Cross: Black Theology and the Ghosts of Modernity.” *Black Theology: An International Journal* 8, 2010.

“Black Sacred Rhetoric: Katie Canon and the Power of Memory,” *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*, Spring 2019.

##### Dictionary and Handbook Entries

Cultural Resource, the African-American Lectionary, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s Birthday (Beloved Community Sunday), January 18, 2009.

Contributor, *Cambridge Dictionary of Theology*, edited by Ian McFarland with Karen Kilby, and Iain Torrance. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Contributor, *Dictionary of Scripture and Ethics*. Ada, Michigan: Baker Academic Press 2011.

Contributor, *Preaching Social Justice from the Lectionary: Years A, B, and C*. Edited by Ronald J. Allen, Dale P. Andrews, and Dawn Ottoni Wilhelm. Louisville, KY. Westminster/John Knox 2011.

Contributor, *Feasting on the Word: Preaching the Revised Common Lectionary Year C*, Volume 1: Advent through Transfiguration. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press 2012.

Contributor, *Encyclopedia of the Bible and its Reception*, Vol. 4. Dale C. Allison Jr. Berlin: DeGruyter 2014 (on-line).

##### Church Publications

“What is Sin?,” *Called To Belong and Called To Lead*. New Leader Curriculum, Congregational Ministries Division, Presbyterian Church (USA), Louisville, Ky. 2004.

“Dissonant Identity, *DisciplesWorld*, September 2004.

“Identity: Doing It In Context,” *DisciplesWorld*, November 2004.

“Heresy: Fill In The Blanks,” *DisciplesWorld*, January/February 2005.

“Folks. Some Is Different . . . Most Ain’t,” *DisciplesWorld*, April 2005.

“Be Not Conformed,” *DisciplesWorld*, June 2005.

“The Gospel and Poor Folks Nihilism,” *DisciplesWorld*, September 2005.

“The Essentials,” *DisciplesWorld*, November 2005.

“Out of The Closet,” *DisciplesWorld*, January/February 2006.

“Choosing Life,” *DisciplesWorld*, March 2006

“Dime Store Phonies,” *DisciplesWorld*, June/July 2006

“The Last Full Measure,” *DisciplesWorld*, September, 2006.

“Looking Toward the Morning,” *DisciplesWorld*, November, 2006

Journal Reviews:

Review, *The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Database on CD-ROM*. David Eltis, Stephen D. Behrendt, and Herbert S. Klein eds. (New York: Cambridge University Press 1999), for *Fidei et Historia*, XXXIX:1 Winter/Spring 2002.

Review, *A House Divided: Bridging the Generation Gaps in Your Church*. Whitesel, Bob and Kent R. Hunter. (Nashville: Abingdon Press 2000), for Family Ministry: Empowering Through Faith.

Review, *Mastering Theology*. Michaela Davey. Hampshire, England: Palgrave, 2002. for Teaching Theology and Religion, 6:2 - April 2003.

Review, *Difference and Identity: A Theological Anthropology*. Ian A. McFarland., The Pilgrim Press 2001, Conversations in Religion and Theology 1:2 November 2003

Review, *The Myth of Ham in Nineteenth-Century American Christianity: Race, Heathens, and the People of God*. Sylvester A. Johnson. New York: Palgrave MacMillan 2004, for Conversations in Religion and Theology 4:1 May 2006

Review, *The Fall and Sin: What We Have Become as Sinners*. Marguerite Shuster. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company 2004, The Scottish Journal of Theology 59:4 November 2006.

Review, *James Baldwin’s God: Sex, Hope, and the Crisis in Black Holiness Culture*. Clarence E. Hardy III. The University of Tennessee Press 2003, for Religious Studies Review (forthcoming).

Review, *White Theology: Outing Supremacy in Modernity*. James W. Perkinson. Palgrave MacMillan 2004, Conversations in Religion and Theology 5:2 October 2007.

Review, *Being Human: Race, Culture and Religion*. Dwight N. Hopkins. Minneapolis, Minnesota: Fortress Press, 2005, The Journal of Religion, 88:412–413, July 2008.

Review, *The African-American Jeremiad: Appeals for Justice in America. Revised Edition*. Temple University Press 2005. Teaching Theology and Religion 12:1 January 2009.

Review, *Martin Luther King, Jr. for Armchair Theologians*. Rufus Burrow, Jr. Religious Studies Review Volume 36, Issue 2, June 2010.

Review, *The Cross and the Lynching Tree*. James H. Cone. Maryknoll, NY, Orbis Books 2012, Christian Century January 2012.

Review, *White Allies in the Struggle for Racial Justice*. Drick Boyd Maryknoll: Orbis Books 2015. Interpretation (forthcoming)

### Publication Reviews:

*Uplifting the People: Black Baptists in Alabama, 1721 – 2000.* Wilson Fallin, Jr. Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 2005.

*The Inevitability of Religious Fundamentalism in Global Civil Society.* Sarah Garlington. *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, October 2007.

*Bible Witness in Black Churches.* Garth Kasimu Baker-Fletcher. New York: Macmillan Palgrave 2009.

*In Adam's Fall: A Meditation on the Christian Doctrine of Original Sin.* Ian McFarland. London: Wiley-Blackwell 2010.

*Redeeming Mulatto: A Theology of Race and Christian Hybridity.* Bryan Bantum. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press 2011.

*Political Spirituality in an Age of Eco-Apocalypse: Essays in Communication and Struggle Across Species, Cultures, and Religions.* James Perkinson. New York: Palgrave 2014.

*Black Women's Bodies and God Politics: A Womanist Theology of Personhood.* Andrea White. New York: Palgrave 2014.

*Toward a Counternarrative Theology of Race and Whiteness.* Christopher Baker. New York: Palgrave forthcoming.

### **Lectureships**

2003 Beacon of Life Lecturer, Muskingum College: *The End of Man: Martin Luther King, Jr., Christian Theology, and the Rights of Human Persons.*

2004 Black History Month Lectures, Memphis Theological Seminary: *The Faithful Remnant: African-Americans, Christianity and the Contest for the Soul of the Faith in America.*

2009 Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Lecture, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary: *Contending for the Cross: Black Theology and the Ghosts of Modernity.*

2011 Kelso Lecture in Honor of Martin Luther King, Jr., Pittsburgh Theological Seminary: *Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Dream and the Idea of a Post Racial America.*

2016 Wertsch Lecture, St. Paul School of Theology: Beckoned By God: The Church in its Becoming.

2016 Samuel DeWitt Proctor Lecture, Association of Chicago Theological Schools Doctor of Ministry in Preaching Summer Program: *The Arc of the Universe: Preaching the Eschatological.*

2020 Holocaust Service of Remembrance and Lecture, Elmhurst College: *Geographies of Goodness and Evil.*

### **Papers and Addresses Delivered**

*Race and Christian Identity: A Consideration of Bonhoeffer's Treatment of the Jewish Question.* The Bonhoeffer Group, the American Academy of Religion, New Orleans, November 26, 1996.

*The Importance of Recognizing Ethnicity and Race When Doing African-American Religious Studies and Theology.* Conference on Race, Ethnicity, and Migration, Yale University, April 11, 1998.

*Not All Black and White: African-American Christian History and the Politics of Historical Identity.* The Afro-American Religious History Group, the American Academy of Religion,

Nashville, November 19, 2000.

*Making Peace in Canaan: African-American Congregationalists in the Antebellum North.*  
Annual Meeting of the Congregational Historical Society, Providence Rhode Island, May 19, 2001.

*The Aphid Herder: Musings of an Un-Modern.* Opening Convocation, Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, February 14, 2002.

*The Meaning of Eschatology.* Mysteries of Faith Series, Highland Baptist Church, Louisville Ky. July 28, 2002.

*Sin, Politics and the Common Good.* Annual Meeting, Kentuckiana Association of the Indiana-Kentucky Conference of the United Church of Christ, Louisville Ky., October 23, 2002

*Toni Morrison and the Quest for Black Humanity,* Jefferson Community College, Louisville, Ky., January 21, 2003.

Response: *Discussion of Stephen G. Ray's Do No Harm: Social Sin and Christian Responsibility.* Theology and Religious Reflection Section, the American Academy of Religion, Atlanta, November 23, 2003.

*E-Racing the Faith: Toward the Beloved Community.* Rhodes College, February 23, 2004.

*E-racing While Black: Pedagogy and Race.* Academic Teaching and the Study of Religion Section, The American Academy of Religion, San Antonio, November 23, 2004.

*Public Dimensions of the African-American Theological Tradition.* Special Convocation, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, January, 10, 2005.

*Sin-Talk, Theo-Politics and African-American Experience.* State of the Black Church Summit, Brite Divinity School, Ft. Worth Tx., April 1, 2005.

Response: *Despair, Evil, and Human Suffering: A Conversation Between Kierkegaard and Black Theology.* Joint Session, Black Theology Group and the Kierkegaard, Religion and Culture Group, The American Academy of Religion, Philadelphia, November 20, 2005.

*Small Acts: Shaping History by Small Acts of Conscience.* St. Matthew's United Methodist Church, February 26, 2006.

*Forgiveness and Reconciliation: The Impossible Dream?*, Drew University, September 26, 2006.

*Contesting the Faith: The African-American Theological Tradition and the Ghosts of Modernity.* Opening Convocation, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, September 5, 2006.

*Ad Selfishness: Politics and Religion in Our Time.* St. Martin of the Fields Episcopal Church, October 29, 2006.

Response: Tillich: Issues in Theology, Religion, and Culture Group and Theology of Martin Luther King, Jr. Consultation. The American Academy of Religion, San Diego, November 18, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Celebration. Pennsylvania Hospital, Philadelphia. January 15, 2007.  
*Sin, Evil and the Travail of Christian Theology.* Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, January 20, 2008.

*Not As Far Off As Once Thought: Black Theology and Pentecostalism.* Black Theology Group and Pentecostal-Charismatic Movements Consultation, The American Academy of Religion, November 2, 2009.

*The Religion of Race: The Demonic in the Quotidian.* The American Theological Society, Midwest, October 28, 2016.

*Black Lives Matter as Enfleshed Theology.* The American Theological Society, (March 24, 2017).

# Tameka Grant-Mack

206 Prindle Avenue Ansonia, CT 06401  
Cell: (203) 278-1882 Home: (203) 751-6140  
[educationequalsfreedom@gmail.com](mailto:educationequalsfreedom@gmail.com)

## **Administrative Experience**

### **USD #1, State School Department Head**

**December 2019- present**

- Assist in the development of the School Improvement Plan
- Chair Districtwide Professional Development Committee
- Assist in Districtwide Climate and Culture Committee
- Work closely with students who have traumatic experiences.
- Coach teachers and help them master the essentials of effective instruction.
- Observe and give targeted and actionable feedback to teachers.
- Lead staff development training for administrators, teachers and school staff..
- Analyze and monitor attendance and to proactively address our area of needs.
- Attend PPT, 504, and Program Reviews
- Interviewed prospective candidates
- Assist with the recruitment of new students
- Assist with the budget decisions

### **Annie Fisher STEM Magnet School, Dean of Students**

**December 2014- June 2016**

- Assist in the development of the School Improvement Plan
- Assist with school discipline
- Work closely with students who have behaviorally challenges and their families.
- Coach teachers and help them master the essentials of effective instruction.
- Observe and give targeted and actionable feedback to teachers.
- Lead staff development trainings.
- Attend PTO meetings and build parent partnerships.
- Analyze and monitor attendance and to proactively address our area of needs.
- Attend PPT, 504, and Program Reviews
- School Climate Specialist (2015 to 2016)
- Interviewed prospective candidates
- Assist with the recruitment of new students
- Assist with the budget decisions

### **Amistad Academy Elementary, Dean of Students**

**June 2010- June 2014**

- Work closely with scholars who have behaviorally challenges and their families. I partner with our school social worker, special services coordinator, and teachers to develop individualized behavior plans.
- Coach teachers and help them master the essentials of effective instruction developed by our network.
- Observe and give targeted and actionable feedback to teachers.
- Assist teachers to use student performance data effectively from common assessments to inform instructional decisions.
- Lead staff development trainings at the beginning and end of the year and on professional development days.
- Oversee our Parent Leadership Council and build parent partnerships.
- Analyze and monitor daily attendance and discipline records to proactively address our area of needs.
- Have a mutually respectful relationship with students and families and support teachers to have the same.
- Review and provide feedback on curriculum documents, including but not limited to standards, scope and sequence, common formative assessments, and unit plans in order to ensure horizontal alignment and rigor.
- Review and provided timely written and verbal feedback for long-term plan, unit plans, and the rigor and alignment of lesson plans and major assessments.
- Coordinated CMTs (until 2013)
- School Climate Specialist (2012-2014)
- BEST/TEAM mentor
- Interviewed prospective candidates

### **Ansonia Middle School, Substitute Administrator**

**September 2004-February 2008**

- In the absence of the principal or assistant principal, filled in all aspects as building administrator, including attending 504/PPT meetings.

### **Amity Middle School, Administrative Intern**

**September 2003-May 2005**

- Observed and participated in the daily aspects of a school administrator.

- Community project: Created a “team handbook” for teacher leaders.

## **The College Board, Math Consultant**

**April 2002-February 2008**

- Provided workshops for a variety of school districts in the areas of vertical teaming and building success in math.

## **Education**

### **The University of Connecticut**

- Sixth Year Certificate, Educational Leadership, May 2005
- Bachelor of Arts, May 1996

### **Sacred Heart University**

- Master of Arts in Teaching, May 1999

### **Certifications-- Connecticut 092, and 005**

## **Teaching/Paraprofessional Experience**

### **Teacher/Substitute Teacher, Duggan School/Waterbury Public Schools**

**October 2019-2020**

- Motivate students to realize and meet high academic and behavior standards.
- Utilize data to drive instruction and interventions.
- Implemented reading, writing, math, science, and social studies unit and lesson plans
- Work collaboratively with co-teacher, grade level members and share instructional strategies

### **Catapult Learning, Teacher—Catholic Academy of Waterbury**

**November 2018-October 2019**

- Utilize data to drive instruction and interventions
- Provide instructional services in math and reading for grades kindergarten through seventh
- Consult with school personnel to coordinate efforts in providing services to students
- Communicate and conference with parents

### **Epiphany Counseling Services, Teacher in the HOPS program (Having Opportunities Provided to Succeed)**

**September 2018-2019**

- Provide children and youth (ages 6-17) with the opportunity to develop and use new skills
- Engage students in skill building activities and encourage them to take on leadership roles
- Work with leadership team and staff members to coordinate efforts in providing services to students

### **Ross Woodward School, Read 180 Teacher**

**December 2017-August 2018**

- Motivate students to realize and meet high academic and behavior standards.
- Utilize data to drive instruction and interventions.
- Implemented reading lesson plans for fifth through eighth grade.

### **Bridge Academy, Paraprofessional**

**August 2017-November 2017**

- Motivate students to realize and meet high academic and behavior standards.
- Utilize data to drive instruction and interventions.
- Implemented reading, writing, math, science, and social studies unit and lesson plans for tenth grade
- Work collaboratively with grade level members

### **Highville Charter School, Fourth Grade Co-Teacher**

**August 2016-January 2017**

- Motivate students to realize and meet high academic and behavior standards.
- Utilize data to drive instruction and interventions.
- Implemented reading, writing, math, science, and social studies unit and lesson plans for fourth grade
- Work collaboratively with grade level members and shared instructional strategies

### **Amistad Academy Elementary, Second Grade Teacher**

**February 2008-June 2010**

- Motivated students to realize and meet high academic and behavior standards.
- Built a classroom community by investing families in their children's academic success and development of REACH values (REACH stands for Respect, Enthusiasm, Achievement, Citizenship, and Hard Work)
- Utilized data from Achievement First's interim assessments to drive instruction and interventions.
- Designed and implemented math unit and lesson plans for second grade
- Worked collaboratively with grade level members and shared instructional strategies
- Facilitated Parent Leadership Council meetings and activities
- BEST mentor

**Ansonia Middle School, 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher****August 2006-February 2008 & August 1999-April 2002**

- Participated in team approach, schedule included teaching two inclusive classes. Taught Language arts, social studies, and math.

**Ansonia Middle School, Instructional Resource Teacher Grades 6-8****April 2002-August 2006**

- Planned staff development activities appropriate to district goals
- Created and implemented school improvement plan
- Aligned state standards with school's curriculum
- Provided teachers with resources to improve instruction
- Supervised Title 1 tutors
- Observed classrooms and provided in the moment instructional assistance
- Created schedules
- Coordinated Training and Administration of CMTs
- Interviewed and oriented new staff members

**After-School Programming****Amistad Academy Elementary**

- Encore Director, January 2009- June 2011

**Ansonia Middle School**

- Educational Coordinator, Charger Club (21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Grant with the Boys and Girls Club)
- Coordinator, After-School Academy
- Coordinator, Getting Ready to Take the CMT
- Teacher, Girls Just Wanna Have Fun with Math

**National Presentations**

- Pre AP for Middle School Administrators" AP National Conference, July 2004
- "Girls in Math and Science" AP National Conference, July 2004
- "Power of the Middle School Teacher... The Nature and Nurture of Rigor for ALL students in grades 6-8" National Equity Colloquium June 2003

# DUSTY RADER

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## EDUCATION AND SKILLS

**M.A.** June 2015, *Central Connecticut State University*, Teaching: English, 6-12.  
*Thesis:* The Effect of the Mobile Socrative App on an English Language Arts Ninth Grade Class (Advisors Susan Seider and Sally Drew).

**B.A.** December 2013, *University of Vermont*, English Major, Theater Minor.

**Skills** Education, educational technology, curriculum design, public speaking, outreach, events, collaboration and interpersonal, grant writing, leadership, Microsoft Office Suite, Google Workplace, Salesforce, Canva, Instagram, TikTok, verbal and written communication, mentoring, team building, customer service.

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## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### **Development Manager** (May 2024-Present)

*Queer Youth Program of Connecticut (DBA Q Plus)*

- Organized a Pride Month Donation Goal to earn \$5,000 between June 1<sup>st</sup> and June 30<sup>th</sup>, overall earned \$8,798. Previous year's Pride Month Donations totaled \$1,547. Organizing included setting up a Givebutter donor site, writing a fundraising appeal, working alongside colleagues, and forging a connection with a local business.
- Organized a sold-out event with previously mentioned local business to make the connection stronger.
- Made and executed scripts for donor appreciation calls and donor appreciation emails.
- Earned a matching grant for a campaign next year; match will reach up to \$7,500 of our campaign.
- Earned a \$7,000 unrestricted grant in first three months at organization.
- Collaborated with management team on creating the Q Plus Pin of the Month Club to encourage donors to make recurring donations beginning in July of 2024; monthly donations increased by 83% in just the first month.

### **University Assistant, Sexuality and Gender Equality (SAGE) Center** (June 2024-Present)

*Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU)*

- Developed the "Ally in Progress" system of training for faculty, staff, and students to encourage continuous exploration into knowledge of diverse and changing identities.
- Maintained SAGE Center spaces, including the Open Door Closet and the Center's main room.
- Planned and coordinated SAGE Center events in coordination with other groups within the Multi-Cultural Center.
- Began the Queer Media database which lists Books, Movies, TV shows, Music, Theater, and Podcasts that feature queer stories and voices.

### **Interim Coordinator of the LGBTQ Center** (Dec. 2022-Nov. 2023), **Adjunct Professor** (Aug. 2019-March 2024)

*Central Connecticut State University (CCSU)*

- Taught Introduction to Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, receiving consistently excellent evaluations from and supporting a wide variety of students, including BIPOC, first-generation, and LGBTQIA+ students.
- Developed, coordinated, presented, and evaluated Safe Zone Trainings, a professional development training program for large and small groups to promote empathy and inclusivity on campus.
- Proposed, budgeted, organized, and ran relevant events, including finding speakers, ordering refreshments, etc.
- Ran the Center's social media, growing the Center's following by posting educational and engaging posts.
- Hired, trained, and mentored student workers and volunteers to staff the Center.
- Managed, maintained, branded, and expanded the Center's donation-based free clothing closet.
- Served on the Committee for the Concerns of LGBTQ+A Community (CCQ).
- Collaborated with multiple departments on housing initiatives and other policy changes within the organization.

## Public Speaker and Activist

*Genderally Speaking* (June 2015-Present)

- Independently designed, developed, and delivered professional development advocating for support for LGBTQIA+ individuals, particularly youth, in Connecticut, Rhode Island, New York, and nationally.
- Member of Board for PROUD Academy, actively supporting grant writing efforts to move school forward.
- Served on a task force regarding policy for transgender students with the CT State Department of Education.
- Presented keynote speeches, a Tedx Talk, and as a panelist on LGBTQ+ issues.

## Community Health Worker, Social Media Lead (Oct. 2021-July 2022)

*Community Health Center Association of Connecticut (CHCACT), a one-year grant-funded position*

- Reached over 110,000 people in CT within eight months advocating for Covid-19 vaccination with a team of nine.
- Created, managed, and tracked social media content regarding vaccination locations, FAQs, and other content.
- Attended events in CT representing CHCACT and created meaningful partnerships with relevant organizations.
- Assisted in training a team of social work and healthcare case managers on building relationships and rapport, including going through DOPE (DiSC) Personality tests.

## Customer Service Associate and Coach (Feb. 2020-Oct. 2021)

*The Home Depot*

- Assisted customers with purchases, returns, placing and picking up orders, and other issues as needed.
- Earned multiple badges for excellent customer service, including employee of the month four times.
- Appointed as an employee coach within five months of employment beginning.

## Outreach Director (Nov. 2018-Dec. 2019)

*Educators for Excellence (E4E)*

- Organized events including a summit exploring diversity in education and a two-day teacher-leader retreat.
- Brought teachers together with legislators to discuss diversity in education and the achievement gap.
- Managed a completely successful union campaign with a group of teacher leaders running as a full slate.

## English Teacher (June 2015-June 2018)

*Avon High School (One Year Long-Term Substitute, 2015-2016), Canton High School (2016-2018)*

- Taught English 9, 10, 11, Creative Writing, and literature courses.
- Participated in "Capturing Kids' Hearts" training.
- Attended educational conferences on technology, pedagogy, and other related topics.
- Participated in theatrical performances as a technical director and served as a volunteer field hockey coach.

## Lead Technician (Oct. 2009-Dec. 2013)

*University of Vermont - Enterprise Technology Services Tech Team*

- Managed shifts for the walk-in computer clinic and the technology Help Line at UVM.
- Created the branding of "Tech Team."

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## SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY

### MENTORING

Aug. 2019-Present: Case by case mentoring of students at Central Connecticut State University.

Aug. 2017-Aug. 2018: Youth facilitator for former PFLAG-Simsbury Meetings.

Dec. 2016-June 2018: After-school mentoring for transgender students at Canton High School.

### INVITED TRAININGS AND SPEECHES

Jan. 2015-Present. Professional Development Training on Transgender Students in Schools. Three of the most recent districts reached in Connecticut are New Britain, Cromwell, and Ellington.

Sept. 2024. Speaker on LGBTQ+ Issues for Glastonbury Martin Luther King Community Initiative (GMLKCI) and Glastonbury Pride community conversation event.

June 2024. Presented LGBTQ+ Identities for Pride month at the Palmer-Warner House in East Haddam.

Nov. 2023. Panelist for Barbenheimer Symposium at CCSU.

Jan. 2023-Nov. 2023. Safe Zone Trainings as Coordinator for the LGBTQ Center at CCSU, modified for varying audiences at CCSU including Resident Assistants, education departments, and open invitations.

April 2019. Speech on Transgender Individuals. CCSU Diversity and Inclusion Conference.

June 2018. Speech on Gender in the Jewish Religion and Discussion Facilitation. Temple Beth El, Stamford, CT.

Nov. 2017. Workshop: Trends: How Can Our Schools Support Transgender Students? CABE/CAPSS Convention.

July 2017. Speech on Transgender Students in Schools. Management Advocates for School Labor Affairs 40<sup>th</sup> Annual Summer Conference.

March 2017. Keynote Speech: Transgender Faculty Members in Our Schools; The Legal and Personal Landscape. North American Association of Educational Negotiators 48<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference.

May 2017. Keynote Speech: Gender in the Classroom. Rhode Island Association of School Committees.

Aug. 2016. Panel Discussion on Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Students. Ulster Board of Cooperative Educational Services. New York.

June 2016. Panelist: Coming Out for Inclusion: Serving LGBT Students and Improving School Climate. Hosted by GLSEN at the National School Board Association's 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Equity Symposium.

## ADVOCACY

Sept. 2023-Present. Joined the Board of Directors for Proud Academy, a school for LGBTQ+ youth in CT.

July 2023-Present. Joined the CT Children's Medical Center's LGBTQ+ Portal Community Stakeholders team.

June 2023-Present. Joined the CT Comptroller's LGBTQIA+ Healthcare Subcommittee.

Jan.-Dec. 2019. Organized a campaign for teachers running for union leadership. The team swept the vote.

Nov. 2018-June 2019. Organized teachers in Hartford, Bridgeport, and New Haven to develop three bills regarding diversity in education. Lobbied for these bills with teachers. Two of these bills were passed.

Nov. 2017. Trends: How Can Our Schools Support Transgender Students? Workshop presented at the CABE/CAPSS Convention.

Oct. 2017. Names Can Really Hurt Us Program. Anti-Defamation League at Canton High School.

June-Dec. 2016. Roundtable on Transgender Students and Faculty in Schools. State Department of Education.

June 2011. Lobbied with PFLAG in Hartford to add Gender Identity and Expression to Connecticut's non-discrimination bill.

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## OTHER WORKS

Rader, D. (2017, April 16). Allow Us To Be Us. *The Hartford Courant*.

Rader, D. (2017, April 21). *Things Learned in Transition* [Presentation]. TEDxManchesterHighSchool, Manchester, CT.

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## IMPACT AND RECOGNITION:

Sept. 2017. Interviewed by Anne Nyberg for her show, *NYBERG*.

June 2017. Named to NBC's #Pride 30.

June 2016. Interviewed by Mary Ellen Flannery for an article in *NEA Today*.

April 2016. Interviewed by Kathy Megan for a front-page article in the Sunday edition of *The Hartford Courant*.

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## TRAINING, WORKSHOPS, AND CERTIFICATIONS

January 2024. Life and Health and Accident Insurance Certification (Connecticut Department of Insurance).

May 2023. Bias in Interviewing. Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CSCU).

June 2023. Time with IX: Title IX & DEI - The Intersection of Our Work Amidst Pending Regulations and Political Climate of 2023. Association of Title IX Administrators.

April 2023. Civil Rights Investigator Level One. Association of Title IX Administrators.

Feb. 2023. Mental Health First Aid for Higher Education. National Council for Mental Wellbeing.

Jan. 2023. Understanding and Preventing Microaggressions. CSCU.

Dec. 2022. FERPA for Staff in Higher Education. CSCU.

Dec. 2022. Workplace Violence Prevention. CSCU.

Dec. 2022. Ethics 101 - Connecticut Office of State Ethics e-Learning. CSCU.

Dec. 2022. Title IX, The Clery Act, and VAWA for Faculty and Staff. CSCU.

Dec. 2022. Harassment Prevention for Connecticut Employees. CSCU.

June 2022. Motivational Interviewing. Community Health Center Association of Connecticut.

Oct. 2020. Associate Advanced Development. The Home Depot.

April 2019. 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Dismantling Systemic Racism Conference. State Education Resource Center.

April 2019. Promise and Perils of Data Use in Schools. Yale Education Leadership Conference.

April 2019. The Future of Affirmative Action in the United States - A Debate. Yale Education Leadership Conference.

Jan. 2019. Education Campaign Organizer Training. Educators for Excellence.

Nov. 2017. CABE/CAPSS Annual Convention.

Oct. 2017. Names Can Really Hurt Us, Teacher Facilitator. Anti-Defamation League at Canton High School.

Sept. 2017. Google for Education Summit. Manchester High School.

June 2016. 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Equity Symposium. National School Board Association.

August 2015. Capturing Kids' Hearts. Avon High School.

# Bylaws

## PROUD Academy, Inc.

(A Nonstock Corporation)

### ARTICLE I

#### Name and Location

**1.1 Name.** The name of the corporation shall be PROUD Academy, Inc. (the “Corporation”).

**1.2 Business Offices.** The principal office of the Corporation shall be located at 56 Harbour Close, New Haven, CT 06519, c/o Patricia A. Nicolari. The Corporation may have such other offices, either within or without the State of Connecticut (the “State”), as the board of directors (the “Board”) may determine or as the affairs of the Corporation may require from time to time.

**1.3 Registered Office.** The Corporation shall have and continuously maintain in the State a registered office. The registered office may be, but need not be, identical with the principal office in the State and the address of the registered office may be changed from time to time by the Board. The initial registered office of the Corporation shall be 56 Harbour Close, New Haven, CT 065119, c/o Patricia Nicolari.

### ARTICLE II

#### Policies and Powers of the Corporation

**2.1 Nondiscrimination Policy.** The officers, directors, committee members, employees, and persons served by the Corporation shall be selected entirely on a nondiscriminatory basis with respect to race, creed, ancestry, marital status, sex, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, veteran’s status, political service or affiliation, color, religion, or national origin. It is similarly the official and stated policy of the Corporation not to discriminate on the basis of any of these personal attributes.

**2.2 Exemption.** The Corporation is dedicated to and operated for nonprofit purposes, and no part of the income or assets of the Corporation shall be distributed to, or inure to the benefit of, any individual. The Corporation is organized as a tax-exempt organization within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (the “Code”), or the corresponding section of any future United States internal revenue law. The Corporation shall apply for recognition of exemption from taxation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Code (the “Exemption”).

**2.3 Federal Tax-Exempt Status.** This Corporation shall endeavor to qualify for the Exemption, and shall operate at all times in a manner consistent with Section 501(c)(3) of the Code and the regulations promulgated thereunder.

**2.4 Powers.** In furtherance of, and not in limitation of, the general powers conferred under the laws of the State, and in furtherance of the purposes enumerated in the Corporation’s certificate of

incorporation (the “Certificate”), the Corporation is empowered:

- (a) To provide an alternative academic setting for students in grades 7-12 who may experience greater academic success, free from bullying and harassment, regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, race, religion, socio-economic status, or disability.
- (b) To borrow money and issue evidence of indebtedness in furtherance of any or all of the objects of its business, and to secure the same by mortgage, pledge, or other lien on the Corporation’s property or leasehold.
- (c) To do and perform all acts reasonably necessary to accomplish the purposes of the Corporation, including the application for and receipt of grants, loans, and contributions, which may provide capital for construction, ongoing operations, or programs.
- (d) To partner with other charitable and educational organizations to develop facilities and programs in furtherance of the foregoing purposes.
- (e) To engage in any lawful act or activity for which corporations may be formed under sections 33-1000 to 33-1290, inclusive, of the Connecticut General Statutes, provided however, that the Corporation shall not engage in any activity not permitted by, or which would prevent it from qualifying as a public charity as described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended from time to time.
- (f) The powers of the Corporation further include the making of grants or other payments to organizations which qualify as exempt organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, or the corresponding section of any future United States internal revenue law.

**2.5 Mission.** The mission of this organization shall be to educate LGBTQ+ students and their peers holistically in a safe, affirming, and student-centered learning community.

The organization shall strive to create a safe educational environment, free from bullying or harassment, where students have the opportunity to thrive socially, emotionally, and academically, regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, race, religion, ethnic origin, social class, or disability. The school will be open to students in grades 6-8.

## ARTICLE III

### Board of Directors

**3.1 Requirements for and Duties of Board.** All corporate powers shall be exercised by or under the authority of, and the business and affairs of the Corporation shall be managed under the direction of, the Board.

### 3.2 Number and Election of Directors.

- (a) The Board shall consist of not fewer than three (3) nor more than nineteen (19) individuals who shall serve as directors of the Corporation (the “Directors”).
- (b) The initial Directors shall be appointed by the incorporators. All Directors shall thereafter be appointed at the first annual Board meeting, and at annual meetings thereafter, as provided in Section 3.3 of this Article. Directors may also be elected at a special meeting called for such purpose.
- (c) Directors shall be elected by a majority of the votes cast by Directors entitled to vote in the election at a Board meeting at which a quorum is present.

### **3.3 Terms of Directors Generally.**

- (a) The terms of the initial Directors shall expire at the first annual meeting of the Board.
- (b) The terms of the Directors elected at the first annual meeting shall be as follows:
  - i) Approximately half of the Directors appointed at such first annual meeting shall serve for a term of one (1) year, and;
  - ii) The remainder of the Directors appointed at such first annual meeting shall serve for a term of two (2) years.
- (c) Thereafter, each successor Director shall serve for a term of two (2) years, to succeed those whose terms expire.
- (d) A decrease in the number of Directors does not shorten an incumbent Director’s term.
- (e) A Director appointed to fill a vacancy shall remain in office until the expiration of the term of the Director they replace.
- (f) Despite the expiration of a Director’s term, such Director continues to serve until their successor is elected and qualified or until there is a decrease in the number of Directors.

### **3.4 Resignation of Director.**

- (a) A Director may resign at any time by delivering written notice to the Board, the Chairperson of the Board, or to the Corporation.
- (b) A resignation is effective when the notice is delivered unless the notice specifies a later effective date.

### **3.5 Removal of Directors.**

- (a) The Board may remove one or more Directors with cause by a majority vote of the Directors entitled to vote in the election of Directors.
- (b) The Board shall have the authority to determine whether a Director’s actions or inactions give rise to grounds for removal of a Director with cause. Such grounds shall include, but not be limited to,

missing three (3) consecutive Board meetings, missing four (4) out of any six (6) consecutive meetings, acting in bad faith, or failing to disclose conflicts of interest to the Board.

(c) Even in the event that the Board determines that grounds for removal with cause exist, the Board shall retain the discretion to choose not to remove a Director for whom such grounds exist.

(d) Notwithstanding any other provisions of the Corporation's bylaws (the "Bylaws"), a Director may be removed by the Board only at a meeting called for which the purpose, or one of the purposes, is to vote upon removing such Director. The meeting must be noticed in writing at least two (2) days prior to the date of the meeting, and such written notice must state the date, time, and place of the meeting, as well as that at least one of the meeting's purposes is to vote upon removal of the Director.

(e) Any Director against whom removal is sought shall be given an opportunity to submit to the Board a statement addressing the matter, either oral or written, and an opportunity to be heard in the meeting described in part (d) above.

**3.6 Vacancy on Board.** If a vacancy occurs on the Board as a result of the resignation, removal or death of a Director, the vacancy shall be filled by the majority vote of the Board. If a vacancy occurs on the Board as a result of an increase in the number of directorships, the vacancy shall be filled as provided by the Board upon the creation of such directorships.

### **3.7 Meetings.**

(a) The Board may hold its meetings at such place or places within or without the State as it may from time to time determine.

(b) A meeting of the Board for the election of the officers of the Corporation (the "Officers") shall occur at the first annual meeting.

(c) Meetings of the Board shall be held quarterly. Special and other meetings of the Board may be held whenever the Chairperson or one-third (1/3) of the Directors may deem it advisable, notice thereof to be given or mailed or emailed to each Director in accordance with these Bylaws.

### **3.8 Notice of Meeting.**

(a) Regular meetings of the Board may be held without notice of the date, time, place or purpose of the meeting, if the date, time and place of the meeting have been established in advance by the Board. Otherwise, the notice requirements for special meetings of the Board delineated in Subsection (b) of Section 3.8 of this Article shall apply.

(b) Special meetings of the Board shall be preceded by at least five (5) days' notice of the date, time and place of the meeting. The notice also shall describe the purpose of the special meeting.

(c) See Section 3.5 of this Article for special notice provisions regarding the removal of one or more Directors.

(d) See Section 8.2 of Article VIII of the Bylaws for special notice provisions regarding the adoption, amendment, or repeal of Bylaws.

### **3.9 Waiver of Notice.**

(a) A Director may waive any notice required by Section 3.8 of this Article or any other provisions

of the Bylaws, before or after the date and time stated in the notice. Except as provided by Subsection (b) of this Section, the waiver shall be in writing, signed by the Director entitled to the notice, and filed with the minutes or corporate records.

(b) A Director's attendance at or participation in a meeting waives any required notice to such Director of the meeting unless the Director at the beginning of the meeting, or promptly upon such Director's arrival, objects to holding the meeting or transacting business at the meeting and does not thereafter vote for or assent to action taken at the meeting.

### **3.10 Quorum and Voting.**

(a) A quorum of the Board shall consist of a majority of the Directors in office at the time the meeting begins.

(b) If a quorum is present when a vote is taken, except for as otherwise indicated in these Bylaws, the affirmative vote of a majority of Directors present is the act of the Board.

(c) A Director who is present at a meeting of the Board when corporate action is taken is deemed to have assented to the action taken unless:

- (i) Such Director objects at the beginning of the meeting, or promptly upon such Director's arrival, to holding or to transacting business at the meeting;
- (ii) Such Director's dissent or abstention from the action taken is entered in the minutes of the meetings, or,
- (iii) Such Director delivers written notice of such Director's dissent or abstention to the presiding Officer at the meeting before its adjournment or to the Corporation immediately after adjournment of the meeting. The right of dissent or abstention is not available to a Director who votes in favor of the action taken.

(d) See Section 8.3 of Article VIII of the Bylaws for special quorum and voting requirements regarding the adoption, amendment, or repeal of Bylaws that would alter the then-existing voting and quorum requirements.

### **3.11 Action Without Meeting.**

(a) Any action required or permitted to be taken at a Board meeting may be taken without a meeting so long as such action is set forth in writing describing the action taken, signed by each Director, and included in the minutes or filed with the corporate records reflecting the action taken.

(b) Action taken under this Section is effective when the last Director signs the consent, unless the consent specifies a different effective date.

(c) A consent signed under this section has the effect of a meeting vote and may be described as such in any document.

**3.12 Meetings by Conference Telephone.** Any majority of the Directors may participate in any meeting of the Board by, or conduct the meeting through the use of, any means of conference telephone or similar communications equipment by which all Directors participating in the meeting may simultaneously hear each other during the meeting. A Director participating in a meeting by such means is deemed to be present in person at the meeting.

**3.13 Confidentiality.** Directors shall not discuss or disclose information about the Corporation or its activities to any person or entity unless such information is already a matter of public knowledge, such person or entity has a need to know, or the disclosure of such information is in furtherance of the Corporations' purposes, or can reasonably be expected to benefit the Corporation. Directors shall use discretion and good business judgment in discussing the affairs of the Corporation with third parties. Without limiting the foregoing, Directors may discuss upcoming fundraisers and the purposes and functions of the Corporation, including but not limited to accounts on deposit in financial institutions. Each Director shall execute a confidentiality agreement consistent herewith upon being voted onto and accepting appointment to the Board of Directors.

## ARTICLE IV

### Officers

**4.1 Titles, Election and Duties.** The Officers shall be a Chairperson, Treasurer, and a Secretary, and any Vice-Chair(s) that the Board may, from time to time, appoint. The offices of the Secretary and Treasurer may be held by the same person. The duties of the Officers shall be such as are prescribed by the Bylaws and as may be prescribed by the Board. Any Officer may appoint one or more assistant Officers to aid in the discharge of the responsibilities of such office. Should a Director's term on the Board end, their officer position ends then, as well.

**4.2 Chair.** The Chair of the Board shall be the chief officer of the corporation and shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Trustees. They may sign, with the Executive Director, or Secretary, or any other proper officer or agent of the corporation authorized by the Board, any deeds, mortgages, bonds, contracts, or other instruments which the Board of Trustees has authorized to be executed, except in cases where the signing and execution thereof shall be otherwise expressly delegated by the Board from time to time.

**4.3 Vice-Chair(s).** The Vice-Chair(s), if appointed, shall perform such duties as may from time to time be assigned to her or him by the Board or delegated to her or him by the Chairperson. In case of the death, disability or absence of the Chairperson, the Vice-Chair(s), or any one Vice-Chair designated by the Board to do so, shall fulfill all the duties and be vested with all the powers and responsibilities of the Chairperson. Any other ViceChair shall perform such duties as the Board or the Chairperson may from time to time prescribe. There may be more than one Vice-Chair, or no Vice-Chair, as determined by the Board from time to time.

**4.4 Treasurer.** The Treasurer shall have charge and custody of and be responsible for all funds and securities of the Corporation, keep full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements and other customary financial records of the Corporation, deposit all moneys and valuable effects in the name and to the credit of the Corporation in depositories designated by the Board and, in general, perform such other duties as may from time to time be assigned to her or him by the Board or by the President or as are incident to the office of Treasurer. The Treasurer shall ensure that at all times, the Corporation maintains in its principal office copies of the Corporation's prior three (3) annual financial statements, which shall at a minimum include a balance sheet as of the end of the relevant fiscal year and a statement of

disbursements for that year, as well as any public accountants' reports made about any of the

Corporation's prior three (3) annual financial statements.

**4.5 Secretary.**

- (a) The Secretary shall keep, as permanent records, a book of:
  - (i) Minutes of all meetings of the Board, which shall include a summary of discussion and records of all actions taken thereat;
  - (ii) Records of all actions taken by the Board without a meeting, and;
  - (iii) Records of all actions taken by a Committee, in the place of the Board, on behalf of the Corporation.
- (b) The Secretary shall issue all notices required by law or by the Bylaws, and they shall discharge all other duties required of a corporate secretary by law or imposed from time to time by the Board or by the Chair or as are incident to the office of Secretary. They shall have the custody of all books, records and papers of the Corporation, except such as shall be in the charge of the Treasurer or of some other person authorized to have custody and possession thereof by a resolution of the Board.
- (c) The Secretary shall ensure that at all times, the Corporation maintains in its principal office copies of:
  - (i) The Certificate;
  - (ii) The Bylaws, and all amendments thereto that are then in effect;
  - (iii) A list of the names and business addresses of the Corporation's then-serving Directors and Officers, and;
  - (iv) The Corporation's most recent annual report delivered to the Secretary of the State pursuant to Conn. Gen. Stat. § 33-1243.

**4.7 Executive Director.** if appointed, shall be the chief operating officer of the Corporation and shall have general managerial responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the Corporation, management of its business and programs, and management of personnel and employees. The Executive Director shall serve at the pleasure of the Board of Directors. The Executive Director shall be a non-voting member of the Board of Directors.

**4.8 Compensation.** The compensation of all Officers shall be fixed by the Board from time to time, consistent with and not to exceed that permitted by the Certificate.

**4.9 Term of Office.** Each Officer shall serve for the term of one (1) year from the date on which such Officer is elected. However, an Officer shall remain in office until such Officer's successor is duly elected or until such Officer's death or until such Officer shall have resigned or have been removed. Any Officer may be removed by the Board at any time with cause. Vacancies among the Officers shall be filled by the Board.

## ARTICLE V

### Committees and Advisory Councils

**5.1 Committees.** The Board may create one or more Committees and appoint members of the Board or others to serve on them. Each Committee shall have two or more members who serve at the pleasure of the Board. The Board shall have the following Standing Committees:

- (a) Executive;
- (b) Finance and Audit;
- (c) Curriculum/Culture;
- (d) Development/Fundraising; and,
- (e) Governance/Policy

**5.2 Advisory Councils.** The Board may create a Community Advisory Council and a Youth Advisory Council (collectively, the “Advisory Councils”), each of which will provide advice and guidance to the Board and Executive Director. The Board shall make all appointments to the Advisory Council. Members of the Community Advisory Council shall possess the desire to serve the community and support the work of the Corporation by providing expertise and professional knowledge. Each Advisory Council may appoint a representative to attend, but not vote at, meetings of the Board of Directors. Advisory Council members shall be subject to the confidentiality obligations set forth in Section 3.13 above.

## ARTICLE VI

### Directors and Officers Liability Insurance

**6.1 Permitted Procurement of Insurance.** The Board may from time to time procure liability insurance covering the actions of Officers and Directors, provided the insured action(s) did not:

- (a) Involve a knowing and culpable violation of law by the Director or Officer;
- (b) Enable the Director or Officer to receive an improper personal economic gain;
- (c) Show a lack of good faith and a conscious disregard for the duty of the Director or Officer to the Corporation under circumstances in which the Director or Officer was aware that their conduct or omission created an unjustifiable risk of serious injury to the Corporation; or,
- (d) Constitute a sustained and unexcused pattern of inattention that amounted to an abdicating of the Director’s or Officer’s duty to the Corporation.

**6.2 Other Rights Preserved.** Any repeal or modification of Section 6.1 of this Article shall not adversely affect any right or protection of a Director or Officer existing at the time of such repeal or modification.

## ARTICLE VII

### Miscellaneous

**7.1 Seal.** The Board may adopt a form of corporate seal for the Corporation.

**7.2 Fiscal Year.** The fiscal year of the Corporation shall end on June 30<sup>th</sup>.

**7.3 Records.** The Corporation shall maintain its records in written form or in another form capable of conversion into written form within a reasonable time.

**7.4 Inconsistencies with Certificate of Incorporation.** If any provision of the Bylaws shall be found to be inconsistent with any provision of the Certificate, as now existing, or as from time to time amended hereafter, the provisions of the Certificate shall prevail.

## ARTICLE VIII

### Amendments

**8.1 By Directors.** The Board shall have the power, by majority vote, to amend, repeal or adopt Bylaws at any regular or special meeting; provided, however, that no amendment shall be adopted that would prevent or impair the Corporation's Exemption and any such proposed amendment shall be void ab initio.

**8.2 Written Notice Required.** Notwithstanding any other provision of the Bylaws, no Bylaw may be brought up for adoption, amendment, or repeal unless stated in a written notice (email being sufficient) of the meeting at which such Bylaw is to be voted upon. If the Bylaw is to be adopted, amended, or repealed at a special meeting of the Board, that meeting shall be preceded by at least five (5) days' notice of the date, time, and place of the meeting.

**8.3 Special Requirements for Adoption of Bylaw(s) Increasing Quorum or Voting Requirements for Directors.** Any Bylaw that alters the quorum or voting requirement for the Board must meet the same quorum requirement and be adopted by the same vote required to take action under the quorum and voting requirements then in effect or proposed to be adopted, whichever is greater.

**8.4 Record of Changes.** Whenever any Bylaw is amended or repealed or a new Bylaw is adopted, such action and the date on which it was taken shall be noted on the original Bylaws in the appropriate place or a new set of Bylaws shall be prepared incorporating such change.

## ARTICLE IX

### Conflict of Interest Policy

**9.1 Purpose.** The purpose of the conflict of interest policy is to protect the Corporation's interest when it is contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interest of a Director, Officer, or Committee member or might result in a possible excess benefit transaction. This policy is intended to supplement but not replace any applicable state and federal laws governing conflict of interest applicable to nonprofit and charitable organizations.

## **9.2 Definitions.**

(a) **Interested Person.** Any Director, Officer, or member of a Committee with Board delegated powers, who has a direct or indirect financial interest, as defined in Subsection (b) of Section 9.2 of this Article, is an interested person.

(b) **Financial Interest.** A person has a financial interest if the person has, directly or indirectly, through business, investment, or family:

(i) An ownership or investment interest in any entity with which the Corporation has a transaction or arrangement;

(ii) A compensation arrangement with the Corporation or with any entity or individual with which the Corporation has a transaction or arrangement, or;

(iii) A potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which the Corporation is negotiating a transaction or arrangement.

Compensation includes direct and indirect remuneration, as well as gifts or favors that are not insubstantial.

A financial interest is not necessarily a conflict of interest. Under Subsection (b) of Section 9.3 of this Article, a person who has a financial interest may have a conflict of interest only if the Board or appropriate Committee decides that a conflict of interest exists.

## **9.3 Procedures.**

(a) **Duty to Disclose.** In connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest, an interested person must disclose the existence of the financial interest and be given the opportunity to disclose all material facts to the Directors and members of Committees with Board delegated powers considering the proposed transaction or arrangement.

(b) **Determining Whether a Conflict of Interest Exists.** After disclosure of the financial interest and all material facts, and after any discussion with the interested person, they shall leave the Board or Committee meeting while the determination of a conflict of interest is discussed and voted upon. The remaining Board or Committee members shall decide if a conflict of interest exists.

### **(c) Procedures for Addressing the Conflict of Interest.**

(i) An interested person may make a presentation at the Board or Committee meeting, but after the presentation, they shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and vote on, the transaction or arrangement involving the possible conflict of interest.

(ii) The Chairperson (or president or chairperson of the Committee) shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person or Committee to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement.

(iii) After exercising due diligence, the governing Board or Committee shall determine whether the Corporation can obtain, with reasonable efforts, a more advantageous transaction or arrangement from a person or entity that would not give rise to a conflict of interest.

(iv) If a more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably possible under circumstances not producing a conflict of interest, the Board or Committee shall determine by a majority

vote of the disinterested Directors whether the transaction or arrangement is in the Corporation's best interest, for its own benefit, and whether it is fair and reasonable. In conformity with the above determination, it shall make its decision as to whether to enter into the transaction or arrangement.

**(d) Violations of the Conflict of Interest Policy.**

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

**9.4 Records of Proceedings.** The minutes of the Board and all Committees with Board-delegated powers shall contain:

- (a) The names of the persons who disclosed or otherwise were found to have a financial interest in connection with an actual or possible conflict of interest, the nature of the financial interest, any action taken to determine whether a conflict of interest was present, and the Board's or Committee's decision as to whether a conflict of interest in fact existed.
- (b) The names of the persons who were present for discussions and votes relating to the transaction or arrangement, the content of the discussion, including any alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement, and a record of any votes taken in connection with the proceedings.

**9.5 Compensation.**

- (a) A Director or Officer who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the Corporation for services is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to that Director's or Officer's compensation.
- (b) A voting member of any Committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the Corporation for services is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to that member's compensation.
- (c) No Director, Officer, or voting member of any Committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the Corporation, either individually or collectively, is prohibited from providing information to any Committee regarding compensation.
- (d) Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this Article IX, and with the exception of reimbursements for reasonable expenses, no Director or Officer shall receive compensation for serving in their role as Director and/or officer of the Corporation.

**9.6 Annual Statements.** Each Director, Officer and member of a Committee with Board-delegated powers shall annually sign a statement which affirms such person:

- (a) Has received a copy of the conflict of interest policy;
- (b) Has read and understands the policy;
- (c) Has agreed to comply with the policy, and;
- (d) Understands the Corporation is charitable and in order to maintain its federal tax exemption it must engage primarily in activities which accomplish one or more of its tax-exempt purposes.

**9.7 Periodic Reviews.** To ensure the Corporation operates in a manner consistent with charitable purposes and does not engage in activities that could jeopardize its tax-exempt status, periodic reviews shall be conducted. The periodic reviews shall, at a minimum, include the following subjects:

- (a) Whether compensation arrangements and benefits are reasonable, based on competent survey information, and the result of arm's length bargaining.
- (b) Whether partnerships, joint ventures, and arrangements with management organizations conform to the Corporation's written policies, are properly recorded, reflect reasonable investment or payments for goods and services, further charitable purposes, and do not result in inurement, impermissible private benefit or in an excess benefit transaction.

**9.8 Use of Outside Experts.** When conducting the periodic reviews as provided for in Section 9.7 of this Article, the Corporation may, but need not, use outside advisors. If outside experts are used, their use shall not relieve the Board of its responsibility for ensuring periodic reviews are conducted.

## **ARTICLE X**

### **Adoption**

These Bylaws were originally adopted by the Board of Directors at a meeting duly held on August 17, 2021.

Amended on July 3, 2024



As an ANSONIA resident, my signature supports PROUD Academy to become the 1st charter school for LGBTQ+ youth & their allies in Ansonia. PROUD Academy will be the first school of its kind in the Naugatuck Valley, in Connecticut, and New England.

NAME	Email	Town/City	Student (grade) Parent/Teacher/ LGBTQ+/Ally, Job title etc...
	Rock The Valley Aug. 24, 2024		
Sandy Dandra	Capcooler3@yahoo.com	Ansonia	<u>Friend</u>
Jaylen Daniels	JaylenDanielsSchool@gmail.com	Ansonia	ALLY
George Kenya	GKenya@gmail.com	Ansonia	FRIEND
Christine Machowski	C.Machowski@icloud.com	Ansonia	ALLY
<u>JONATHAN</u> <u>MANDRAME</u> <u>DRONER</u>	Mandrake@gmail.com	ANSONIA	ALLY
Crystal Castro	Crystal Castro@gmail.com	Ansonia	Spouse
Jenny Uhlig	jennyjtt@gmail.com	Ansonia	ALLY
Martina Beattie	MartinaBeattie@gmail.com	Ansonia	Labteq
Jayden Uhlig	Jaydenuhlig029@gmail.com	Ansonia	ALLY
Margaret Endres	mnorris313@sbcglobal.net	ANSONIA	Friend



As an ANSONIA resident, my signature supports PROUD Academy to become the 1st charter school for LGBTQ+ youth & their allies in Ansonia. PROUD Academy will be the first school of its kind in the Naugatuck Valley, in Connecticut, and New England.

NAME	Email	Town/City	Student (grade) Parent/Teacher/ LGBTQ+Ally, Job title etc...
Timothy Holman	tholman25@gmail.com	Ansonia	Ally
Wilby Martin Jr	WilbyMartinJr@yahoo.com	Ansonia	Ally
Jake Wilcox	Jakewilcox@gmail.com	Ansonia	LGBTQ gajim1213@att.net
Gai Miller-Klein		Ansonia	Ally
Ken Klein	superfly82@gmail.com	Ansonia	Ally/Parent
Jaimie Brickett	jaimiebrickett@gmail.com	Ansonia	LGBTQ
John Feckler	jfeckler@gmail.com	Ansonia	LGBTQ
Stefanie Romo- Rejada	smwalsh84@gmail.com	Ansonia	Ally
Tausha France	—	Ansonia	Ally
Frances Tichey	francesstichey@yahoo.com	Ansonia	Ally



As an ANSONIA resident, my signature supports PROUD Academy to become the 1st charter school for LGBTQ+ youth & their allies in Ansonia. PROUD Academy will be the first school of its kind in the Naugatuck Valley, in Connecticut, and New England.

NAME	Email	Town/City	Student (grade) Parent/Teacher/ LGBTQ+/Ally, Job title etc...
Lynn Ann Schwarzenberg	riverpoet@comcast.net	Ansonia	Parent /self
Tommie Howell	tommiejh@comcast.net	Ansonia	Ally
John Feddern	john.feddern@gmail.com	Ansonia	Parent / self Registrar of Voter
Joe Cassetti	Joe.Unico2@yahoo.com	Ansonia	Ally
Lene Iovino	475-228-8887	Ansonia	Ally
Ciera Canness	CieraJCR8@yahoo.com	Ansonia	PARENT Ansonia
Arleen Pagan	shopsnstores@gmail.com		Grandparent
Nichole Ferraro	nicholeferraro0@gmail.com	Ansonia	Parent
Rebecca Adamo	Rn.Q611@yahoo.com	Ansonia	PARENT
Amy Dickison	amydaimie2006@yahoo.com	Ansonia	Ally



As an ANSONIA resident, my signature supports PROUD Academy to become the 1st charter school for LGBTQ+ youth & their allies in Ansonia. PROUD Academy will be the first school of its kind in the Naugatuck Valley, in Connecticut, and New England.

NAME	Email	Town/City	Student (grade) Parent/Teacher/ LGBTQ+Ally, Job title etc...
Steven Bosworth	stevenb2015@gmail.com	Ansonia, CT	LGBTQ PCT
Michael Litke	MikeLitke571@gmail.com	Ansonia, CT	LGBTQ
Sherry Litke	Sherrylitke@gmail.com	Ansonia, CT	LGBTQ Supported
Stephanie Ocasio-Cortez	s.occasio088@gmail.com	Ansonia, CT	LGBTQ+ Board of Ed
Lisa Arnold	lisaarnold90@yahoo.com	Ansonia, CT	Alley
Keith Maynard	Keith.maynard44@yahoo.com	Ansonia, CT	Alley
Mark Crump	MarkCrump22@gmail.com	Ansonia, CT	Ally
Harold G. Bell	(75-216-5310)	Ansonia, CT	Ally
Wesley H. Hampson	203-678-1452	Ansonia, CT	Ally
Amber Flynn	amberflynn35@globalnet.ansonic.com	Ansonia, CT	Ally



As an ANSONIA resident, my signature supports PROUD Academy to become the 1st charter school for LGBTQ+ youth & their allies in Ansonia. PROUD Academy will be the first school of its kind in the Naugatuck Valley, in Connecticut, and New England.

NAME	Email	Town/City	Student (grade) Parent/Teacher/ LGBTQ+/Ally, Job title etc...
Andrew Bartowski	SupercAndrew2401 @gmail.com	Ansonia	Ally
Tiffany Carofano	Tiffersx01230 @gmail.com	Ansonia	LGBTQ+
Tinney Crystal	crishan3204 @icloud.com	Ansonia	Ally
Denise Gonzalez	Dmgonzalez1027 @gmail.com	Ansonia	Lgbtq
Dawn Lathrop	2034467497	Ansonia	Ally
Stephanie Reyes	203-513-9309	Ansonia	Lgbtq Parent
Victor Carrasquillo	203 893 3943 victor88@hotmail.com	Ansonia	Ally
Dave Rhodes	Rhodes2685@aol.com	Ansonia	Ally
Jessica Camillo Kimberly	jcamillo@gmail.com	Ansonia	Ally
McDaniel	Kimberly.m1984@gmail.com	Ansonia	Ally



As an ANSONIA resident, my signature supports PROUD Academy to become the 1st charter school for LGBTQ+ youth & their allies in Ansonia. PROUD Academy will be the first school of its kind in the Naugatuck Valley, in Connecticut, and New England.

NAME	Email	Town/City	Student (grade) Parent/Teacher/ LGBTQ+/Ally, Job title etc...
Karen Hemenway	203-308-2813 karen.hemenway@gmail.com	Ansonia	Ally
Kim Ginez	kimginez3@gmail.com	Ansonia	Parent of LGBTQ
Ten Pawlak	Jen@outlook.com	ANS Ansonia	Ally
Greg Karas	greg.karas@sbcglobal.net		Ally
Valencia Turpin	646-474-9966	Ansonia	Parent
Janazria Cooks	475-263-8348 Nazy.Cooks2003@gmail.com	Ansonia	
April Johnson	april15johnson@gmail.com	Ansonia	Ally
Donna Vane	donnajr10@comcast.net	Ansonia	Ally
Candace Lewis	Candiw414@gmail.com	Ansonia	Ally
Jen Trotto	jennifer0405@aol.com	Ansonia	Ally



As an ANSONIA resident, my signature supports PROUD Academy to become the 1st charter school for LGBTQ+ youth & their allies in Ansonia. PROUD Academy will be the first school of its kind in the Naugatuck Valley, in Connecticut, and New England.

NAME	Email	Town/City	Student (grade) Parent/Teacher/ LGBTQ+/Ally, Job title etc...
Amy Barger Elena	jennifer021405@aol.com	Ansonia	Ally
Tamaya Heitz	ethertz@sbcglobal.net	Ansonia	Registered Nurse (UConn College Health)
Kathy Gerwien	Kathy.Gewien@GE.com	Ansonia	Ally
Madison Diley	madic519@outlook.com	Ansonia	LGBTQ+
Jill Breeden Iannucci	jillbreeden@comcast.net	Ansonia	Ally Hairdresser
Mary Malloy	baysmom106@yahoo	Ansonia	LGBTQ
Randi Pereiras	Mirandapereiras17@gmail.com	Ansonia	LGBTQ
Amy EPPS	(203)717-8835	Ansonia	LGBTQ
Patricia Lanzieri	plml132@aol.com	Ansonia	Elementary School teacher
Kathryn King	Kathryn_King1@yahoo.com	Ansonia	Ally



By signing this petition—I am showing my support for PROUD Academy to become the first charter school for our LGBTQ+ youth and their allies in the Naugatuck Valley—Ansonia (First in CT/New England)

Rock The Valley - Aug. 24, 2024

NAME	Email	Town/City	Affiliation:
			Student (grade) Parent/Teacher/ LGBTQ+/Ally etc

Val Lott	val1241@gmail.com	Woodbridge	N/A
Brad Lott	brad.lott@optonline.net	Woodbridge	N/A
Panel Sifron	santamon.danielle@gmail.com	Derby	A/A
Alicia Andra	alicia.moscariello@yahoo.com	Shelton	
Steve Collicelli	scollirelli@gmail.com	Ansonia	N/A
Lilly McKenzie	lilliandmckenzie@gmail	Easton	LGBTQ
Melissa Barnes	MBARNES2686@yahoo.com	Naugatuck	Ally
Angel Macalid	arc0123@asnet.net	Derby	Friend
Allisa Miller	Allisa.Miller@mail.com	North Creek NY	Lesbian
Charli Klein	charli11423@gmail.com	New Britain	Queer
Skyler Grala	skylergrala@gmail.com	New Britain	Queer
Alex Majorino	majorini.mackenzie@mail.com	Seymour	trans & gay
Mariam Harbal	mariamharbal@gmail.com	Seymour	
Michael H. Harbal	" " "	Seymour	
Shawn Craver	craversp@gmail.com	Vernon	Pan



By signing this petition—I am showing my support for PROUD Academy to become the first charter school for our LGBTQ+ youth and their allies in the Naugatuck Valley—Ansonia (First in CT/New England)

NAME	Email	Town/City	Affiliation:
			Student (grade) Parent/Teacher/ LGBTQ+/Ally etc

Denise Bailey Rubyredpieceofme  
Oxford  
Wilkes [caulk6@skyglobal.net](mailto:caulk6@skyglobal.net) Derby LGBTQ+  
Vernon Lin [VCUSAND623@gmail.com](mailto:VCUSAND623@gmail.com) Milford Teacher  
Darren Middlebrook [Dmiddlebrook9@gmail.com](mailto:Dmiddlebrook9@gmail.com) Milford Teacher  
LGBTQ+  
Spencer Lange [Zeninja33@gmail.com](mailto:Zeninja33@gmail.com) Beacon Falls LGBTQ+  
Paul Fredericks [paul@paulfrasick.com](mailto:paul@paulfrasick.com) Seymour Teacher  
Shannon Denihan [sstar1974@yahoo.com](mailto:sstar1974@yahoo.com) Naugatuck Teacher  
Julia DeMatti [dermattieJulia@gmail.com](mailto:dermattieJulia@gmail.com) Seymour Ally  
Aimee Swain [sweetain@gmail.com](mailto:sweetain@gmail.com) Seymour Ally  
Analisa Carloni [analiscarloni@gmail.com](mailto:analiscarloni@gmail.com) Derby LGBTQ+  
Samya Quinones [SamyaQuinones2@gmail.com](mailto:SamyaQuinones2@gmail.com) Derby  
Naugatuck LGBTQ+  
Anastacia Bartimole [anastacia.bartimole@gmail.com](mailto:anastacia.bartimole@gmail.com) Stratford Ally  
Kate Feeley [Kate8720@gmail.com](mailto:Kate8720@gmail.com) Stratford LGBTQ+  
Allison Feeley [AllisonBassett@gmail.com](mailto:AllisonBassett@gmail.com) Stratford LGBTQ+  
Renee Adams [ray8546@gmail.com](mailto:ray8546@gmail.com) Shelton Ally



By signing this petition—I agree that PROUD Academy should become a charter school for our LGBTQ+ youth and their allies (all welcome) in CT.

NAME	Email	Town/City	Student/Parent of LGBTQ+/ally/ teacher/etc..
David Bedell	dbedellgreen@hotmail.com	Wallingford	teacher
Peter Little	beneguest@aol.com	Bloomfield	
Brian Donahue	BDJ	Rocky Hill	
Brandon Arroyo	Branddo.arroyo@gmail.com	Meriden	LGBTQ+
Wayne Winston	waynewinston@gmail.com		
Marian Cordero	MarianCordero@gmail.com		Her/him
Zahir	860-870-6102		teacher
Ber Hyland	919 523 3870	wallingford	ally
Suzan Huizenga	adellehoustan@gmail.com	wallingford	justice volunteer community member
Kenya Williams	1centwill3@yahoo.com	Derby	<del>ally</del> LGBTQ
Angela King	MCF0900@gmail.com	Sheboygan	ally/teacher
Allison Gamble	Alliegodd@gmail.com	Seymour	Ally
Joshua Dowdy	Downey26@comcast.net	New Haven	ally
Bob Brereton	GO1TJRBr3y14.66MASL.MILF030		LGBTQ+
Shelly Smith	Dancinstars7@aol.com	Seymour	N/A



By signing this petition—I am showing my support for PROUD Academy to become the first charter school for our LGBTQ+ youth and their allies in the Naugatuck Valley—Ansonia (First in CT/New England)

NAME	Email	Town/City	Affiliation: Student (grade) Parent/Teacher/ LGBTQ+/Ally etc

Catslyn Schumacher porsch/girl12@comcast.net BFalls  
Jade Murzin jademurzin@gmail.com Seymour  
Carol Burch CarolBurch@gmail.stygt Busdriver  
Blanche Bailey blanchebailey36.bb@gmail.com Derby  
Matthew Cain (callmecain@skycrown.com New Haven  
Pam Lind pam.lind.29@gmail Beacon Falls LGBTQ  
Denise Lewis dessa905@yahoo.com Derby Ally  
Roseanne Fazzino roseanne.fazzino@yahoo.com Derby  
Kim Uzarski uzarski.lcm8@gmail.com Shelton  
Diane Wistemburg dwistemburg@SNET.NET Stratford Ally  
Joe Wistemburg dwistemburg@SNET.NET Stratford Ally  
Jess Lind J.lind0406@gmail.com Derby ALLY  
Jasden Rzaas 2412asa@gmail.com Seymour LGBTQIA+  
Morgan Rzaas 20mrgzaas@gmail.com Seymour lgbtqia+



By signing this petition—I am showing my support for PROUD Academy to become the first charter school for our LGBTQ+ youth and their allies in the Naugatuck Valley—Ansonia (First in CT/New England)

New Haven-United Church on the Green

NAME

Email

Town/City

Affiliation:  
Student (grade)  
Parent/Teacher/  
LGBTQ+/Ally etc

9/8/24

Kristina Zallinger kristinazallingerHamden@gmail.com

Claudia Furman claudia.furman@yahoo.com

Benjamin Gay ben155@att.net@gmail.com

Angelyn Singer angelyn.singer@gmail.com

Sarah Allum-Minich Sarahallumminich@gmail.com New Haven Ally

MAX M Schmidt maxim.schmidt@gmail.com Plainville LGBTQ+

Christine Mavusky mawusky@gmail.com New Haven LGBTQ+

Nicole Rowell Hansen chezniki@gmail.com West Haven Ally

Scarlett Ray 3413Tresser St Apt 2 New Haven@gmail.com New Haven Ally

Dom DeGennaro dom.degennaro.98@gmail.com New Haven

Danell R. Danellwilkerry1@gmail.com New Haven Ally

Abraam Gekker abraamgekker@gmail.com New Haven Ally

Kirke Elsass elsasskirke7@gmail.com New Haven Ally

JEAN Blue jeanandjoni7@gmail.com New Haven Ally



By signing this petition—I am showing my support for PROUD Academy to become the first charter school for our LGBTQ+ youth and their allies in the Naugatuck Valley—Ansonia (First in CT/New England)

NAME	Email	Town/City	Affiliation: Student (grade) Parent/Teacher/ LGBTQ+/Ally etc
Josephine Buchanan	geoj@sbgb.bal.net	Branford	ally
Colleen Connor	connor.colleen@yahoo.com	West Haven	ally
June Richards	june.richards@njscsm.org	Wallingford	Ally



By signing this petition—I am showing my support for PROUD Academy to become the first charter school for our LGBTQ+ youth and their allies in the Naugatuck Valley—Ansonia (First in CT/New England)

9/7/24 New Haven Pride

NAME	Email	Town/City	Affiliation: Student (grade) Parent/Teacher/ LGBTQ+/Ally etc

Samuel Giordina Sam.giordina@yahoo.com Berlin, CT LGBTQ+

Rita Natale isurrenderme@icloud.com Meriden LGBTQ

Cathleen Meaden Cathleen.meaden@yahoo.com Meriden LGBTQ

Andre Palermo AndrePalermo@gmail.com Hartford CT LGBTQ+

Gary Santiago gssssantiago@gmail.com Vernon, CT LGBTQ+

Hayley Wilhelm HayleyA.Wilhelm@gmail.com Berlin LGBTQ

Lorele Gnevre lgnevre@gmail.com Lakeville LGBTQ+

Malachy Jackson meljackson7765@gmail.com Berlin, CT LGBTQ+

AJ D'ophy AedanDophy357@gmail.com Madison LGBTQ+

Rebecca Degan rebecca@prismcounseling.ct.com Millisworth LGBTQ, parent, ally, therapist

Christa Douyard redxta@gmail.com Haddam Ally

Devin Orde devinorde@gmail.com Berlin, CT LGBTQ+

Taren Dalrose taren.dalrose@gmail.com New Haven LGBTQ+ Community Member

Emily Ent emilyent330@gmail.com New Haven Ally / Educator

Brit Fleck brit.fleck@yale.edu New Haven CT Ally



By signing this petition—I am showing my support for PROUD Academy to become the first charter school for our LGBTQ+ youth and their allies in the Naugatuck Valley—Ansonia (First in CT/New England)

NAME	Email	Town/City	Affiliation: Student (grade) Parent/Teacher/ LGBTQ+/Ally etc
------	-------	-----------	---

Cameron LaPerriere & Clarajanez <sup>12yr old</sup> Middle town Trans  
wendy DiCarlo wendy.dicarlo@<sup>yahoo.com</sup> Derby Ally  
D'Analascari dana.montanez@yahoo.com Milford ally  
Frank Redente Frederic@gnail.com N H Queer  
Isiah mitter isiah.mitter1992@gmail.com New Haven Queer  
Dolores Deyage doloresdeyage@gmail.com Naugatuck Queer  
Boyce McKinzie D.Bryce.Mckinzie@gmail.com Meriden Queer & EOC org.  
Pace Kuehn kuehnpn@gmail Handen Gay  
Alex Ward alexward@gmail.com G.Haven Gray Ally  
Jay Henderson HendersonJ4@southernct.edu <sup>New Britain</sup> Gay  
Scott HawKaw CT1HAWK01@comcast.net New Ham Parent  
Cheryl Balkom cherbear\_b@yahoo.com Bridgeport teacher  
Roger Adams roger-adams-<sup>12</sup>@comcast.net Grafton Ally  
Jeff Topper hopperj@Luchs.com Handen Ally  
George Lindsay <sup>12</sup>lindsay1@gmail.com New Haven LGBTQ +



By signing this petition—I am showing my support for PROUD Academy to become the first charter school for our LGBTQ+ youth and their allies in the Naugatuck Valley—Ansonia (First in CT/New England)

NAME	Email	Town/City	Affiliation: Student (grade) Parent/Teacher/ LGBTQ+/Ally etc
------	-------	-----------	---

Emma Lynch	emma.lynch@yale.edu	New Haven, CT	Grad student + LGBTQ+
Rie Sakai	rie.sakai@yale.edu	New Haven, CT	yale student
Gabi Wiggill	gabi.wiggill@yale.edu	New Haven	yale student
Cristian Taborda	ctaborda7@gmail.com	New Haven	Resident physician
Michael Flora	Mike@blueorchidnewhaven.net	New Haven	Restaurant owner Blue orchid
Erin McElhone	erin.mcelhone@new-haven.k12.ct.us	New Haven	teacher
John Murray	John.w.murray.3@gmail.com	New Haven	Brewery
Tahnee Cokson-Lohman	TL.Cokson7@gmail.com	Brantford	Parent
Milly LeBron	milly.lebron@gmail.com	Hamden	PARENT



By signing this document—I agree that PROUD Academy should become a charter school geared for our LGBTQ+ youth and their allies in CT.

6/29/24 Milford Pride

NAME

Email

Town/City

Student/Parent/  
Cmty Member (CM)

Rick Hriblak	rhriblak@milfordcd.org	NH Teacher	6-8
Susan Roth	SusanMeierroth@gmail.com	Milford	CM
Susan Barrieau	SBarri65@gmail.com	Milford	CM
Alex Sahn	alex.sahn.30@gmail.com	Fairfield	Teacher
Richard Pizzo	iamhe999@yahoo.com	New Haven	Teacher
Gina Reichert	greichert0419@gmail.com	Milford	Teacher
Teresa Novicki	thecoastsid@gmail.com	Milford	CM
Cathy Rice	cathyrice6@gmail.com	Milford	CM
Victoria McGinnis	vikmcg@mac.com	BRANFORD	FILM MAKER
Cerina Savino	CSAV1981@yahoo.com	Brentford	Dietitian
Cayes D Jarda	cayes.d.jarda@gmail.com		Teacher/Dean
Sofia Gonzalez	Mssofia@gmail.com	Newgate	Parent
Jose Gonzalez	jig193@yahoo.com	NAUGATUCK	PARENT
Luisa Lopez	lalalaila113@gmail.com	Ansonia	Parent
Judy L. Niclou	JLNICLARIE@comcast.net	Ansonia	CM
Terry Powers	TPW1500@aol.com	Milford	Parent



By signing this document—I agree that PROUD Academy should become a charter school geared for our LGBTQ+ youth and their allies in CT.

4/29/24 Milford Pride

NAME

Email

Town/City

Student/Parent/  
Cmty Member (CM)

Armand Zell arzak3@yahoo.com Milford retired teacher  
Dawn L Ford dawndale@gmail.com Milford CM  
Lesley Grovarelli lmgrovarelli@gmail.com Orange retired  
Ben Wyckoff bwyckoff@mtc.com Orange CM  
Allyson Segar Ally98003@aol.com Orange CM - Teacher/Coach  
JULIA D. DICK JUDIPOETTHOUSE@GMAIL.COM Stratford CM - ADVOCATE  
Colleen Hangove LoveisLoveStratford@gmail.com Stratford CM  
Debby Brown DebraDebri.CNA@gmail.com Stratford CM  
Matt Kubo-McConnell mtkubomc@gmail.com Milford Parent  
Paige Miglior executivedirector@milfordarts.org / community  
Lyn Stehman lynstehmann@gmail.com Milford CM  
Kim Gerlach Kgerlach@gmail.com Milford CM  
Bee Byer Bbeewhite@gmail.com Milford CM  
Wayne Foyne wwaynecat@yahoo.com Milford CM  
Bettina Thiel bthiel08@gmail.com Milford CM



By signing this document— I agree that PROUD Academy should become a charter school geared for our LGBTQ+ youth and their allies in CT.

6/29/24 Milford Pride

NAME

Email

Town/City

Student/Parent/  
Cmty Member (CM)

Patricia Acevedo	PA2969@att.com	Meriden	Parent
Marc Beranides	Mba25e@att.com	Ansonia	CM
Katie Di Dio	Katie.D.Diodio@att.com	Milford	CM
Christine Santoro	coachchris50@gmail.com	Milford	CM
Judy Aet 7716	JMPNJR92@aol.com	Milford	CM
Houri Sorenson	hsoren@gmail.com	Shelton	FB
Stephen Scovell	sscoves@gmail.com	Milford	CM
DONNA RADECKI	donrada@optonline.net	Milford	CM
Riley Branyan	rileybranyan@gmail.com	Trumbull	CM
Rachel Branyan	r1branyan@gmail.com	Trumbull	CM
Brian Rogers	Rogers5212@yahoo.com	Middletown	Parent
Kelsey DeCarlo	Kgumbleucc@gmail.com	Clinton	Parent
Brook Anderson	Andersonbrynn33@yahoo.com	Milford	CM
Laura Bonilla	Lezluva@gmail.com	FFD	—
Emma Trisciani	eastpony@icloud.com	West Haven	CM



By signing this document—I agree that PROUD Academy should become a charter school geared for our LGBTQ+ youth and their allies in CT.

6/29/24 Milford Pride

NAME	Email	Town/City	Student/Parent/ Cmtv Member (CM)
Sophia Tramuta	Sophystardoll@gmail.com	Milford	SM
Lin Farnum	linfarnum1@gmail.com	Milford	CM
Kara Fawr	Karadeleonardis@gmail.com	Milford	Milford Pride Coordinator
Chloe Pappas	cpappas22@gmail.com	Stratford	CM
Emme Pappas	pappasem@gmail.com	Stratford	CM
Abadnya Lambay	abadyalambay@gmail.com	New Haven	CM
Alissa Bitt	Dakota3575@att.net	Shelton	CM
Nicole Ferrai	nic.Ferr-rari@yahoo.com	New Haven	CM
Meg Tramuta	MegTramuta01@gmail.com	Milford	Parent <del>CM</del>
Joe Tramuta	joetess1@gmail.com	Milford	Parent
Lynne Nicolori	a.lynnenic@gmail.com	Milford	CM
Erin Garlock	zylasfletcher@gmail.com	Milford	CM
Kim Adamski	adamski.kimberly@gmail.com	W. Hartford	CM
Norm Lebron	norman.lebron@gmail.com	BRISTOL	CM
Sarah Bromley	Seabromley1@yahoo.com	Milford	CM Teacher
Bruce Barrett	BruceBarrettoutdoor.com	Milford	CM Parent



By signing this document—I agree that PROUD Academy should become a charter school geared for our LGBTQ+ youth and their allies in CT.

4/29/24 Milford Pride

NAME

Email

Town/City

Student/Parent/  
Cmtv Member (CM)

DENISE Paladino	PaladinoDeni@gmail.com	WEST HAVEN	Cmtv Member
lynnaezekezn	lynnaezekezn@sbcgippal.net	Shelton	
Nyja Bark	Point4status42 youwillbepie	Milford	Student
Solana Bark		Milford	Student
Roxen Bark	Blevensky42	Milford	Student
Denise Torres	Bxbaby10 wet @Gmail.com	BPT	
Jack Ayala	JacNwet @Gmail.com	BPT	
Lisa Cardella	lisa_cardella@ hotmail.com	Milford	CM
Monica Wojcik	monicawojcik12 @gmail.com	Ansonia	Student
Adrian Hug	adarahug917@ gmail.com	Derby	Grad student
Britton Sanders	Britton.sanders@ icloud.com	Woodbridge	Parent
Stan McDr Sanders	irishstan@ yahoo.com kathleenauburn@	Woodbridge	Parent
Kathleen Auburn	yahoo.com	West Haven	CM
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6/9/24 Glastonbury Pride

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Stephen Harbeck	Harbenks@gmail.com	"	
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Shenl Atkins	Shenl8bakes@gmail.com	Glastonbury	
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24 Glastonbury Pride

NAME	Email	Town/City	Student/Parent/ Cmtv Member (CM)
------	-------	-----------	-------------------------------------

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6/9/24 Glastonbury Pride

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Town/City

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HK Pride 6/9/24

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HK Pride 6/9/24

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HK Pride 6/9/24

NAME

Email

Town/City

Student/Parent/  
Cmtv Member (CM)

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Sonia + Leslie McNeill	Leslie.McNeill@yahoo.com	75-5	Parent



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Guilford Pride 5/18/24

NAME	Email	Town/City	Student/Parent/ Cmty Member (CM)
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Guilford PRIDE 5/18/24

NAME	Email	Town/City	Student/Parent/ Cmty Member (CM)
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Ari Stephens	Ariannahstephens@gmail.com	Guilford, CT	CM



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Guilford Pride 5/18/24

NAME	Email	Town/City	Student/Parent/ Cmty Member (CM)
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Anna Giulian	Anna Giulian@gmail.com	East Haven	



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Guilford Pride 5/18/24

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Guilford Pride 5/18/24

**NAME**

**Email**

**Town/City**

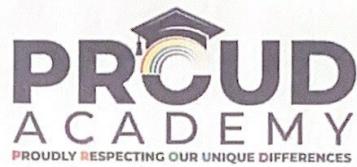
**Student/Parent/  
Cmtv Member (CM)**

SL  
Zahnii Artis zahnii.artis@gmail.com Clinton CT CM

Debra Semin debsimon220@gmail.com GUILFOOD CM

Barbara HARVEY BARKER, HARVEY LMT @ GMAIL Nicotic CM

CATHY STAPLETT cathybugdriving.com HAMDEN CM



9/28/24

Ansonia Harvest Festival

As an ANSONIA resident, my signature supports PROUD Academy to become the 1st charter school for LGBTQ+ youth & their allies in Ansonia. PROUD Academy will be the first school of its kind in the Naugatuck Valley, in Connecticut, and New England.

NAME	Email	Town/City	Student (grade) Parent/Teacher/ LGBTQ+/Ally, Job title etc...
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Candice Deum	Candice.deum@outlook.com	Ansonia	Mother
Asya M.	OSCARMONT3@HOTMAIL.COM	Ansonia	College Graduate
Elaine VITALE	Elaine.VITALE24@HOTMAIL.COM	Ansonia	LGBTQ+
LISA Toto	LISA Toto 3@Hotmail.com	Ansonia	LGBTQ+ Educator
Mariel Ordóñez	Director fsle@outlook.com	Ansonia	Ally
Yohanny Ahey	Yohanny.alvarez100@gmail.com	Ansonia	-
Althous Carter	ac1888@yahoo.com	Ansonia	Ally
Stephanie Duncan	s.duncan294@gmail.com	Ansonia	LGBTQ & Ally
Kayla Duncan	Kaylayduncan@yahoo.com	Ansonia	Ally



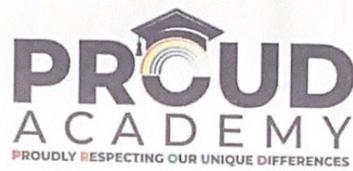
As an ANSONIA resident, my signature supports PROUD Academy to become the 1st charter school for LGBTQ+ youth & their allies in Ansonia. PROUD Academy will be the first school of its kind in the Naugatuck Valley, in Connecticut, and New England.

NAME	Email	Town/City	Student (grade) Parent/Teacher/ LGBTQ+/Ally, Job title etc...
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Michael Harke	W12kdc761@gmail.com	Ansonia	School Bus Driver
Rebecca Burns	Rburns.RB@yahoo.com	Ansonia	Parent
Patricia	P.Pinnicaw@gmail.com	Anshma	Sales
Queen Belenchia	DBELENCHIA@COMCAST.NET	Ansonia	Banker
John Gorden	8weet.t20@yahoo.com	Ansonia	—
Jessica Brown	JAEBEEONTH@gmail	Ansonia	Mrs. Pam.
DENISE Bush	—	Ansonia	Alley



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NAME	Email	Town/City	Student (grade) Parent/Teacher/ LGBTQ+Ally, Job title etc...
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Summa Gomez	Sulmagomez@gmail.com	Ansonia	Parent.
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Charles Mailard	Charlesapeck1@gmail.com	ANSONIA	LGBT+
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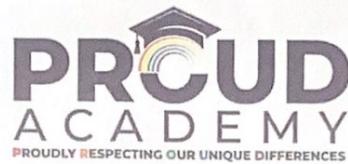
As an ANSONIA resident, my signature supports PROUD Academy to become the 1st charter school for LGBTQ+ youth & their allies in Ansonia. PROUD Academy will be the first school of its kind in the Naugatuck Valley, in Connecticut, and New England.

NAME	Email	Town/City	Student (grade) Parent/Teacher/ LGBTQ+/Ally, Job title etc...
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NAME	Email	Town/City	Student (grade) Parent/Teacher/ LGBTQ+/Ally, Job title etc...
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Denice Cvera	dcuniverse0224@gmail.com	Ansonia	Ally
Edwin Rivera	erwe87@gmail.com	Ansonia	Ally
Low Richards		Ansonia	Citizen



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NAME	Email	Town/City	Student (grade) Parent/Teacher/ LGBTQ+/Ally, Job title etc...
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NAME	Email	Town/City	Student (grade) Parent/Teacher/ LGBTQ+/Ally, Job title etc...
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Carrie Butler	CBUTLER@clark.com	Ansboro	ally
Sean Nicolari	Nicolari.sean@gmail.com	Ansboro	ally



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9/28/24 Ansonia Harvest Festival

NAME	Email	Town/City	Student/Parent/ Cmty Member (CM)
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Rich D'Galo	stevirochid05b@global.net	Derby	<del>CM</del>
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Tate Whalen	detzzyphus@gmail.com	New Haven	Ally
Brianna musbek	Baebreee27@gmail.com	Seymour	ally
Shane Lagasse	Shanelagasse37@gmail.com	Seymour	Ally
Lorna Sura	sara@gmail.com	Milford	Ally
Melissa Vanzo	Sally6166@aol.com	Bridgeport	ally



By signing this petition—I agree that PROUD Academy should become a charter school for our LGBTQ+ youth and their allies (all welcome) in CT.

NAME	Email	Town/City	Student/Parent of LGBTQ+/ally/ teacher/etc..
Gabriana Gambino	gabbygamb@gmail.com	Seymour	LGBTQ+
Krista Gambino	gambino.krista@gmail.com	Seymour	Parent of LGBTQ
Jean Saxton	Sean.sax23@gmail	Derby	Friend & Supporter
Michelle Saxton	gokatgo13@hotmail	Derby	Supporter
Cathy Konopko	Cathy.Konopko@gmail.com	Shelton	Supporter
Deb Sirowich	deb.sirowich@gmail.com	Ridgefield	Supporter
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Kiersten Sirowich	sirowichky@gmail.com	Seymour	LGBTQ+
Kaleigh Frame	k1frame@hotmail.com	Seymour	LGBTQ+
Kelly Howard	khowa8@gmail.com	New Haven	LGBTQ+ Supporter
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Nigel May	Nigel.May.11467@gmail.com	Seymour	Parent
Laurie Lukaszewski	laurie.lukaszewski.10851ukas43@gmail.com	Derby	Friend



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By signing this petition—I agree that PROUD Academy should become a charter school for our LGBTQ+ youth and their allies (all welcome) in CT.

10/5/24 Madison Pride

NAME	Email	Town/City	Student/Parent of LGBTQ+/ally/ teacher/etc..
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Jessica Herrington	Jabbers57@yahoo.com	Guilford CT	Ally
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Kelly Wh. Tamm	cat21inc3088@yahoo.com	Clinton	ally
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Connie Meredicks	conniedianem@gmail.com	Madison	Ally
Michelle Cotton	ctmikclu@hotmail.com	Guilford, CT	Ally
Jordan Knoblock	jordan.d.Knoblock@gmail.com	Middletown CT	Music Teacher!



By signing this petition—I agree that PROUD Academy should become a charter school for our LGBTQ+ youth and their allies (all welcome) in CT.

Madison Pride 10/5/24

NAME	Email	Town/City	Student/Parent of LGBTQ+ ally/ teacher/etc..
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Phil Brown	xLunaDinnerx7@gmail.com	Middlefield	LGBTQ
PAULA SALERNO		WEST HAVEN	LGBTQ
	fins & feathers @ gmail.com		
Rachel Strabley	rcstrabley@gmail.com	Madison	Parent
Elise Strabley	eliseharris05@gmail.com	Madison	LGBTQ+
GARY CERETIC	gerry.ceretic@ctb.net	Glastonbury	Classroom Teacher
Ronald P. Smith	avantgardect13@yahoo.com	Branford	GAY MALE
Alberto Terrigoo	NCAMPBELLN17C4M21.L.com	N. Branford 06471	Gay male
Cori Ouellette	cc0214@gmail.com	Branford	LGBTQ+
Julie Consoe	julie.consoe-156@gmail.com	Branford	LGB TQ+
Donna Larkin	donna.larkin70@gmail.com	Madison	Parent
John Thimm	JJThimm@aol.com	Clinton	Gay Man



By signing this petition—I agree that PROUD Academy should become a charter school for our LGBTQ+ youth and their allies (all welcome) in CT.

NAME	Email	Town/City	Student/Parent of LGBTQ+/ally/ teacher/etc..
Jonny's Jara Silva	jar.a.Silva.333@gmail.com	East Haven	LGBTQ+
Eliana Silva	silvadiana11@yahoo.com	East Haven	ally
Traeie Melillo	traeiemelillo@yahoo.com	Branford	Friend
Abby Roccaprione	ahwatrous@gmail.com	Clinton	Parent
Lindsay Luong	lindsayluong@gmail.com	Guilford	Parent
Sarah Johnston	isaiahjohnston@gmail.com	New London	ally
James Catts	bizjimt8@comcast.net	Killingworth	ally Parent
Yolanda Gokson	Yuanchi.Truce@yahoo.com	Killingworth	ally Parent
Donelle Boccelli	Risinggibson@comcast.net	North Branford	ally
Mark Harris	mwharris714@att.net	Guilford	parent
Beth Kennedy	bethkenn@yahoo.com	Clinton	Parent/ally
MATT KENNEDY	matthkenn@yahoo.com	Clinton	parent/ally
Ariel Gintron	ctpopshop.com	Wallingford	parent
John Izro	JohnIzro58@aol.com	Guilford	LGBTQ
Allison Murphy	allisonmacmurph@gmail.com	Clinton	friend



my signature supports PROUD Academy to become the 1st charter school for LGBTQ+ youth & their allies in Ansonia. PROUD Academy will be the first school of its kind in the Naugatuck Valley, in Connecticut, and New England.

NAME	Email	Town/City	Student (grade) Parent/Teacher/ LGBTQ+/Ally, Job title etc...
Barbara Ross	babsrss@hotmail.com	North Haven	Ally, LGBTQ+
Kate Williams	tailspaw@gmail.com	East Haven	Ally
Bobbi Jo Evans	bobjeff2019@att.net	East Haven	Ally
Phyllis Nola	phyllisnola@aol.com	Madison	Ally
KF D'OCAH	keiron@stol.com	Madison	Ally
Jordan Gage	jordangage1@gmail.com	Hamden	LGBTQIA
Beth Skudder	bstkud13@gmail.com	Madison	Ally + Parent
Molly Nolan	mollybnolan@gmail.com	Durham	Ally
Michael D'Alighio	Mike159ct@aol.com	Madison	LGBTQIA
ZIVA TOVAR	ziva.tenovar@gmail.com	Madison	Ally, LGBTQ+
Susan Conner	Sue.Conner62@gmail.com	Madison	LGBTQ Teacher



By signing this petition—I agree that PROUD Academy should become a charter school for our LGBTQ+ youth and their allies (all welcome) in CT.

## Madison Pride



Students under 1

As an ANSONIA resident, my signature supports PROUD Academy to become the 1st charter school for LGBTQ+ youth & their allies in Ansonia. PROUD Academy will be the first school of its kind in the Naugatuck Valley, in Connecticut, and New England.

NAME	Email	Town/City	Student (grade) Parent/Teacher/ LGBTQ+/Ally, Job title etc...
Julie-Ana Chambers	Julieanachambers717 @ icloud.com	Ansonia	12 <sup>th</sup> grade
Lilly Ullrich	leullrich07@gmail.com	Ansonia	12 <sup>th</sup>
Makayla D'Alessio	Makayla62707@ icloud.com	Ansonia	12 <sup>th</sup>
Amanda Pressley	Pressleyamanda83 @gmail.com	Ansonia	12 <sup>th</sup>



By signing this petition—I agree that PROUD Academy should become a charter school for our LGBTQ+ youth and their allies (all welcome) in CT.

10/5/24 Madison Pride

NAME	Email	Town/City	Student/Parent of LGBTQ+/ally/ teacher/etc..
Carissa Hernandez	carissa.iannone@gmail.com	Madison, CT	Ally
Doug Boyette	dboyette@aol.com	Clinton CT	Ally/Parent
Kelly Kane	KellyKanesalem@gmail.com	Madison	Ally
Sue Langer	sueL67@yahoo.com	Clinton CT	LGBTQ
Frank Tows	Paragwesu@yahoo.com	Madison	Ally
Jessica Herrington	Jabbers57@yahoo.com	Guilford CT	Ally
Rose McManus	mcmanusrose@hotmail.com	Guilford	Ally
Kelly Kraynak-Duprey	Kelly.KRAYNAK@yahoo.com	Clinton	teacher
Timmy Dwyer	tdwayer@SBGglobal.net	Clinton	Retired
Kelly Wh. Tamm	catalina.3088@yahoo.com	Clinton	ally
Jen Goodwin	jeannette.goodwin1@gmail.com	Guilford	LGBTQ+ conn. member
Christine Vogt	christine.a.vogt@gmail.com	Guilford	LGBTQ+.com
Connie Meredicks	conniedianem@gmail.com	Madison	Ally
Michelle Cotton	ctmikclu@hotmail.com	Guilford, CT	Ally
Jordan Knoblock	jordan.d.Knoblock@gmail.com	Middletown CT	Music Teacher!



By signing this petition—I agree that PROUD Academy should become a charter school for our LGBTQ+ youth and their allies (all welcome) in CT.

Madison Pride 10/5/24

NAME	Email	Town/City	Student/Parent of LGBTQ+ ally/ teacher/etc..
Hailey M	hignotidhcepla@gmail.com	Clinton, CT	
Jeff Callahan	JeffreyT.Callahan@gmail.com	Clinton	Ally
Theresa Press	terry.j.hague@gmail.com	Meriden	Genderqueer Teacher
Phil Brown	xLunaDinnerx7@gmail.com	Middlefield	LGBTQ
PAULA SALERNO		WEST HAVEN	LGBTQ
	fins & feathers @ gmail.com		
Rachel Strabley	rcstrabley@gmail.com	Madison	Parent
Elise Strabley	eliseharris05@gmail.com	Madison	LGBTQ+
GARY CERETIC	gerry.ceretic@ctb.net	Glastonbury	Classroom Teacher
Ronald P. Smith	avantgardect13@yahoo.com	Branford	GAY MALE
Alberto Terrigoo	NCAMPBELLN17C4M21.L.com	N. Branford 06471	Gay male
Cori Ouellette	cc0214@gmail.com	Branford	LGBTQ+
Julia Consoe	juli.j.consoe-156@gmail.com	Branford	LGB TQ+
Donna Larkin	donna.larkin70@gmail.com	Madison	Parent
John Thimm	JJThimm@aol.com	Clinton	Gay Man



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Jonny's Jara Silva	jar.a.Silva.333@gmail.com	East Haven	LGBTQ+
Eliana Silva	silvadiana11@yahoo.com	East Haven	ally
Traeie Melillo	traeiemelillo@yahoo.com	Branford	Friend
Abby Roccaprione	ahwatrous@gmail.com	Clinton	Parent
Lindsay Luong	lindsayluong@gmail.com	Guilford	Parent
Sarah Johnston	isaiahjohnston@gmail.com	New London	ally
James Catts	bizjimt8@comcast.net	Killingworth	ally Parent
Yolanda Gokson	Yuanchi.Truce@yahoo.com	Killingworth	ally Parent
Donelle Boccelli	Risinggibson@comcast.net	North Branford	ally
Mark Harris	mwharris714@att.net	Guilford	parent
Beth Kennedy	bethkenn@yahoo.com	Clinton	Parent/ally
MATT KENNEDY	matthkenn@yahoo.com	Clinton	parent/ally
Ariel Gintron	ctpopshop.com	Wallingford	parent
John Izzo	JohnIzzo58@aol.com	Guilford	LGBTQ
Allison Murphy	allison1macmurph@gmail.com	Clinton	friend



my signature supports PROUD Academy to become the 1st charter school for LGBTQ+ youth & their allies in Ansonia. PROUD Academy will be the first school of its kind in the Naugatuck Valley, in Connecticut, and New England.

NAME	Email	Town/City	Student (grade) Parent/Teacher/ LGBTQ+/Ally, Job title etc...
Barbara Ross	babsrss@hotmail.com	North Haven	Ally, LGBTQ+
Kate Williams	tailspaw@gmail.com	East Haven	Ally
Bobbi Jo Evans	bobjeff2019@att.net	East Haven	Ally
Phyllis Nola	phyllisnola@aol.com	Madison	Ally
KF D'OCAH	keiron@stol.com	Madison	Ally
Jordan Gage	jordangage1@gmail.com	Hamden	LGBTQIA
Beth Skudder	bstkud13@gmail.com	Madison	Ally + Parent
Molly Nolan	mollybnolan@gmail.com	Durham	Ally
Michael D'Alighio	Mike159ct@aol.com	Madison	LGBTQIA
ZIVA TOVAR	ziva.tenovar@gmail.com	Madison	Ally, LGBTQ+
Susan Conner	Sue.Conner62@gmail.com	Madison	LGBTQ Teacher



By signing this petition—I agree that PROUD Academy should become a charter school for our LGBTQ+ youth and their allies (all welcome) in CT.

## Madison Pride

## **PROUD Academy Student Survey**

N=100

Open Ended Responses (Raw Data)

### **Environment**

- Increased security
- Ensure safety and have security guards
- An accepting environment that affirms children of all gender identities and orientations.
- Welcoming spaces no matter what the students identity
- Gender neutral bathrooms
- Disability friendly
- Disability accessible
- Gender spaces and sports, minimize targeting and excluding references
- Mini clothes shop for people who want to express themselves but can't because they can't buy the clothes they want
- Tuition-free enrollment
- Ability for students to get transportation to school—free transportation

### **Supportive Staff**

- Teachers that they can talk to whenever
- Teachers should be accepting of students
- School nurse should accept and understand gender identities
- Teachers should be allies or part of the LGBTQ+ community
- Teachers who understand our struggles and programs built for us

Teachers who pay attention to us and can pick up on when we are being discriminated against

### **Inclusive academic learning**

- LGBTQ+ History classes
- More research on the various flags and their meanings  
Teach inclusive content that makes people feel more normal
- Classes that can help us learn a trade as college is not for everyone  
Freedom of expression
- Artistic freedom
- Plays and productions representing LGBTQ+ community
- Give trans kids a safe space to express themselves
- Freedom of expression

### **Collective Student Support and Learning**

- Transitioning lessons, LGBTQ+ sex education
- Provide comprehensive sex education
- Educate people on sexualities
- Inclusive nonbinary gender education—I didn't know what my identity was until I did research on websites at 2am
- Build leadership skills of the youth—train youth to facilitate and lead workshops
- Opportunities for students to advocate for themselves
- Hold Pride meetings
- SAGA—Sexuality and Gender Alliance groups
- Affinity spaces /groups for marginalized groups like trans and people of color
- Stop bullying, educate
- Look out for bully's and try to keep everyone happy—just don't try too hard
- Allies should be included in this school

### **Individual Student Support**

- Therapy for LGBTQ+ students
- Student support for home hardships, education accommodations
- Talk about what to do if someone judges us
- Sexual assault taken seriously
- How to come out
- Make it ok for students to change (SOGI)

### **Family Support and Learning**

- Parent support groups
- Workshops for families/parents of LGBTQ+ and workshops for allies

### **Community Education**

- Ensure that more knowledge is spread about the community and its struggles
- People should be educated about gender and sexual identity from a young age

# PROUD Academy Survey

PROUD Academy, Inc. is a nonprofit. Our goal is to open and operate a public charter school for grades 6-12. Our mission is to inclusively educate LGBTQ+ students and their allies in a safe and affirming learning community, free from bullying and harassment. We are a mosaic community in which students thrive in the truth and strength of their identities and self-expressions.

\* Indicates required question

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1. Email \*

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2. CT City/Town where you reside. If other than CT please write the state. \*

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3. My Age: \*

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4. My Grade: \*

*Mark only one oval.*

*Mark only one oval.*

- Middle School (Grade 6, 7, 8)
- High School (Grade 9, 10)
- High School (Grade 11, 12)
- College Student
- College Graduate
- Educator
- Parent/Caregiver
- Community Member
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

5. My Ethnicity: \*

*Mark only one oval.*

*Mark only one oval.*

- Hispanic or Latino
- Not Hispanic or Latino

6. My Race: \*

*Mark only one oval.*

*Mark only one oval.*

- Black or African American
- White
- Biracial
- Asian
- American Indian
- Pacific Islander
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

7. My Sex at Birth: \*

*Mark only one oval.*

*Mark only one oval.*

- Male
- Female
- Intersex
- Prefer not to answer
- Unsure

8. My Gender Identity: \*

*Mark only one oval.*

*Mark only one oval.*

Male

Female

Transgender

Nonbinary

Questioning

Unsure

Prefer Not to Answer

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

9. My Sexual Orientation: \*

*Mark only one oval.*

*Mark only one oval.*

Lesbian

Gay

Bisexual

Pansexual

Heterosexual

Asexual

Unsure

Prefer Not to Answer

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

10. Do you see a need for PROUD Academy? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

*Mark only one oval.*

Absolutely YES

Yes

Absolutely NOT

No

Undecided

11. If you are a student, would you consider attending PROUD Academy? Why? If you are a parent/caregiver, would you consider enrolling your child in PROUD Academy? Why? \*

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12. Transportation is only provided for families within the district in \* which we will be located. Although we plan to be creative and find a solution for this, we need to know if transportation was not available, what is the maximum distance you would be able or willing to travel to and from each day?

*Mark only one oval.*

*Mark only one oval.*

- 5 miles
- 10 miles
- 15 miles
- 20-25 miles
- I would not be able to attend if transportation is not provided.
- I would be willing to travel any distance to attend PROUD Academy.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

13. Select the top 5 priorities you feel would be most important for PROUD Academy to meet students' needs and be successful. \*

*Check your top 5.*

*Check all that apply.*

- A racially diverse staff who are LGBTQ+ allies
- Parent/Caregiver Support/Training
- Gender neutral bathrooms
- Mental Health support in the school
- Inclusive curriculum on race and LGBTQ+ history
- Allies should be encouraged and welcome to attend
- How to handle being bullied or harassed
- Readily accessible gender clothes available for those who wish to change and can't at home
- A rigorous curriculum that challenges students academically, socially, and emotionally
- Transportation to and from school
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

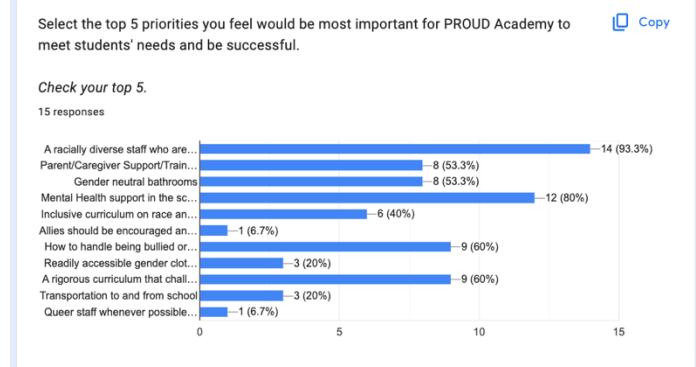
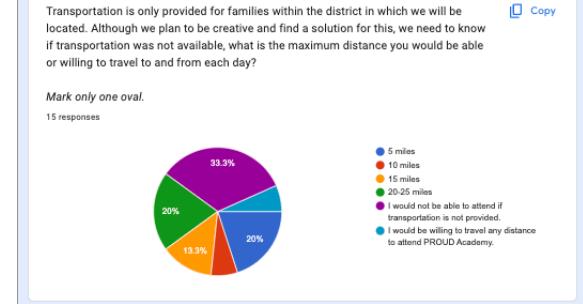
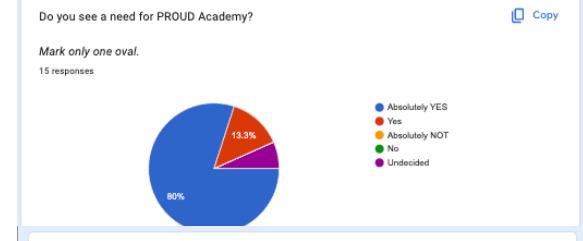
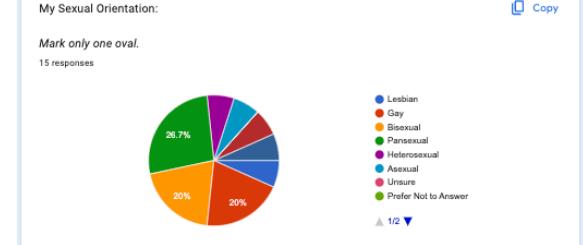
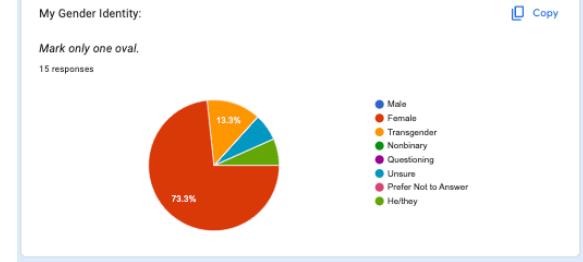
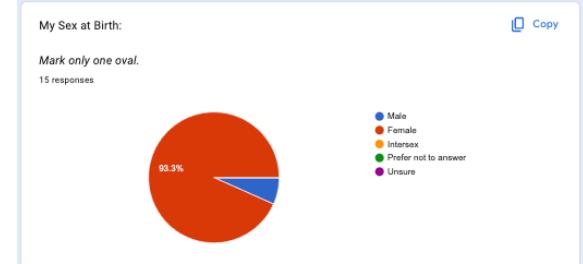
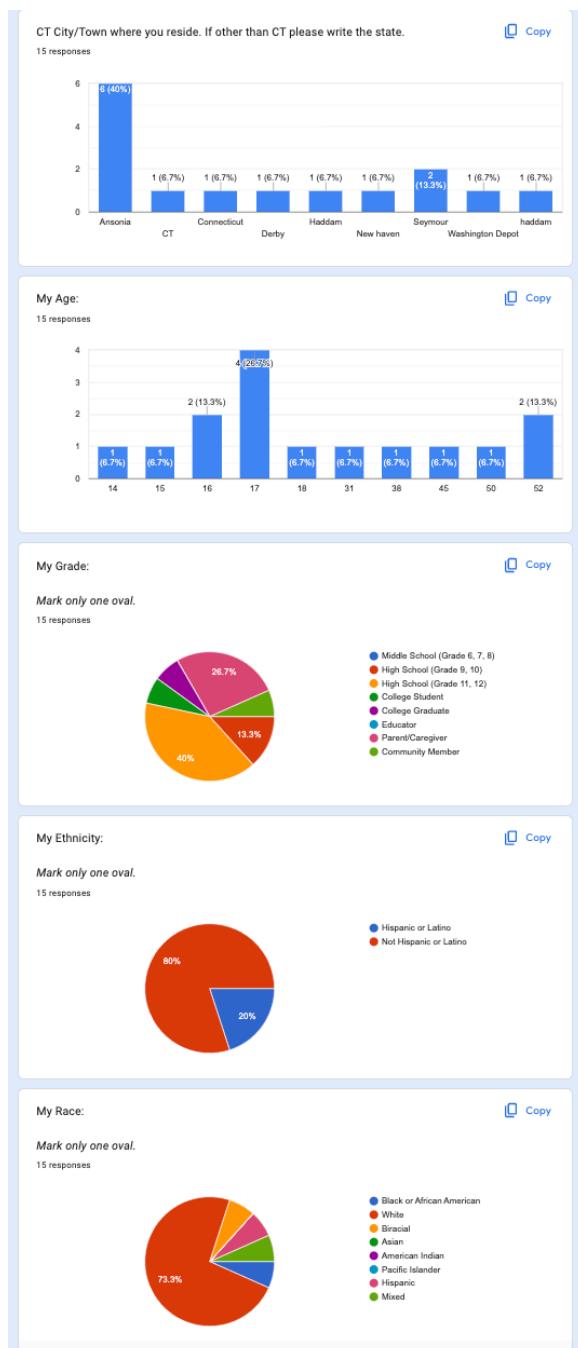
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Google Forms

# PROUD Academy Community Survey Responses

N=15 (survey remains open)



**Appendix D4: Letters of Support List (n=34)**

Name	Title	Organization
David Cassetti	Mayor	City of Ansonia; Candidate for State Representative
Bill Purcell	President/CEO	Greater Valley Chamber of Commerce
Sharon L Closius	President/CEO	Valley Community Foundation
Shaye Roscoe	CEO	Boys & Girls Clubs of Lower Naugatuck Valley
David Morgan	President/CEO	TEAM, Derby
Richard DiCarlo	President	Valley Arts Council (Ansonia, Derby, Beacon Falls, Shelton, Naugatuck, Seymour, Oxford)
Jodi Hill-Lilly	Commissioner	Department of Children & Families
Will Ginsberg	Exec Director	Community Foundation of Greater New Haven
Roland Harmon	Exec Director	Governor's Prevention Partnership
John Pica-Sneeden	Exec Director	Gay/Lesbian Chamber of Commerce
Josiah Brown	Exec Director	CASA/New Haven
Alice Forrester	Exec Director	Clifford Beers/New Haven/West Haven
Pattie McKnight	Exec Director	Health Care Advocates International/Stratford
David Grant	Exec Director	The Health Collective
Robin McHaelen	Former Exec Director	True Colors, Largest LGBTQ Youth Conference in World
Kevin Jennings	CEO	Lambda Legal-National Founder GLSEN
Celeste Lecesne	Co-Founder	Trevor Project/Future Perfect Project - national
Rebecca Degnan	Teacher/ therapist	Prism Counseling & Support, LLC Haddam-Killingworth
Luchina Fisher	Founder/Producer	Little Light Productions
Bill Finch	Former Mayor	Bridgeport
Dr Stephen Ray Jr.*	Senior Pastor	Yale Divinity School; United Church on the Green
Rev. Richard Allen	Minister Emeritus	The Congregational Church, South Glastonbury
Jennifer Snow	Instructional Librarian	Yale University Library
Dr Quan Tran	Senior Lecturer	Yale University
Dan Woog	Writer/ Educator/ Founder	Staples HS/Westport Outspoken Author 18 books
David Weinreb	Educator/ Founder	Elm City Montessori/ New Haven LGBTQ+ Youth Task Force
Joji Florence	Co-Founder/ Head of School	Miss Major Middle (lgbtq proposed school) Brooklyn, NY
Robert Rader*	Retired Exec Director	CABE-CT Assoc. of Boards of Education
Sarah Bromley	Educator/Activist	Parent of lgbtq+ youth, Milford
Maria Kokiasmenos*	Parent	Parent of lgbtq+ youth, Glastonbury
Rebecca Gurecki	Parent	Parent of lgbtq+ youth, Oxford
Crystal Kyttle	Parent	Parent of lgbtq+ youth, Ansonia
Amy Constanzo	Parent	Parent of lgbtq+ youth, Newington
Anonymous	Parent	Parent of lgbtq+ youth, Farmington

\* Current PROUD Board of Directors member



David S. Cassetti  
*Mayor*

# City of Ansonia

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
CITY HALL  
253 Main Street  
Ansonia, Connecticut 06401

Office: (203) 736-5900  
Fax: (203) 734-3853  
Email: [dcassetti@ansoniact.org](mailto:dcassetti@ansoniact.org)

July 9, 2024

CT State Department of Education  
Commissioner of Education  
Ms. Charlene Russell-Tucker  
450 Columbus Blvd  
Hartford, CT 06103

**Subject: Endorsement of PROUD Academy as a charter school**

Dear Commissioner Russell-Tucker,

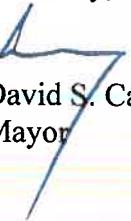
I am writing to you as the Mayor of the City of Ansonia to express my strong support for PROUD Academy. We wholeheartedly welcome the first school in CT for our LGBTQ+ students and their allies. We also feel proud to be hosting the first charter school in the Naugatuck Valley. Our parents and students deserve a choice.

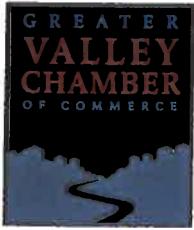
On a personal level, I can relate to parents with transgender children. I too, have a transgender daughter. My daughter went through the Ansonia Public Schools and would have benefited tremendously from the opportunity to attend PROUD Academy.

We have been very supportive of PROUD Academy, Inc. Ansonia hosted several PRIDE flag raising events and involved the founder as a guest speaker. We provided a space at the city hall for the PROUD Board of Directors to host their annual board meeting. PROUD Academy had booths at our Harvest Festival and Rock the Valley events. We are a small town with big pride. We embrace all our people regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, ability, and socioeconomic status. We need PROUD Academy to be a charter school.

As the Mayor of Ansonia, my door will always be open for conversations about PROUD Academy as we enthusiastically welcome families from surrounding communities.

Sincerely,

  
David S. Cassetti  
*Mayor*



Serving the communities of:  
Ansonia  
Beacon Falls  
Derby  
Oxford  
Seymour  
Shelton

July 19, 2024

CT State Department of Education  
Commissioner of Education  
450 Columbus Blvd  
Hartford, CT 06103

**Subject: Support of PROUD Academy as a charter school**

Dear Commissioner Russell-Tucker,

It is with great pleasure that I am writing to express my strong support for PROUD Academy as a charter school, the first charter school in this region of the State and the first of its kind in New England.

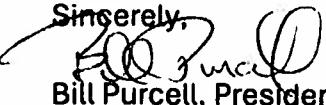
As the premiere business association serving the All-America City Naugatuck Valley communities of Ansonia, Beacon Falls, Derby, Seymour, Shelton, and Oxford, the Chamber has a strong interest in public education.

PROUD Academy will be a safe and affirming school for LGBTQ+ youth. All students will be welcome regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, socioeconomic status, or ability. When students feel represented and allowed to be their authentic selves, they are more likely to thrive academically.

Over the years, the Chamber has developed strong partnerships with our public-school systems. I am particularly proud of the Shelton High School Business Advisory Council, which the Chamber established in 2018 to support students in Career Exploration, Job Shadowing, and Internships throughout the year.

The Chamber looks forward to establishing a similar partnership with PROUD Academy to provide its students with access to similar career exploration opportunities.

Thank you for your consideration and commitment to providing quality education options for our children.

Sincerely,  
  
Bill Purcell, President



August 28, 2024

Board of Directors

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Aleta Miner  
*Vice Chair*

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*Treasurer*

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William W. Ginsberg  
Mark D. Goumas  
Christopher H. Grizzle  
Terry H. Jones  
Bevon McLean  
Ned Miller  
Gregory J. Stamos, Esq.  
Jack Walsh

Sharon L. Closius  
*President and CEO*

Serving  
Ansonia  
Derby  
Oxford  
Seymour  
Shelton

253-A Elizabeth Street  
Derby, CT 06418  
203-751-9162  
203-751-9352 fax  
[www.valleyfoundation.org](http://www.valleyfoundation.org)

Affiliated with  
The Community Foundation  
for Greater New Haven

CT State Department of Education

Charlene Russell-Tucker  
Commissioner of Education  
450 Columbus Boulevard  
Hartford, CT 06103

RE: ENDORSEMENT OF PROUD ACADEMY AS A CHARTER SCHOOL

Dear Commissioner Russell-Tucker:

As President and CEO of the Valley Community Foundation in Derby, CT, on behalf of our Board of Directors, I am writing to express our strong support for the PROUD Academy's application to become a Charter School in the State of Connecticut. This will be the first school of its kind for our LGBTQ+ students in Connecticut and New England.

PROUD Academy will be an inclusive school for all students, regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, socioeconomic status, or ability. When students feel valued, respected, and are allowed to be their authentic selves, they are much more likely to thrive socially, emotionally, and academically.

The Valley Community Foundation supports all efforts to ensure the inclusivity of our residents and community, especially our young people, who are the future of this region. Having the PROUD Academy physically located in the Valley will serve as a shining model to the rest of the state and beyond of how important it is to provide opportunities for everyone to feel that can succeed and belong.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me with any questions you may have. Thank you for your kind and thoughtful consideration of this request, and commitment to providing high quality educational opportunities for our students.

Sincerely yours,

Sharon Closius  
President and CEO

For Good. For Ever. For the Valley.



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUB  
OF THE LOWER NAUGATUCK VALLEY**

**Officers**

John Schaible\*  
Chairman of the Board

Christopher Douglas  
President

Richard Carroll  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice President

Michael Duncan  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President

David Murcko  
Treasurer

Susan M. DeLeon\*  
Secretary

**Board of Directors**

Thomas Baklik  
Brendan Carey  
Keenan Carey  
Patrick Carey\*  
Jennifer Champagne  
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Fernanda Ferrari  
Michael P. Healey\*  
Robert Lesko  
Vincent Luzetti  
Brian Marcucio  
Ben McGorty  
David Murcko  
Matthew Olival  
Adam Pacheco  
Joseph A. Pagliaro, Jr.\*  
Jeremy Redike  
Carlo Samiento  
Frederick Serra\*  
Lisa Serra  
Dominick Thomas, Esq.\*  
Jimmy Tickey  
Linda Welch

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Calvin K. Price\*  
Kenneth E. Schaible\*  
Charles H. Sullivan\*

**Honorary**

Mayor Mark Lauretti  
Mayor Joseph DiMartino  
Mayor David Cassetti  
First Selectwoman Annmarie Drugonis  
First Selectman George Temple

\* Past President

August 29, 2024

CT State Department of Education  
Commissioner of Education  
450 Columbus Blvd.  
Hartford, CT 06103

Dear Commissioner Russell-Tucker,

I am writing to express my full support for PROUD Academy, a pioneering educational institution in Connecticut and New England. This tuition-free school of choice will provide our families with an unparalleled educational opportunity, enhancing the academic landscape in our region.

PROUD Academy embodies the values of innovation, inclusivity, and excellence, aiming to provide students with a unique learning environment that fosters growth, creativity, and community engagement.

In supporting PROUD Academy, we are committed to ensuring its success in delivering high-quality, tuition-free education to the families of the Naugatuck Valley.

Sincerely,

*Shaye Roscoe*

Shaye A. Roscoe  
Chief Executive Officer

SAR:jcl



Established in 1926 as  
the Community Building  
Association

**Lavietes Unit** One Positive Place • Shelton, CT 06484 • Phone 203-924-9329  
**Smilow Unit** 28 Howard Avenue • Ansonia, CT 06401 • Phone 203-735-1200 • Fax 203-736-8675  
**Business Office** One Positive Place • Shelton, CT 06484 • 203-924-7462 • BGC-LNV.org • BGCLNV@BGC-LNV.org



Connecticut State Department of Education  
Attention: Commissioner Charlene Russell-Tucker  
450 Columbus Blvd  
Hartford, CT 06103

July 25, 2024

Dear Commissioner Russell-Tucker,

TEAM Inc enthusiastically supports PROUD Academy as the first charter school in the Naugatuck Valley, as well as the first of its kind for LGBTQ+ youth and their allies in Connecticut & New England – this is a critical opportunity for Connecticut to lead the way as an exemplar in education for inclusive, high-quality learning environments that empowers all students to be their authentic selves, feel valued & respected, and to succeed in school and in life.

PROUD Academy is a researched-based approach to learning that exudes the values & guiding principles of high-quality education responsive to all students and their families from all walks of life – PROUD Academy and Connecticut can lead the way toward ensuring the achievement of educational outcomes as well as affirming all of Connecticut's learners – especially our most vulnerable learners subject to negativity, bullying, and many other layers of direct & indirect discrimination, rejection, and violence that further spirals Connecticut's kids – our leaders & workforce of Connecticut's *tomorrow* – into higher rates of depression, substance abuse, and suicide.

As the President/CEO of TEAM Inc, I witness firsthand the devastating impacts on LGBTQ+ youth & their families and their allies & communities when learning environments & experiences lack deliberate intentionality to be a safe space where all students can come to learn & grow, to embrace exactly who they are, and to reach their fullest potential. As a current & lifelong resident in Connecticut, I have dedicated my entire career in the field of Human Services & Education, including multiple Connecticut Governor & legislative appointments to Connecticut's work in Early Childhood & Elementary Education, Parent/Family Engagement & Empowerment, Human Services, and overall Community Wellbeing/Revitalization. I am a certified educator in the State of Connecticut (K-6) and carry multiple credentials in the field of Education & Human Services at the State and National level. Above all, I am a father of 3 and welcome any opportunity or resource that protects, affirms and supports my family in their journey of learning, growing, and becoming who they are.

With all the pressures that young people face today, especially those on the journey of figuring out their identity amongst a multitude of outside voices & pressures, PROUD Academy is *the needed resource* that creates a path for LGBTQ+ children towards academic and personal achievement. This is an historical opportunity for Connecticut to lead the way with educational opportunities that are authentically responsive and inclusive to all children & families seeking to thrive in their educational pursuits and pave their path toward lifelong success...AND in a world of such division, this is an historical opportunity for communities to bring people from all walks of life together in a meaningful, collaborative, and healing manner. **We can do this in Connecticut and be the exemplar for New England & our Nation to build upon as we establish the first of its kinds charter school in our State's Naugatuck Valley** uniquely designed as an inclusive, affirming space with the highest level of educational outcomes for students who identify as LGBTQ+. Thank you for your consideration and commitment to providing quality options for all of our children – please don't hesitate to contact me for any further questions and opportunities we can pursue to bring this vision to a reality in Connecticut.

Sincerely,



David Morgan – President/CEO  
(203) 751-8680

[www.teaminc.org](http://www.teaminc.org)



# The Valley Arts Council

Ansonia • Beacon Falls • Derby • Naugatuck • Oxford • Seymour • Shelton  
325 Olivia Street, Derby CT 06418

6/9/2024

**PROUD Academy**

**To whom it may concern,**

**My name is Richard DiCarlo, President of the Valley Arts Council, an organization representing representing and serving the seven municipalities that make up the Lower Naugatuck Valley Region.**

**Not only am I the Father of an LGBTQ child, I wish that the PROUD Academy existed when my child was a student. My organization represents a sizable portion of the LGBTQ community, as part of our artist membership demographic. I am writing to express our whole hearted support for the PROUD Academy as a charter school.**

**The Valley Arts Council is a non discriminatory organization, all are welcome. Members of the LGBTQ community make up our families, friends and relatives and are a vital part of what makes the Valley a great place to live and conduct business. Having a designated charter school would be a great asset to all.**

**A chartered PROUD Academy would provide a much needed service to not only the students and their families, but to the community as a whole, providing a safe, supportive atmosphere for our LGBTQ children.**

**Thank You  
Richard Di Carlo  
President, Valley Arts Council**



Jodi Hill-Lily  
Commissioner

## DEPARTMENT of CHILDREN and FAMILIES

*Making a Difference for Children, Families and Communities*



Ned Lamont  
Governor

Date: September 20, 2024

Commissioner Charlene M. Russell-Tucker  
Connecticut State Department of Education  
450 Columbus Boulevard  
Hartford, CT 06103

Re: Support of PROUD Academy as a charter school

Dear Commissioner Russell-Tucker:

The Connecticut Department of Children and Families (DCF) supports PROUD Academy as a charter school. It will be the first of its kind for LGBTQ+ youth and their allies in Connecticut and New England.

PROUD Academy will be an inclusive school for all students regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity / expression, socioeconomic status, or ability. When students feel valued, respected, and allowed to be their authentic selves, they are much more likely to thrive socially, emotionally, and academically.

We appreciate the opportunity to offer our support.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jodi Hill-Lilly".

Jodi Hill-Lilly, MSW  
Commissioner



# The COMMUNITY Foundation for Greater New Haven

August 27, 2024

William W. Ginsberg  
*President & CEO*

**Board of Directors**  
Marcella Nunez-Smith  
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Michael Morand  
Gregory J. Pepe  
Valarie Shultz Wilson  
Heather Tookes Alexopoulos  
Emily Wang

CT State Department of Education  
Commissioner of Education  
450 Columbus Boulevard  
Hartford, CT 06103

Dear Commissioner Russell-Tucker:

On behalf of The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven (The Foundation), I write to express enthusiastic support for the PROUD Academy's charter school application to the State Department of Education (SDE).

The Foundation has a long history of supporting charter schools in our community with grant funding. We have also provided support for charter applications by serving as a fiduciary for nonprofits in formation. Our charter school support has included Amistad Academy - Achievement First, Booker T. Washington, and Common Ground High School, to name a few. The Foundation believes charter schools have a positive impact on student learning. These entities have also played an important role in promoting meaningful change in public school systems in our region.

PROUD Academy will be the first tuition-free charter school of choice in the Naugatuck Valley. As a charter school for youth who identify as LGBTQ+ and their allies, PROUD Academy will be the first of its kind in Connecticut and New England. The charter school would be the fifth such school nationally. PROUD Academy will create a safe and affirming space for all students. The charter school will offer a holistic approach to educating students by addressing the mental and physical well-being of students so that they can thrive academically.

While the PROUD Academy will address the unique needs of LGBTQ+ students, it will be an inclusive setting for all students regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, socioeconomic status, or ability. When students feel valued, respected and allowed to be their authentic selves, they are much more likely to thrive socially, emotionally, and academically. People who identify as LGBTQ+ face many challenges in their lives. Having a school such as the PROUD Academy will be a positive step for students to have a strong base of support as they aim towards their dreams.

On behalf of The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven, I am pleased to send this letter to express our strong belief in the PROUD Academy as a crucial resource for LGBTQ+ students and their allies in our region. I hope that the State Department of Education will support the PROUD Academy's application to launch this important new charter school.

Yours very truly,

William W. Ginsberg

70 Audubon Street  
New Haven, CT 06510

203-777-2386  
203-787-6584 fax  
cfgnh.org  
@cfgnh



August 7, 2024

CT State Department of Education  
Commissioner of Education  
450 Columbus Blvd  
Hartford, CT. 06103

**Subject: Endorsement of PROUD Academy as a Charter School**

Dear Commissioner Russell-Tucker,

It is with great enthusiasm that I write this letter to express my strong support for PROUD Academy as a charter school. As the Co-President of the Governor's Prevention Partnership, I am aware of the importance of developing schools like PROUD Academy which will be the first of its kind for youth who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning, intersex, and gender nonconforming youth (LGBTQ+) and their allies in Connecticut and New England.

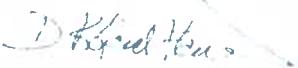
PROUD Academy will be an inclusive school for all students regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, socioeconomic status, or ability. When students feel valued, respected, and allowed to be their authentic selves, they are much more likely to thrive socially, emotionally, and academically.

Patricia Nicolari has been an advocate for quality, evidence-based services for youth in Connecticut throughout her career. She worked with The Partnership on various mentoring initiatives, including the Juvenile Justice Mentoring Initiative and projects funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. She collaborated with The Partnership to develop resources for other mentoring providers to better serve LGBTQ+ youth and continues to channel this passion into developing PROUD Academy. As the result of her work, hundreds of students in the New Haven Metropolitan area benefited from quality mentoring services.

Unfortunately, many students find school environments unwelcoming for a variety of reasons and we want to support efforts to provide equity in educational opportunities for the state. Studies show LGBTQ+ students are more likely to face bullying and harassment than their non-LGBTQ+ peers, which puts them at greater risk of school dropout and other adverse outcomes. Schools like PROUD Academy offer an inclusive space that provides students with a welcoming climate where they can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. PROUD Academy can offer the opportunity for students to be in an affirming environment and to receive peer support and mentoring from experienced faculty.

Thank you for your consideration of the PROUD Academy application to become a charter school and commitment to providing quality educational options for all our children.

Sincerely,



D. Roland Harmon, Co-President &  
Chief Program and Administrative Officer



## CONNECTICUT GAY & LESBIAN CHAMBER

Your business. Your community.

Date August 28, 2024

CT State Department of Education  
Commissioner of Education  
450 Columbus Blvd  
Hartford, CT. 06103

Subject: Endorsement of PROUD Academy as a charter school

Dear Commissioner Russell-Tucker,

I am John Pica-Sneeden, Executive Director of CT Gay and Lesbian Chamber (of Commerce). I'm writing this letter to express my support to Patricia Nicolari and PROUD Academy as a charter school. This will be the first of its kind for our LGBTQ+ youth and their allies in Connecticut and New England

PROUD Academy will be an inclusive school for all students regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, socioeconomic status, or ability. When students feel valued, respected, and allowed to be their authentic selves, they are much more likely to thrive socially, emotionally, and academically.

The CT Gay and Lesbian Chamber is a statewide chamber of commerce that supports the LGBTQ and Allied business in the community. Having Proud academy as a charter school in CT means that there will be a safe place for minority children (LGBTQ+) at an impressionable age to be educated in a safe environment. The learning process is complicated today and we need to let students feel safe and give them the opportunity to shine.

Who knows maybe some student will open their own businesses and or corporations.

As a Chamber of Commerce, I feel there will be an economic boost in families moving to CT and the increase economically to the area.

Thank you and please consider and commit to providing quality educational in a safe environment for all our children that will attend Proud academy.

Stay safe and proud<

John Pica-Sneeden  
Executive Director  
CT Gay and Lesbian Chamber



August 26, 2024

CT State Department of Education  
Commissioner of Education  
450 Columbus Blvd  
Hartford, CT 06103

RE: Endorsement of PROUD Academy as a charter school

Dear Commissioner Russell-Tucker,

Having worked in education and more recently child welfare, I write to express strong support for PROUD Academy as a charter school. This will be the first of its kind for LGBTQ+ youth and their allies in Connecticut and across New England.

PROUD Academy will be an inclusive school for all students regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, socioeconomic status, or ability. When students feel valued, respected, and allowed to be their genuine selves, they are much more likely to thrive socially, emotionally, and academically.

Connecticut Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), which works with children who have experienced abuse/neglect, sees many cases of youth who face mental health and academic challenges, including chronic absenteeism and school bullying. LGBTQ+ youth are disproportionately represented among those in foster care, as they may have difficulty finding acceptance with their families. PROUD Academy is needed as a resource for such youth and others whose own neighborhood schools may lack the kind of caring, supportive, research-informed community that PROUD Academy promises to offer students. Already, we at Connecticut CASA benefited from Patty Nicolari's *pro bono* participation in a Pride Month panel discussion, publicly available on our [YouTube channel](#), and we have been impressed by her sincere dedication to educating members of the youth population that our organization serves.

Thank you and your colleagues for your consideration and commitment to providing quality educational options for all our children.

Sincerely,

***Josiah H. Brown***

Josiah H. Brown  
Executive Director  
Connecticut Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)  
157 Church Street, 19<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New Haven, CT 06510



July 26, 2024

Connecticut State Department of Education  
Commissioner of Education  
450 Columbus Boulevard  
Hartford, CT 06103

Dear Commissioner Russell-Tucker,

I am Alice Forrester, Chief Executive Officer of Clifford Beers Community Health Partners. I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for PROUD Academy, the first charter school in Connecticut/New England for LGBTQ+ youth and their allies.

PROUD Academy will be a safe and affirming school for all students regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, socioeconomic status, or ability. When students feel valued, respected, and allowed to be there authentic selves, they are more likely to thrive academically.

Clifford Beers Community Health Partners fully supports PROUD Academy and their desire to provide a safe space for teens who identify as LGBTQ+ and their ally population. Safe and accepting spaces where positive experiences and learning can occur with no judgement and bias is critical to the health and wellness of youth. PROUD Academy is modeled after many such schools across the country and is a critical educational ideal for youth in Connecticut. Mental wellness is created through loving and accepting relationships with youth and adults. Mentoring, learning and acceptance is critical to positive youth development and PROUD Academy encapsulates those very ideals.

Thank you for your consideration and commitment to providing quality education choices for all of our children.

Sincerely,  
DocuSigned by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alice Forrester".

CFCDDBDAD521A44B...  
Alice Forrester  
Chief Executive Officer



07/29/2024

CT State Department of Education  
Commissioner of Education  
450 Columbus Blvd  
Hartford, CT 06103

Subject: Endorsement of PROUD Academy as a charter school

Dear Commissioner Russell-Tucker,

I am Pattie McKnight the Executive Director of Health Care Advocates International LLC in Stratford Connecticut. It is with great enthusiasm that I write this letter to express my strong support for PROUD Academy as a charter school. This will be the first of its kind for our LGBTQ+ youth and their allies in Connecticut and New England.

PROUD Academy will be an inclusive school for all students regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, socioeconomic status, or ability. When students feel valued, respected, and allowed to be their authentic selves, they are much more likely to thrive socially, emotionally, and academically.

If we can link arms to protect these young humans, we won't have so many adults struggling with the scars of being bullied and feeling like they can not live as their true selves.

I thank you in advance for your consideration and commitment to providing tuition-free quality schools for all of our children. It takes a village and I am inspired by working shoulder to shoulder with folks like Patty Nicolari to advocate for this community.

Pattie McKnight  
She/Her/Hers  
Executive Director  
Health Care Advocates International, Inc.  
2595 Main Street,  
Stratford CT 06615  
Tel: (203) 345-0404 ext. 109;  
Fax: (203) 9084110  
Personal cell: (203) 687-1860

"I have learned more about love, selflessness and human understanding from the people I have met in this great adventure in the world of AIDS than I ever did in the cutthroat, competitive world in which I spent my life."

- Anthony Perkins

CT State Department of Education  
Commissioner of Education  
450 Columbus Blvd.  
Hartford, CT 06103

**Subject:** Endorsement of PROUD Academy as a charter school

Dear Commissioner Russell-Tucker,

I am David Grant, Executive Director of the Health Collective. I am writing this letter to express the Health Collective's strong support for PROUD Academy as a charter school.

Originally founded as the Hartford Gay and Lesbian Health Collective in 1983, our organization was established to address the healthcare crisis faced by LGBTQIA+ individuals, particularly those living with HIV/AIDS. Our organization was a leader in many regards, filling a critical need at a time when discrimination left many without access to services. Today, we continue to serve the community with medical, dental, mental health, and support services.

PROUD Academy follows a similar path of necessity. In today's social and political climate, LGBTQIA+ youth face unprecedented challenges, from bullying and harassment to political attacks aimed at marginalizing and invalidating their identities. Schools should be safe spaces, but for many LGBTQIA+ students, they are not. PROUD Academy offers a sanctuary where these students can learn and thrive, just as our organization offers a safe space for those seeking healthcare and community.

A charter school like PROUD Academy would be more than just an educational institution; it would be essential for the well-being of students who feel unsafe and unsupported in traditional schools. National data shows that LGBTQIA+ youth face higher rates of absenteeism and mental health challenges due to bullying. PROUD Academy would help combat these statistics by providing a welcoming environment where students can focus on education without fear.

The Health Collective fully supports PROUD Academy's mission to create an affirming space for LGBTQIA+ youth. We urge you to consider the profound impact this school will have on both its students and the broader community. Connecticut can lead the nation in ensuring all students, regardless of their identity, receive the education and support they deserve.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



David A. Grant  
Executive Director  
[davidg@healthcollective.org](mailto:davidg@healthcollective.org)

7/31/24

Connecticut State Department of Education  
Commissioner of Education  
450 Columbus Boulevard  
Hartford, CT 06103

Dear Commissioner Russell-Tucker,

My name is Robin McHaelen. I was the founder and former Executive Director of True Colors until my retirement in 2020. During its tenure, True Colors was the premier organization in CT advocating for and supporting the needs of LGBTQ+ youth and their families. We provided mentoring, an annual conference (the largest in the country), social and support groups for LGBTQ+ youth and trained thousands of educators, clinicians and child welfare about the unique risk and protective factors associated with these young people.

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for PROUD Academy, the first charter school in Connecticut/New England for LGBTQ+ youth and their allies.

PROUD Academy will be a safe and affirming school for all students regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, socioeconomic status, or ability. When students feel valued, respected, and allowed to be their authentic selves, they are more likely to thrive academically.

Proud Academy is needed now more than ever. The landscape for LGBTQ+ youth and those who care about them has changed, and not for the better over the last three years. More than 600 anti-LGBTQ+ bills have been proposed in 40 states and more than 70 have passed in the last two years alone. 24 states now ban gender affirming care for transgender and non-binary youth. At least 4 states criminalize intact, loving families and providers for supporting these young people. Hate crimes have gone up.

For the fifth consecutive year, the data from the 2023 Trevor Project Survey of more than 18,000 LGBTQ+ youth underscore that anti-LGBTQ victimization contributes to the higher rates of suicide risk reported by LGBTQ young people and that most who want mental health care are unable to get it.

- 41% of LGBTQ young people seriously considered attempting suicide in the past year—with higher rates for young people who are transgender, nonbinary, and/or people of color.
- 14% of LGBTQ young people attempted suicide in the past year including nearly 1 in 5 transgender and nonbinary young people.
- 2 in 3 LGBTQ young people said that hearing about potential state or local laws banning people from discussing LGBTQ people at school made their mental health much worse.

11% of white young people attempted suicide in the past year

compared to...

<b>22%</b> of Native/ Indigenous young people	<b>18%</b> of Middle Eastern/ Northern African young people	<b>17%</b> of Multiracial young people
<b>16%</b> of Black young people	<b>15%</b> of Latinx young people	<b>10%</b> of Asian American/ Pacific Islander young people

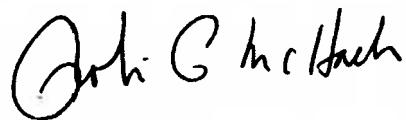
Although the risks are profound, there are significant school-based protective factors. These include the existence of a Gender and Sexuality Alliance, the willingness of teachers and support staff to use the child's affirmed name and pronouns, the existence of gender-neutral bathroom and locker room facilities – things that all schools should be doing but many are not.

Proud Academy offers the opportunity for youth of all orientations and genders to learn in a safe and affirming space that incorporates all these protective factors into the student's day-to-day lives and experiences. Of course, those students will have the best opportunity to thrive!

I would be happy to discuss my enthusiastic support for Proud Academy in greater detail if you would like. I can be reached at [McHaelen@gmail.com](mailto:McHaelen@gmail.com) or by cell at (860) 416-0068.

Thank you for your consideration and commitment to providing quality education choices for all our children.

Sincerely,



Robin P. McHaelen, MSW  
19 Autumn Street  
Manchester, CT 06040



CT State Department of Education  
Commissioner of Education  
450 Columbus Blvd  
Hartford, CT. 06103

Dear Commissioner Russell-Tucker,

I am the CEO of Lambda Legal, the oldest and largest civil rights organization in America dedicated to securing the rights of all LGBTQ+ people and everyone living with HIV. I am also a resident of Southbury, Connecticut.

It is with great enthusiasm that I write this letter to express my strong support for PROUD Academy as a charter school. This will be the first of its kind for our LGBTQ+ youth and their allies in Connecticut and in fact all of New England.

PROUD Academy will be an inclusive school for all students regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, socioeconomic status, or ability. When students feel valued, respected, and allowed to be their authentic selves, they are much more likely to thrive socially, emotionally, and academically.

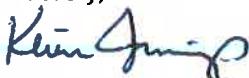
The 2021 Connecticut School Health Survey, utilizing the CDC's Youth Risk Behavior Survey tool, found enormous and alarming disparities between heterosexual and gay, lesbian and bisexual youth (unfortunately, the survey does not include data on transgender youth) on a variety of subjects, including:

- **Bullying:** LGB youth were 50% more likely to experience bullying at school (18.4 % vs. 12.2%)
- **Absenteeism:** LGB youth were nearly 50% more likely to have skipped school in the past 30 days due to safety concerns than their heterosexual peers (14.7% v. 10.3%)
- **Suicidality:** LGB youth were over twice as likely to have attempted suicide than their heterosexual peers (13.9% v. 5.9%)

As a former high school history teacher myself, I found this following fact from the CT School Health Survey the most telling: **a large majority of Connecticut's LGB youth feel sad or hopeless on a regular basis – 62.4%, in fact.** (By comparison, that number for heterosexual youth is 35.6%). The fact that the conditions in our state cause such widespread misery makes the case for a school like PROUD Academy.

Thank you for your consideration and your commitment to providing quality educational options for all our children.

Sincerely,

  
Kevin Jennings, CEO





CT State Department of Education  
Commissioner of Education  
Ms. Charlene Russell-Tucker  
450 Columbus Blvd  
Hartford, CT. 06103

Subject: Endorsement for the Establishment of PROUD Academy as a public charter school

June 28, 2024

Dear Commissioner Russell-Tucker,

I am writing to you as the co-founder of The Trevor Project to express my support of PROUD Academy. As you know, The Trevor Project is the largest suicide prevention and crisis intervention lifeline for LGBTQ+ youth. I am also the co-founder of The Future Perfect Project, an organization amplifying the voices of LGBTQ+ youth nationwide. As a dedicated advocate within the LGBTQ nonprofit sphere, I am offering my unwavering support for the establishment of Proud Academy, the new public charter school in Connecticut.

I know from experience that innovative educational models are essential to the survival of queer youth. As someone deeply embedded in the fight for equality and understanding, particularly within the LGBTQ community, I've seen the benefits when queer youth and their parents are offered the opportunity to be a part of a learning environment that is inclusive, affirming, and transformative. Too many of the youth we work with come to us looking for a safe place to develop their talents and expand their horizons because their school environments are not affirming of who they are. I've witnessed the profound impact that a school like Proud Academy can have on the life of not only the student but the entire community in which that student develops. To paraphrase a popular slogan, none of us are free until all of us are free.

With the support of the community, Proud Academy promises to be a place of freedom for ALL. By reaching into the community and offering an academically rich and 'genderful' environment that nurtures joy, inclusivity, and personal growth the school can become a beacon of what is possible. Having spent the past thirty years traveling around the country and visiting schools and LGBTQ+ Youth Centers, I've seen young people thrive when they are safe, seen and celebrated. If we want to contribute to a tomorrow worth living for, I'm convinced that we need more spaces like Proud Academy where young people are free to express themselves.

Sincerely,

Celeste Lechesne  
Artistic Director & Co-Founder of The Future Perfect Project  
Celeste@thefutureperfectproject.org



Rebecca Degnan, LPC  
Prism Counseling and Support, LLC  
176 Route 81, Unit 2D  
Killingworth, CT 06419  
860-333-8454  
[rebecca@prismcounselingct.com](mailto:rebecca@prismcounselingct.com)

9/20/2024

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing this letter to express my passionate support for PROUD Academy as one of CT's newest charter schools. I am unusually qualified to testify to the need for a school that focuses on support of LGBTQ+ students and hope that you will take my expertise, experience and clinical professionalism into account as part of your decision making process.

I am a former educator and school counselor, a licensed professional counselor and a parent of a son who is transgender. This combination allows me to uniquely see the needs for a school like PROUD Academy from a wide perspective. As a former educator, with 20 years of experience working in public schools at the middle school level, I have witnessed first-hand the difficulties our queer students face. These students are so often bullied, and are afraid to report it to teachers or administrators for a variety of reasons. It may be because they don't want to "out" themselves, or because they fear retaliation, or often because they don't trust the school faculty to have their backs. In my role as a school counselor, an alarming percentage of our queer students struggled with self injury and/or suicidal ideation. This is not because being LGBTQ+ in itself creates mental health struggles, it is because they are trying to exist in an environment where they are not seen, respected, supported or emotionally safe. As a therapist, I see the impact of being in an environment where queer kids don't feel safe, and it is significant. Kids can't focus on learning because they are too focused on their own safety and lack of connection and belonging. Most of my clients meet the DSM V criteria for anxiety, depression and/or PTSD, and for many this is in addition to gender dysphoria, which is painful enough in and of itself. Our LGBTQ+ students need a learning environment where they don't have to constantly explain and defend their own identity, but instead can focus on being a student and accessing their own education.

This is not going to happen anytime soon in the public school arena, which is why a school such as PROUD Academy is so hugely important.

As parents, my husband and I spent four long years helping my son *survive* high school. Note, I said “survive,” as that sadly was the achievable goal. There was no way he or any other queer student could thrive there. He was the first student to come out as transgender in our high school’s history, and was bullied throughout his four years. While he often did not report details for fear of retaliation, when he did, the school administration made excuses every single time for why they couldn’t do anything about it. We spent the years doing all we could to build a support system and affirming community around him outside of school. If we could have sent him to PROUD Academy, I would not have hesitated for a moment. It would have been a dream come true, and he would truly be a different (and much happier) person today. He is now at Hampshire College, a school where they embrace their very large community of queer and gender diverse students, and he is thriving for the first time. To see the difference in his entire being just for being in such a safe place warms my heart, and once again makes me regret that he couldn’t have attended a school like PROUD Academy earlier in his lifetime.

Our public school systems are failing our queer kids. Even in CT, where our laws are relatively affirming compared to other states. That problem will not be fixed anytime soon, and our LGBTQ+ students are suffering because of it. They can’t wait for the system to be fixed.

Statistics show that LGBTQ+ students who have at least one accepting adult at school have a 40% lower chance of *attempting* suicide (The Trevor Project, 2019). It stands to reason that there would be even a significantly more positive impact on these kids to be in a school where the whole school community is accepting. While I am sure that you have received applications for other great charter schools, I doubt any of them can honestly say that they are actually going to save lives. I believe, as an educator, therapist and parent, that **PROUD Academy absolutely will**. I plead with you to approve PROUD Academy as a charter school. Our LGBTQ+ kids deserve the chance to *thrive*.

Sincerely,

*Rebecca Degnan*

Rebecca Degnan, LPC

# Bill Finch



203-333-2000  
finchbpt@gmail.com

September 20, 2024

Connecticut State Department of Education  
Commissioner of Education  
450 Columbus Blvd.  
Hartford, CT 06103

Dear Commissioner Russell-Tucker,

I am writing to enthusiastically support the PROUD Academy's application to become a Charter School. This will be the first of its kind for our LGBTQ+ youth in Connecticut and New England. It will benefit the State, its students, and their families.

PROUD Academy will be an inclusive school for all students regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or ability. I believe that when students feel valued, respected and acknowledged for their authentic selves, they are much more likely to thrive in school.

As a public servant for most of my life I have served in various capacities. I have been Mayor of our State's largest City, Bridgeport, served as State Senator, and City Council Member among other volunteer positions which have all taught me about advancing opportunity for all.

Over several decades of involvement in civic life I have seen social attitudes evolve in many ways. Students today are bravely asserting themselves in ways that challenge and expand societal norms and we should evolve our institutions to support their bravery.

None of my titles are as important or as challenging as being a parent. I have been on a journey with my daughter who identifies as a member of the LGBTQ+ community and have seen the challenges of this community through her eyes. I know we can serve this community better.

I supported many charter applicants while Mayor. I know that their approval can at times be controversial. I wish that were not the case because thousands of students in my home City have been given opportunities, just like Proud Academy will offer, that they have appreciated and benefitted from. Thank you for your consideration of this application.

Sincerely,

Bill Finch

Luchina Fisher  
Founder/Producer, Little Light Productions  
10 Dick Finn Rd. New Fairfield, CT 06812  
luchinafisher@gmail.com  
<https://www.luchinafisher.com>

Oct. 12, 2024

CT State Department of Education  
Commissioner of Education  
450 Columbus Blvd.  
Hartford, CT 06103

Subject: Endorsement of PROUD Academy as a charter school

Dear Commissioner Russell-Tucker,

My name is Luchina Fisher, and I am an Emmy Award winning film director and producer from New Fairfield, CT. I also teach documentary filmmaking at Yale University, and I am a mother of three, including a child who identifies as transgender.

It is with great enthusiasm that I write this letter to express my strong support for PROUD Academy as a charter school. This will be the first of its kind for our LGBTQ+ youth and their allies in Connecticut and New England.

As the mother of a trans child, I can speak first-hand about how important that is. When my daughter came out in eighth grade, we were fortunate to be able to work with our local school administration and superintendent to make her social transition as smooth as possible. They wanted to get it right because they knew others would follow. But I know from speaking to other Connecticut parents in support groups that I attended, this is not always the case. And with families coming from states that are hostile to their children and seeking refuge in Connecticut, there is a real need for PROUD Academy.

I love that PROUD Academy will be an inclusive school for all students regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, socioeconomic status or ability. When students feel valued, respected and allowed to be their authentic selves, they are much more likely to thrive socially, emotionally and academically. My daughter is a great example. Now a junior at the University of Southern California, she is thriving as a student on the Dean's list, a model, advocate, author, board of director for The GenderCool Project, and social media coordinator for her sorority. That started with her positive school experience in middle and high school after her transition.

I can't say enough about the importance of allyship and creating spaces where everyone feels welcome to be their authentic selves. My work is at the intersection of race, gender and identity and my Emmy Award winning film *The Dads* (Netflix), which was executive produced by NBA All star Dwyane Wade, also a parent of a trans child, is about five fathers of trans kids finding connection and community through the love of their children. In the film the dads express their concern for their children's safety. Let's continue to make Connecticut a safe place for all children, regardless of how they identify.

Thank you for your consideration and commitment to providing quality educational options for all our children.

Sincerely,

*Luchina Fisher*

Luchina Fisher  
New Fairfield, CT  
luchinafisher@gmail.com



# UNITED CHURCH ON THE GREEN

AN OPEN AND AFFIRMING CONGREGATION OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

CT State Department of Education  
Commissioner of Education  
450 Columbus Blvd  
Hartford, CT 06103

Subject: Endorsement of PROUD Academy as a Charter School

Commissioner Russell-Tucker,

I am Rev. Dr. Stephen G. Ray Jr., pastor of the historic United Church on the Green in New Haven. I write to offer my unqualified support for the application of PROUD Academy to be recognized and supported as a charter school here in Connecticut. This school, which will be the first of its kind for our LGBTQ+ youth and other marginalized students is urgently needed in these times.

PROUD Academy will be an inclusive school for all students regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, socio-economic status or ability. Creating an environment in which often stigmatized students can thrive. When students feel valued, respected, and allowed to be their authentic selves, they are much more likely to be engaged and succeed academically while also flourishing socially and emotionally.

My personal commitment to this project stems from my long commitment to building a more just and equitable society. As a supporter of the role that public education plays in that work, creating affirming spaces for children often marginalized has been an important part of my social engagement. PROUD Academy offers the unique opportunity for children regardless of their families' means to gain the skills to participate successfully in our everchanging economy and be contributing members of society. And do so in an environment in which alienation and exclusion are not constant companions on their journey to adulthood. Given the current political moment in which we live, in which government and our public institutions are being weaponized against queer youth, the sort of hope that PROUD Academy will offer is vital.

Thank you for your consideration of this project and continuing commitment to providing quality educational options for all of the children of Connecticut.

Sincerely,

  
Rev. Dr. Stephen G. Ray Jr.  
Senior Minister  
United Church on the Greenin

Rev. Richard C. Allen  
Minister Emeritus  
The Congregational Church in South Glastonbury  
70 Homestead Drive  
South Glastonbury, CT 06073  
[richardclarkeallen@gmail.com](mailto:richardclarkeallen@gmail.com)  
860-558-3461  
September 10, 2024

CT State department of Education  
Commissioner of Education  
450 Columbus Blvd  
Hartford, CT 06103

**ENDORSEMENT FOR PROUD ACADEMY AS A PUBLIC CHARTER  
SCHOOL**

Dear Commissioner Russell-Tucker,

I am very glad to write this letter enthusiastically endorsing support for Proud Academy as a charter school.  
It will be the first such school in CT specifically serving our LGBTQ+ students and their allies.

In 1991, South Congregational Church became the fifth Open and Affirming Church in our state.  
Since that time, we have championed the rights of the LGBTQ community and have striven to provide a safe environment for their spiritual lives.  
A charter school will definitely provide that same, safe, environment for academic achievement!  
It has been my personal joy to watch LGBTQ children and youth thrive when their community affirmed their identities.

Thus, I urge the founding of Proud Academy in Connecticut as soon as possible.  
Count on my support moving forward.

In the greatest of hope,

Rev. Richard C. Allen

Jennifer Snow  
Instructional Librarian  
Yale University Library  
130 Pratt ST  
Glastonbury, CT 06033  
jelanzing@gmail.com  
860-414-9134

July 25, 2024

CT State Department of Education  
Commissioner of Education  
450 Columbus Blvd  
Hartford, CT 06103

Subject: Endorsement for PROUD Academy as a public charter school

Dear Commissioner Russell-Tucker,

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for the establishment of PROUD Academy as a charter school. PROUD Academy will be the first charter school in Connecticut for our LGBTQ+ students and their allies—all are welcome regardless of race, religion, socioeconomic status, or ability.

LGBTQ+ students often experience discrimination and bullying in mainstream public schools. As I have worked closely with Yale's department of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies (WGSS), I have had the opportunity to hear from many students about how they had felt unwelcome at primary and secondary educational institutions, and that it was not until they were able to leave those environments that they could truly express themselves and feel safe in an educational setting.

PROUD Academy will be more than a safe and affirming learning community. Using a holistic approach to learning and allowing students to be their authentic selves, will absolutely improve academic performance.

I wholeheartedly support the approval of PROUD Academy—we need this in our state for students to have a choice.

Thank you for your consideration and commitment to providing quality education options for our children.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Snow

Dr. Quan Tran  
Senior Lecturer  
Yale University  
35 Broadway  
New Haven, CT 06511  
quan.tran@yale.edu  
203-432-0116

July 29, 2024

CT State Department of Education  
Commissioner of Education  
450 Columbus Blvd  
Hartford, CT 06103

**Subject: Endorsement for PROUD Academy as a public charter school**

Dear Commissioner Russell-Tucker,

I write to express my enthusiastic support for the establishment of PROUD Academy as a charter school. PROUD Academy will be the first charter school in Connecticut for our LGBTQ+ students and their allies—all are welcome regardless of race, religion, socioeconomic status, or ability.

As an educator, I am keenly aware of the need to foster and create inclusive, safe, and affirming learning spaces for students who are minoritized in mainstream educational spaces, including LGBTQ+ identifying students from all backgrounds. Discrimination, bullying, stigmatization, ignorance, microaggression, and lack of appropriate resources are very real challenges that many of our LGBTQ+ youth face in mainstream public schools, which in turn negatively affect their sense of well-being and their educational opportunities.

PROUD Academy will be more than a safe and affirming learning community. Using a holistic approach to learning and allowing students to be their authentic selves, will absolutely improve academic performance.

I wholeheartedly support the approval of PROUD Academy—we need this in our state for students to have a choice.

Thank you for your consideration and commitment to providing quality education options for our children.

Sincerely,

*Quan Tran*

Dr. Quan Tran

Dan Woog  
301 Post Road East  
Westport, CT 06880  
203-984-9635  
[dwoog@optonline.net](mailto:dwoog@optonline.net)

July 13, 2024

Subject: Endorsement for PROUD Academy as a public charter school

Dear Commissioner Russell-Tucker,

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for the establishment of PROUD Academy as a charter school. PROUD Academy will be the first charter school in Connecticut for our LGBTQ+ students and their allies. All will be welcome regardless of race, religion, socioeconomic status, or ability.

I am a gay man, an educator (now retired) who worked for over 45 years with LGBTQ+ youth as a soccer coach (Staples High School), the founder of the first Gay-Straight Alliance in any Connecticut public school (also at Staples), and the founder and 23-year leader of the OutSpoken LGBTQ+ youth group at the Triangle Community Center in Norwalk.

I know first hand how important it is for young people to have a safe space, every day. I hear it every day, from them, from their parents, and their advocates. Though many Connecticut schools are, to varying degrees, welcoming and affirming, many are not. Even those that are may not work well for students who feel particularly vulnerable, fearful, or otherwise not accepted. While we wish it were not so, and hope that all children can learn in safe, secure environments, wishing and hoping will not make it so.

PROUD Academy is crucial, for a very vulnerable population. The next generation is our future, and we cannot afford to leave any one of them behind.

PROUD Academy will be more than a safe and affirming learning community. Using a holistic approach to learning and allowing students to be their authentic selves, will absolutely improve academic performance.

I wholeheartedly support the approval of PROUD Academy. We need this in our state for students to have a choice.

Thank you for your consideration and commitment to providing quality education options for our children.

Sincerely,

Dan Woog

July 12, 2024

To whom this may concern:

My name is Dave Weinreb, I am the Magnet Resource Teacher and Gender Sexuality Alliance advisor at Elm City Montessori School, a public charter school in New Haven serving students PreK-8th grade. I am also one of the founders and directors of the City of New Haven LGBTQ Youth Task Force. I have known Patty for some time and been aware of the safe educational space Proud Academy is seeking to build. I advocate for all schools to be safe spaces for LGBTQ youth, I appreciate Proud's Academy's mission of seeking to build a radically safe and affirming space for LGBTQ youth, and I am writing this letter in support of their work. Please reach out to me if you have any questions.

Thank you,  
Dave

David Weinreb, M. Ed.  
Pronouns: he/him/his ([what is this?](#))  
Magnet Resource Teacher | [Elm City Montessori](#)  
[david.weinreb@elmcitymontessori.org](mailto:david.weinreb@elmcitymontessori.org) | 914-393-7671



Joji Florence  
Head of School and Co-Founder  
Miss Major Middle Public Charter School  
Brooklyn, NY

August 7, 2024

Dear Commissioner Russell-Tucker,

Having spent the last twenty-five years in education, first as a high school and middle school math teacher, then math specialist, and then as an out and proud nonbinary and trans educator and leader, co-founder of Trans formative Schools and co-founder of Miss Major Middle School, I have seen the growing need to support our LGBTQ+ kids, families, educators, and allies. At the middle school level, students enter in 5th or 6th grade, and over the next three years experience significant changes to their minds, bodies, and social experiences. The heartbreaking reality is that LGBTQ+ students emerge from middle school four times more likely to attempt suicide than their peers. Black and brown LGBTQ+ students face even harsher disparities when it comes to mental health.

PROUD Academy will save lives and PROUD Academy will improve lives. When a child spends six to eight hours a day, five days a week, in an affirming, supportive environment, where they can walk down the halls knowing everyone is different and unique, yet bonded together by a shared understanding of humanity, compassion, growth, change, and support, this child breathes differently, this child's nervous system has a more stable baseline of calm, and this child has a greater chance of learning and of success.

As we are in the process of securing our charter in NYC for Miss Major Middle, I know in my heart and through our experiences budgeting and planning for opening, that the charter pathway is the ideal means to open up PROUD Academy. If PROUD Academy is dependent upon tuition as a private school, this inhibits the school's ability to support students who can't afford to attend. The charter approach levels the playing field and offers PROUD Academy a way to truly open its doors to all LGBTQ+ students, families, and allies, no strings attached, no qualifiers.

Please know PROUD Academy will continue to have the support of Miss Major Middle, the National LGBTQ+ Schools Alliance, and the broader LGBTQ+ and Ally community of organizations, families, teachers, and students. We are here to help make PROUD Academy a reality. PROUD Academy will succeed and I thank you so much for helping this much-needed school come into existence.

Sincerely,

Joji Florence



September 1, 2024

Dr. Charlene Russell-Tucker  
Commissioner, State Department of Education  
450 Columbus Avenue  
Hartford, Connecticut 06103

Dear Commissioner Russell-Tucker:

As you know, I retired in July 2022, after having served as the executive director of the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education since January 1996. I believe that, over the years, both in Connecticut and New York (I was at their state school boards association for 15 years), I have proven myself as a champion of public schools and the education of all of our students.

After hearing about efforts to build a school focused on the needs of LGBTQIA students and their allies, it became obvious to me that these students need support and services that might not be available in a traditional public school. I am proud that I have been enlisted in the effort to provide a public charter school for these children. This will be first school of its kind in Connecticut and New England.

In the current hostile national environment for gay and transgender students, it is necessary not only to illustrate that Connecticut welcomes all students and will provide an excellent education, free from bullying and other types of discrimination. I have been involved with the gay community in Glastonbury, helping launch its first Gay Pride group and, having a son who is transgender, I am acutely aware of the needs of our LGBTQIA youth.

Proud Academy will be an inclusive school for all students, regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, socioeconomic status or ability. We will strive to ensure that students will feel valued, respected and allowed to be their authentic selves. The State of Connecticut owes them no less.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely Yours,

Robert Rader  
Chair of the Proud Academy Board of Directors

Maria Kokiasmenos  
S. Glastonbury, CT 06073  
[Mekokiasmenos@gmail.com](mailto:Mekokiasmenos@gmail.com)

Commissioner of Education  
CT State Department of Education  
450 Columbus Blvd  
Hartford, CT 06103

Subject: Endorsement of PROUD Academy as a charter school

Dear Commissioner Russell-Tucker,

I write to you as a board member of PROUD Academy and the parent of an LGBTQ+ child. It is with great enthusiasm that I write this letter to express my strong support for PROUD Academy as a charter school. This will be the first of its kind for our LGBTQ+ youth and their allies in Connecticut and New England.

PROUD Academy will be an inclusive school for all students regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, socioeconomic status, or ability. When students feel valued, respected, and allowed to be their authentic selves, they are much more likely to thrive socially, emotionally, and academically.

As the parent of an LGBTQ+ child, I know how scary it is to send your child to a school where they do not feel physically or psychologically safe. When my husband and I first heard about PROUD on the news, I immediately reached out to see how I could help. The possibility of sending our child to a school where we knew he would be safe and be affirmed for who he is was so promising that we were willing to drive 45 minutes each way to get him there.

In my opinion, PROUD is vitally necessary because the public school districts in Connecticut are not doing enough to prevent and address the bullying faced by LGBTQ+ children. The fact that our children are being demonized by politicians has only made the situation worse, and I fear it will continue to deteriorate as this panic shows no sign of slowing down. I know many other parents of LGBTQ+ kids and, to a person, they have had the same experiences and have the same fears.

Thank you for your consideration and commitment to providing quality educational options for all our children.

Sincerely,

Maria Kokiasmenos

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**Endorsement for the establishment of PROUD Academy as a charter school****GURECKI Rebecca (CAR-US) <rebecca.gurecki@cartier.com>**

Wed, Jul 3 at 9:03 AM

To: Patricia Nicolari &lt;pnicolari@proudacademyct.org&gt;

To Whom it May Concern:

My name is Rebecca Gurecki. I am a parent of a child attending CT public schools.

I am writing to express my support for PROUD Academy and the need for inclusive and safe learning communities for our children.

In 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade my child was the subject of bullying in school by her peers, both verbally and physically. The administration of her school did nothing to prevent her continued abuse or to support us as a family. They were not equipped to deal with these situations, unwilling to learn, unable to accept diversity in their student population, and as a result they often blamed my child for the actions of others while repeatedly ignoring our requests for support and action. At the end of 8<sup>th</sup> grade, I removed her from that school so she could finish her education at home in safety. This should never have to happen.

As a result of this, there was no way I was going to put her into the public high school in the same district. We applied, and were thankfully accepted, to the Cooperative Arts and Humanities high school in New Haven. If PROUD Academy had been an option, we would have applied there as well. Our children deserve a safe space to learn and grow without abuse from peers and neglect of untrained administrators.

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Thank you,

Rebecca Gurecki

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Oxford, Connecticut

July 4, 2024

To whom it may concern:

RE: Endorsement for PROUD Academy as a Charter School

My name is Crystal Kyttle and I am a parent of a transgender teenager in Ansonia, CT.

I strongly feel PROUD Academy should be a school of choice for our LGBTQ+ youth and their allies. A safe and affirming school where students feel valued and respected and have teachers who represent them is very important for all students.

My child had many challenges being transgender in our town's schools. He was just learning his identity and, while he did have many supportive friends and an amazing supportive teacher at the time, he also did not have an inclusive, safe school. Many schools are lacking in gender affirming accommodations such as gender-neutral bathrooms or gender-neutral activities.

There is also the issue of bullying. I have experienced the nonchalant attitudes of administration ("oh it's just kids being kids.") regarding bullying in our town on a personal level with my oldest child. Learning increases when students don't have to live in fear of being bullied. Learning also increases when children feel safe and accepted. My transgender child's grades sky-rocketed when he entered a different, more affirming, school setting.

PROUD Academy would be such an asset to the CT education system because it would provide this safe, affirming setting for all students who attend. This is a critical step in the right direction for our students.

Sincerely,  
Crystal J Kyttle  
She/Her

July 22, 2024

To Whom It May Concern:

Subject: Endorsement for the establishment of PROUD Academy as a charter school

My name is Amy Costanzo. I am the parent of a 14-year-old transgender child. I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for PROUD Academy, the first school in CT for our LGBTQ+ youth and their allies.

My child came out the summer before their 6th grade. At that time, I didn't feel I could safely send him to public school, so I homeschooled him instead. If we had had an option, like Proud Academy at the time, it would have been such a different experience. To have a place that would offer complete understanding, community, and support would have been a very welcome option. Most people don't understand that the entire family needs acceptance and support, not just the student. Proud Academy would have offered that safe place for my family.

Thank you for your consideration,

Amy Costanzo  
Newington, CT  
[amycostanzoagain@gmail.com](mailto:amycostanzoagain@gmail.com)

July 3, 2024

To Whomever It Concerns:

I am writing, giving my unqualified support for PROUD Academy as both a parent and teacher.

Both my kids came out as trans/non-binary in their home districts.

Neither child had peers prepared to accept them, or school staff able to meet basic needs such as correct gendering, resulting in direct and indirect harassment. This extended to discriminatory treatment by the district themselves. Each child and their peers was subject to a hate crime. In both cases, we were not informed.

As a result, both children had attendance problems that were partly or fully caused by LGBTQIA incompetency. Neither can currently be educated in their home district, by admission of all.

The effects was so severe my youngest that we were recommended to move districts to a magnet school where the administration was known to be progressive.

Unfortunately, while the administration was progressive, peers were not prepared to accept a LGBTQIA student, and mocked my child relentlessly, ganging up on my terrified child and chanting "what is that thing"? It was caught visually on camera, but the administration refused to investigate because there were too many kids to interview.

My child internalized it, stopped speaking, and became fearful of being seen. They eventually became unable to leave the house. They have spent the last two years out of the school system to allow them to recover.

I can unequivocally say that if PROUD academy was around, and local to us, we would have opted for it immediately, and we would not have the degree of trauma and disability and anxiety that we have. This will impact my child for life.

My youngest child planned to attend PROUD last year, but unfortunately, it was not open. My kiddo's therapist continues to ask if PROUD would be an option, because it would be by far, the least restrictive setting.

My child needs peer support, teacher support, and curriculum that mirrors them. With that, they can thrive. Nowhere else is all that possible.

We've toured the therapeutic schools in our area, as the alternative to a no bullying atmosphere of peers is a small enough setting to catch and address bullying right away. Only one of 5 demonstrated basic trans competency (aka proficiency with they/them pronouns.) That school is not appropriate because it is designed for kids with developmental delays, so not an appropriate fit for my two bright children.

Not only do you need PROUD Academy, you need a network of schools through the state, where kids like mine- traumatized by school to the point of not attending, but safe in an environment of their peers- can attend.

My children are not unique. As a teacher, I assisted in guiding another child experiencing bullying to a magnet school that would be likely to be a safe space. Unfortunately, like you saw with us, it is still possible to get bullied in even the most supportive magnet schools if LGBTQIA kids are in the minority.

PROUD- and a network of schools like it- is a cost-effective way to provide equal access and the least restrictive setting for many kids, suffering from trauma as a result of the bullying the vast majority of queer kids in Connecticut are subject to.

With one in 4 high schoolers identifying as LGBTQIA, this is a substantial part of the population.

Competency with LGBTQIA matters by school staff and peers was literally the only thing my youngest kiddo needed to stay in school. Neither local or generalized magnet schools could provide that competency.

PROUD would provide that.

Sincerely,  
Name withheld for privacy

Dear Commissioner Russell-Tucker,

I am writing to you as a parent, teacher and community leader to show my support for PROUD Academy as a charter school.

My 40 plus years as an Early Childhood Educator and NAEYC member have included teaching and administration at

- Wesleyan University's Neighborhood Preschool in Middletown,
- the YWCA of Darien,
- Bright Horizons at Yale's West Campus in Orange.

I have been a staunch advocate for children, families, and for strong public schools, both locally in Milford (where I've lived for 20 years) and in Hartford where I've supported legislative advocacy with too many groups to name here.

As much as I support the need for strong public schools, I feel equally strongly that there are enough students who need substantially different things, different instructors, a different environment in order to truly thrive to warrant having PROUD Academy as a charter school option.

If you're wondering why a Preschool teacher can claim to speak to the need of older students, I have relationships with families all over the state that have endured well beyond the preschool years.

My first students have their own children now!

"My" families stick with me through the preschool years of multiple children, so I'm still in their lives when their children reach elementary, middle and high school ages.

Some of these families have children for whom a PROUD Academy would be an affirming, even life-saving option.

It is my sincere hope that PROUD Academy will be the first of its kind in CT for our LGBTQ+ youth and their allies—regardless of the race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, ability, or socioeconomic status. Our students and their families deserve this choice.

On a personal note, three of my four adult children identify as LGBTQ, as do I. I so wish PROUD Academy had been an option for them.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

I welcome any opportunity to speak with you and your colleagues as you work through the details of this important decision.

Best regards,  
Sarah Bromley

27 Norway Street  
Milford, CT 06461  
(203) 246-0706

**APPENDIX D5: Local, Regional, Statewide Outreach Activities, 2002-2024**

**Local Outreach: Ansonia, CT**

4/28/23	Ansonia High School's Statewide Pride Conference, Patty Nicolari guest speaker
6/23/23	Hillside Cafe, Patty Nicolari spoke about PROUD Academy
7/19/23	Boys & Girls Club open house for parents, students, teachers and the community (Patty Nicolari) (flyer in App D6)
8/23/23	Rock the Valley: PROUD booth, petition signatures gathered (Patty Nicolari)
10/1/23	Harvest Festival: PROUD booth, petition signatures gathered (Patty Nicolari)
11/20/23	Transgender Remembrance Day, Flag raising, Ansonia City Hall, Former Bridgeport Mayor Bill Finch and Ansonia Mayor David Cassetti talked about their transgender children
5/16/24	Meeting with Dr. Joseph DiBacco, Ansonia Superintendent of Schools
6/6/24	Ansonia Pride Flag Raising Ceremony, Speaker Jimmy Tickey, Boys & Girls Club Board of Directors
8/24/24	Rock the Valley: PROUD booth, petition signatures gathered (Patty Nicolari)
9/28/24	Harvest Festival: PROUD booth, petition signatures gathered (Patty Nicolari)
	Ansonia Senior Center: information table, petition signatures gathered (Patty Nicolari)
9/28/24	Meeting with Ansonia Superintendent of Schools Dr. Joseph DiBacco

**Local Outreach, Naugatuck Valley, CT**

7/16/24	Legislative Wrap Up 2024 at Derby City Hall with Representative Kara Rochelle, Senator George Cabrera, Representative Mary Welander, Representative Jason Rojas
	Mary Welander, Derby, Orange, Education Committee, phone call
7/15/24	Meeting with Dr. Matthew Conway, Derby Superintendent of Schools
7/9/24	Coffee with Kara event, Derby Valley Diner with Representative Kara Rochelle
7/8/24	Meeting with Representative Kara Rochelle and Senator George Cabrera at Derby Valley Diner, Patty Nicolari and Tisha Markette
6/28/24	Meeting with Fran Rabinowitz, Executive Director CAPSS-CT Association of Public School Superintendents, Bob Rader an Patty Nicolari
4/30/24	Read-A-Loud Career Day at Kingswood Elementary School, Waterbury, hosted by principal Erik Brown. Guest speakers: former New Haven Mayor Toni Harp, Dr. Verna Ruffin, Waterbury Superintendent of Schools, Gil Simmons, chief meteorologist for WTNH-TV, Carroll E Brown, West Haven Black Coalition, Patty Nicolari, founder, PROUD Academy
4/19/24	Meetings with senators/legislators
	Shelton Food Trucks—PROUD Academy booth, petition signatures collected

**PROUD Academy:** Connecticut State Department of Education, Application for a State Charter School

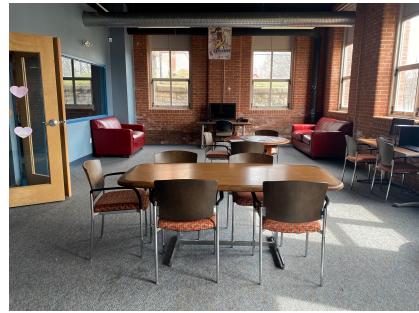
9/28/23	Greater Valley Chamber of Commerce, Trumbull Marriott, PROUD Academy booth, petition signatures collected (Patty Nicolari)
6/24/24	Distributed newsletter (see App D7)
	Songs of Solidarity, Seven Angels Theater, Waterbury, Patty Nicolari speaker

**Statewide Outreach, CT**

3/21/22	New Haven
7/2/22	Hamden: PROUD booths (Patty Nicolari)
9/21/22	New Haven, Black Wall Street
9/22	Hartford: Democratic LGBTQ+ Caucus, Tisane Restaurant, PROUD Academy received an award for the Futures category (Bob Rader and John Rose)
	New Haven, PROUD Academy advertised on 2 billboards
1/23	Southern Connecticut State University, National School Choice Week, held for PROUD Academy Parents, students, teachers, college professors, politicians, general public. Keynote speakers: Celeste Lecesne, co-founder of The Trevor Project, Joe Bertolino, former President of SCSU, Erick Russell, State Treasurer and Tarin Degnan, the first out trans student at Haddam-Killingworth High School.
2/2/23	New Haven City Hall: Black History Month, Calvin Alexander Ramsey (author of civil rights children's book, Ruth & the Green Book (Patty Nicolari)
2/28/23	West Hartford—Vigil honoring Ned Benedict
3/3/23	Yale internship recruitment event: PROUD booth (Patty Nicolari and Barbara Duncan)
3/31/23	Hartford: Transgender Visibility Day—State Capital
5/21/23	Guilford Pride: US Representative Rosa DeLauro, PROUD booth (Patty Nicolari)
6/1/23	New Haven—Career Day at Career High School for Pride Month—New Haven Mayor Justin Elicker, State Treasurer Erick Russell, Madeline Negron, New Haven Superintendent of Schools and Patty Nicolari
6/2/23	Greenwich Green (intern Samantha Ennis w/flyers)
6/3/23	Middletown—PROUD booth (Patty Nicolari)
6/10/23	Norwalk, US Senator Richard Blumenthal (Patty Nicolari)
6/10/23	Hamden—PROUD booths (Patty Nicolari)
6/16/23	Ridgefield Playhouse, speakers actor Harvey Fierstein and Chasten Buttigieg, Patty Nicolari spoke during the public session about PROUD Academy and personally to the speakers afterwards.
6/17/23	North Haven: disseminated information (Patty Nicolari)
	Westport: disseminated information (Dan Woog)
6/23	New Haven Green: Juneteenth Freedom Day

**PROUD Academy:** Connecticut State Department of Education, Application for a State Charter School

6/24/23	West Hartford: petition signatures collected (Patty Nicolari with two parent volunteers)
6/30/23	Waterbury Green (Patty Nicolari, Cathie Hillian)
7/29/23	Bridgeport Green: PROUD booth (Patty Nicolari, Michael Fiorello)
10/23	Madison Green
10/22/23	New Haven
2/29/24	Hartford, Capitol—Trans Visibility Flag Raising
3/23/24	Bridgeport, Margaret E Morton Government Center, Trans Visibility Day Flag Raising
4/27/24	Hartford—CT VOICE Honors Ceremony, Jim Obergefell speaker from federal Supreme Court decision Obergefell v Hodges (Dusty Rader)
5/6/24	New Haven Pride Center, conversations on LGBTQ+ issues with Senator Chris Murphy and State Treasurer Erick Russell (Patty Nicolari, Bob Rader, Dusty Rader and Stephen Ray)
	State Senator Ceci Maher at Mrs. London's Bakery and Cafe, Westport
6/15/24	Haddam-Killingworth HS, Celeste Lescene, cofounder of the Trevor Project, keynote speaker
6/15/24	Glastonbury Green: Meeting with State Treasurer Erick Russell, Bob Rader, Dusty Rader
6/25/24	CASA Court Appointed Special Services —Pride Month; Patty Nicolari guest speaker
6/29/24	Milford Green: Patty Nicolari guest speaker
6/24	Dominique Johnson, Norwalk, Education Committee, phone call
6/24	Toni Walker, New Haven, National Charter Schools Conference, Boston, MA National Charter Schools Conference, Boston, MA
7/18/24	Zoom meetings with Representatives Jeff Curry, Kara Rochelle and Moira Rader, Guilford, Branford, Education Committee
9/7/24	New Haven
9/17/24	New Haven
9/24	Outreach letter to all traditional public school counselors (see App D7)
10/5/24	Madison Green
	Antonio Felipe, Bridgeport, Education Committee, Bridgeport Pride



## OPEN HOUSE for PROUD Academy

Meet & Greet: PROUD parents, students, teachers, financial supporters, board members, support service providers, elected officials, PROUD partners, and community folks.

When: Wednesday- July 19, 2023 from 6:15pm -7:30pm

Location: 28 Howard Ave, Ansonia, CT (PROUD Academy at Boys & Girls Club)

As we continue to build our PROUD mosaic learning community in anticipation of our inaugural year, we are eager to embark on a journey together-one for the history books.

Please register at [info@proudacademyct.org](mailto:info@proudacademyct.org) or call/text 203-901-7447



## OUR MISSION

PROUD Academy inclusively educates LGBTQ+ students and their allies in a safe and affirming learning community, free from bullying and harassment. We are a mosaic community in which students thrive in the truth and strength of their identities and self-expressions.

## OUR VISION

PROUD students are empowered to take their rightful places in shaping a positive and accepting world.

### Thank You

We thank our donors for the generosity you have demonstrated during the GREAT Give May 1-2. Your donations will help support making our goal a reality for CT's LGBTQ+ youth and their allies to attend a safe and affirming school.



Bob Rader, Chair

## OUR PROGRESS-Happy Summer!

We are excited to share that the State Dept of Education issued a Request for Proposals in April of 2024 for new charter schools. PROUD Academy is applying to become a charter school. Applications are due November 5. We received a grant for \$150,000 to hire an educational consultant to help guide us in the application process. Additionally, the PROUD Board cannot complete this application without your support. As community members, parents, students, teachers, and legislators, we need you! Those willing to speak on behalf of the need for a PROUD Academy please reach out. In addition, we will be launching a new website and conducting a needs assessment survey on the site. Until then- Please write us a letter of support to include in our application. At PROUD we will embrace all students regardless of race, religion, SOGI, ability, or socioeconomic status.



PROUD Board members Bob Rader and John Rose attended the Democratic LGBTQ+ Caucus gathering at Tisane in Hartford co-hosted by Colin Hosten.

## WE NEED YOUR HELP!!! ASAP

**Please email a letter of support for PROUD Academy to open as a charter school to:**

[info@ProudAcademyCT.org](mailto:info@ProudAcademyCT.org)

## MEET NEW BOARD CHAIR, BOB RADER.

Bob has been a PROUD Board member for one year. He is eager to take on this new role and continue his professional journey to create safe public schools for all students, including transgender and nonbinary students. Bob's son "Dusty" is transgender and was featured in the previous newsletter. Bob is retired as the Executive Director for CABE (CT Association of Boards of Education). He earned a BS from Cornell University and J.D. from Albany Law School. The PROUD team would like to give a huge shout out and thanks to outgoing chair **Carol Santos** for her tremendous work over the past year. We wish her well in her new career as an international/national educational consultant.





Dear School Counselors,

September 2024

I would like to introduce myself. I am Robert Rader, former Executive Director of the CT Association of Boards of Education (CABE). I retired in 2022, after over 40 years serving school boards in New York and Connecticut. I have worked closely with many superintendents over the years and I am glad to be doing so again!

Presently, I am volunteering as the Chair of the Board of Directors of PROUD Academy. We are a non-profit, focused on opening and operating a high-quality public charter school for LGBTQIA+ students, their allies and other students who, their parents believe, could thrive in this new, safe, supportive and encouraging environment.

We are excited about helping these students have the opportunity to go to school with others who may face many of the challenges they do. We hope to be the first school of this type in New England and we look forward to cooperating with all Connecticut public schools.

We are aiming to open in the Naugatuck Valley—specifically Ansonia.

We are applying with the State Department of Education to open our school. As you may know, the process is rigorous and demanding of applicants. Applications are due November 5th and our hope is to open next September. Part of the application involves gathering data to demonstrate a need for this specific type of school.

I understand this is a very busy time as you prepare to open, but, we hope you would consider administering a survey, at your discretion, (through your GSA, counseling department, Human Relations Club) for students in grades 6-8, so that we can gauge interest. Names of students will be confidential as the information will be used for data collection only.

Please understand that PROUD Academy can provide a life-saving opportunity for many students. Parents from Connecticut and other states have shown strong interest in having their child(ren) attend.

Parents in your community with students who might enroll in PROUD Academy may be relieved to know that, in the near future, their child may have a tuition-free choice for education.

Best of luck for a terrific opening and school year!

Please feel free to reach out to me with questions or comments.

Sincerely yours,

**Robert Rader**

Robert Rader

Chair

PROUD Academy Board of Directors





## **Principal Job Description**

The Principal executes the academic vision and strategic direction of the school. She/he/they supports and holds leaders and teachers responsible for academic results and facilitates the evolution of all instructional practices. The Principal ensures that all students achieve at least grade level proficiency, are well prepared for high school, and subsequently, ready for college and career. The Principal serves as a thought leader and spokesperson on behalf of the school and students.

### **Assume Leadership of Academic Programs**

- Establish, maintain, and passionately communicate high academic expectations, at or above grade level proficiency standards, for all students.
- Strive to ensure that the school achieves the absolute academic goals included in the charter accountability plans and align strategy and measurable growth and outcome goals to make progress towards them.
- Create a climate of inquiry that challenges the school community to continually re-purpose itself by building on its core values and beliefs about its future and develop the necessary pathways to achieve it.
- Hold all staff members accountable for effectively enforcing all policies and expectations.
- Prepare reports, data overviews and presentations for various stakeholders (Board of Directors, authorizer)
- Hire, on-board, develop and retain highly qualified staff members.
- Contribute to the development of, and closely monitor the annual school budget, ensuring the school is well-resourced and fiscally responsible.
- Ensure the smooth daily operations of the school, which includes but is not limited to scheduling, enrollment, attendance, meals, transportation, building safety procedures and the purchase and inventory of all materials and supplies.

### **Ensure Effective Instructional Practices and Systems are Employed**

- Build cohesion, facilitate shared decision-making, and employ a distributed leadership approach with the school leadership teams.
- Leverage the strengths and facilitate the growth of all leadership team members to increase individual and collective effectiveness.
- Effectively and rigorously monitor and address the professional growth needs, challenges, and interests of all instructional leaders and teachers.
  - Monitor teacher performance and growth data at the individual, team and school levels.
  - Implementing consistent instructional professional development protocols and plans (e.g. PD calendar, walkthroughs and observations, data and student work product reviews, etc.).
  - Ensure staff developers and other leaders are closely guided and monitored in the delivery of impactful, data-driven coaching to teachers, and instructional consultants are effectively deployed.

### **Ensure PROUD Academy is Data-Driven**

- Monitor student progress against grade-level proficiency benchmarks, by any and all subgroups (e.g. class, grade, gender, race, disability, English language learner, at risk, etc.).
- Systematically use formative and summative student learning data to guide learning support and drive adjustments in instruction implementation, curriculum materials utilized, and professional development priorities.



#### **Ensure Rigorous Curriculum Programs and Materials are Utilized Effectively**

- Ensure all leaders and teachers have access to and are guided by clearly articulated scope and sequence documents for each content area, at each grade level.
- Facilitate the effective adoption of new curriculum materials, through formal trainings and ongoing supports.
- Recommend investments in Common Core aligned, high-quality, evidence-based curriculum materials and technology that adequately support and challenge all students.
- Contribute to network-wide processes to evaluate and improve the quality, rigor and accessibility of curriculum materials, as well as vertical and horizontal alignments.

#### **Ensure PROUD Academy Meets the Academic and Social Emotional Needs of All Students**

- Support leaders and teachers to establish, implement and monitor a comprehensive, data driven MTSS Response to Intervention (RtI) framework of tiered academic supports as well as tiered psychosocial and behavioral supports.
- Ensure all intervention resources and programs are meeting the needs of students.
- Ensure summer and afterschool programs meet the academic needs of the students.
- Create opportunities for academically advanced students to extend their learning.
- Monitor the assessments, service provisions and compliance requirements for all students formally identified within special populations (students with disabilities, English language learners, students who are homeless or otherwise at-risk).

#### **Establish a Strong Culture and Community**

- Establish and maintain a culture of mutual respect and excellence through dialogue and relationships with all stakeholders (students, families, school-based and network staff, community members).
- Be a visible presence and model, and communicate openly and often, with all community members.
- Ensures a safe environment for teaching and learning.
- Advance the social-emotional development, learning and practices of all students and staff members.
- Monitor student trends in behavioral challenges, incidents, discipline practices and trends.
- Collaborate with and support the Family Association.
- Contribute to the cultivation of PROUD Academy as an authentically diverse, equitable and inclusive organization.

#### **We are seeking candidates with the following experience, competencies and assets:**

##### **Competencies:**

- Solution-oriented. Maintains optimism, perseverance and patience around changes, challenges and ambiguity.
- Data-driven, ambitious and outcomes-oriented.
- Communicates clearly and persuasively.
- High degree of comfort and confidence modeling effective classroom management and instruction.
- Knowledge of best practices in adult learning.
- Ability to prioritize and manage multiple obligations and initiatives, strong attention to detail and excellent time management.
- Knowledge of change management theory and practice, team building, and group dynamics.
- Models life-long learning through professional development and individual growth activities.

**Assets:**

- Holds a deep belief that all students can learn and achieve, and all families deserve access to high-quality public schools.
- Capacity to develop strong relationships based on trust, respect, effective communication, and common goals.
- Entrepreneurial mindset with a commitment to preserving a bold, can-do culture that sustains the organization's core values.
- Collaborative decision-making style, with a proven track record of working effectively with individuals at all levels to drive decision-making and results.
- Commitment to leveraging the existing strengths and supporting the continuous evolution of our communities, students, families and staff members.
- Master's degree in an education field/administration and supervision.
- CT Teacher certification. Administrative certification preferred.
- Spanish-speaking strongly preferred.

**Experience:**

- Minimum of 5 years as an effective, impactful classroom teacher, preferably in the elementary grades.
- Minimum of 2 years leading, coaching and consulting with teachers.
- Experience planning, developing, facilitating and evaluating high-impact professional development.
- Familiarity with data housing and digital learning platforms (e.g. PowerSchool, curriculum programs).
- Strong command of all Microsoft Office and Google Suite programs.
- Track record of achieving impressive quantitative and qualitative outcomes.
- Experience in charter schools strongly preferred.



## **Classroom Teacher Job Description**

### **Plan and Deliver Rigorous and Engaging Instruction**

- Assume personal responsibility for the academic progress of all students.
- Implement a coherent, research-based curriculum, aligned to content and grade level specific scope and sequence guiding documents.
- Document all syllabi, lesson plans, assignments, rubrics and other instructional materials and methods.
- Use consistent school-wide practices and a variety of individualized methods to engage students in the classroom.
- Modify, differentiate and extend learning experiences to engage all students with disabilities, and integrate Instructional Education Plan (IEP) recommendations as appropriate.
- Modify, differentiate and extend learning experiences to engage all ELL students.
- Implement various methods to promote a student-led and student-centered classroom.

### **Comprehensively Assess Student Learning**

- Track student proficiency and progress towards achieving learning objectives with formative and summative assessment tools.
- Analyze assessment results, utilizing data to inform and adjust instruction.
- Provide ongoing and timely feedback to students on their progress towards meeting expectations and achieving goals.
- Use student data to reflect on effectiveness of lessons in order to improve instruction and personal practice.

### **Create a Safe and Responsive Learning Environment**

- Teach and encourage the development of the PROUD values.
- Develop and maintain a warm and firm learning environment that allows students to feel safe, take risks and be creative.
- Establish, model, practice and reinforce developmentally appropriate rules and behaviors using clear and consistent procedures.
- Formulate and implement behavioral management plans with individual students as needed.
- Build positive and supportive partnerships with families.
- Communicate with families frequently and effectively, to provide them with information about instructional programs and student progress (reports, conferences, etc.), maximize participation and respond to their concerns.

### **Contribute to a Collaborative and Cohesive Staff Learning Community**

- Model life-long learning through professional development and individual growth activities.
- Show evidence of utilizing constructive feedback to enhance the quality of learning experiences for students.
- Demonstrate teamwork, actively modeling cooperation and helpfulness for students.
- Engage in respectful and critical dialogue to contribute to the school's evolution.
- Maintain optimism and flexibility throughout the year.
- Encourage and support the growth of colleagues.
- Serve on school-based committees.



**We are seeking candidates with the following experience, competencies and assets:**

**Experience:**

- Minimum of 2 years experience as an effective, impactful classroom teacher.
- Familiarity with high-quality curriculum programs.
- Familiarity with data housing and digital learning platforms (e.g. PowerSchool, curriculum programs).
- Strong command of all Microsoft Office and Google drive programs.

**Competencies:**

- A high degree of comfort and confidence planning and implementing rigorous, engaging and effective instruction.
- Commitment to create and maintain a safe and responsive learning environment.
- Capacity to develop strong relationships based on trust, respect, effective communication, and common goals.
- Ability to prioritize and manage multiple obligations and initiatives, strong attention to detail and excellent time management.

**Assets:**

- Alignment to the PROUD Academy mission, vision and values.
- Bachelor's Degree required, Master's Degree in the field of education preferred.
- CT teaching certification is required:
- Spanish-speaking preferred.



## **2026-2027 Personnel Policies Handbook**

These policies contained in this Handbook are designed to assist in achieving consistent personnel practices and to best utilize the human and other resources of PROUD Academy in the achievement of its goals and objectives. These personnel practices do not constitute a contract between PROUD Academy and its employees.

The Board of Directors of PROUD Academy is the source of authority concerned with setting personnel objectives and issuing policy statements. All staff will be under the policy authority of the Board of Directors. The Principal will be responsible for the implementation of this policy statement and for the development of detailed procedures consistent with its intent and individual objectives.

While it is the role of the Board of Directors to develop and adopt these policies, it is the role of the Principal to interpret and implement them. Each employee of PROUD Academy will be provided with a copy of this personnel policy manual and oriented as to its implementation.

These personnel policies may be amended by the Board of Directors at any time, with a copy of any changes provided to all employees within 90 days. This policy statement will be reviewed at least annually by the Board of Directors. The Principal may take recommendations to the Board for changes at any time.

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## **Acknowledgment Of Receipt Of Personnel Policies**

## **Section 1 - General School Policies**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to PROUD Academy! Thank you for joining our team.

This handbook introduces PROUD Academy, and its PRIDE and PILLARS to you. The POLICIES that follow are constructed to support your development and success as a professional and valued community member of our school.

May your employment at PROUD Academy be an inspiring and rewarding experience. We look forward to working together to bring PROUD Academy to life for our students, their families and the community around us.

Sincerely,

Principal  
Chair, Board of Directors

## 1.2 MISSION/VISION/DESIGN ELEMENTS

### MISSION

PROUD Academy educates and empowers LGBTQ+<sup>1</sup> students and their peers to thrive as evolving learners and as their most authentic selves within a safe, affirming and student-centered learning community.

The acronym **PROUD** stands for **Proudly Respecting Our Unique Differences**.

### VISION

The vision of PROUD Academy is to ensure its students are academically prepared and psychosocially empowered to shape a positive and accepting world.

By creating a safe, inclusive and affirming school environment for LGBTQ+ students and their peers, we will allow students to thrive as evolving learners and as their most authentic selves. PROUD Academy will be a mosaic community in which students thrive academically in the truth and strength of their identities and expressions. We believe that through rigorous and engaging academic learning and comprehensive support, our students will become the leaders we need to shape our world.

PROUD Academy will be a nurturing and empowering educational environment where every student can thrive and where each of their complex and unique identities will be embraced. We believe that education should be an inclusive and holistic experience that prepares students to engage thoughtfully and compassionately in a diverse and ever-evolving world.

Our deep philosophical commitments to inclusivity, diversity, equity, and the holistic development of students underpin everything we will do. To create a culture of belonging, to ensure our community is safe and affirming, and to effectively serve the diverse needs of our students, PROUD Academy will be rooted in these four foundational **PILLARS**:

#### **PILLAR 1: Inclusivity**

- **Our culture** will embrace and affirm the identities of all students and reflect the beliefs that everyone belongs and all experiences and voices matter.
- **Our curriculum programs** were chosen because they are universally accessible, with options to modify, supplement and engage all learners.
- **Our instructional design** will be integrated and flexible.
- **Our leaders and teachers** will collaborate to create rigorous, supportive learning opportunities for every student.
- **Our families** will be welcomed in our building, involved in their children's learning and valued contributors to the ongoing evolution of PROUD Academy.

#### **PILLAR 2: Diversity**

- **Our culture** will celebrate the rich tapestry of cultures, histories, and perspectives within our school and our surrounding communities.
- **Our curriculum programs** will integrate diverse voices and experiences across all subjects, emphasizing and integrating those of minoritized and marginalized individuals and groups.

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<sup>1</sup> The acronym LGBTQ+ refers to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and/or gender expansive, queer and/or questioning. The plus sign (+) indicates that there are additional identity terms. The terms used to describe gender identities and sexual orientations are constantly changing and being updated to better represent people.

- **Our instructional design** will offer multiple pathways for students to engage in learning, including the arts, sciences, STEM, social studies and real-world community connections.
- **Our leaders and teachers** will weave windows, mirrors and doors through all content area learning.
- **Our families** will gain opportunities to develop relationships, trust and understanding across differences.

#### **PILLAR 3: Equity**

- **Our culture** will be grounded in restorative practices to build a positive school environment, promote conflict resolution, and support growth. Our policies will be clearly articulated and consistently applied in order to instill a sense of collective fairness and safety for all.
- **Our curriculum programs** are comprehensive tools at the heart of learning, providing students with texts, tasks and topics that affirm identity and culture, build ownership and agency and encourage critical analysis of the world.
- **Our instructional design** is data-driven, guiding teachers to address trends and individual needs, reducing risks of subjectivity and bias, and maintaining rigorous academic standards.
- **Our leaders and teachers** will help students examine and understand the complex issues of social justice and human rights.
- **Our families** will be treated with dignity and honored for their collective and unique strengths.

#### **PILLAR 4: Holistic Development**

- **Our culture** will foster an environment where students can develop resilience, self-awareness, and a deep sense of community.
- **Our curriculum programs** support academic as well as social emotional learning.
- **Our instructional practices** utilize an MTSS framework that assesses and tiers student academic and behavioral health functioning, guiding targeted supports, and will engage students in a daily advisory program that will prioritize social emotional development.
- **Our leaders and teachers** will closely coordinate with counselors, special education and ELL teachers and the Manager of Student Supports to support the academic, social, emotional, and physical well-being of students.
- **Our families** will feel embraced as partners and engaged as leaders and learners.

The four **PILLARS** of our educational philosophy ensure PROUD Academy will serve the diverse needs of individual students. Genuine **inclusivity** insists we know and engage every student in learning and value them as members of our school community. When students feel as though they belong, and their needs are recognized and met, they will achieve academically and thrive socially and emotionally. PROUD Academy views **diversity** as a collective superpower. Students who feel seen, accepted and celebrated are more likely to engage in learning with and from others. Interlacing rigorous academic expectations for all students with tailored, personalized supports and enrichments for each student - informed by objective and relevant data - ensures **equity**. PROUD Academy's commitment to **holistic development** allows students to be more fully understood and supported and introduces multiple opportunities for achievement and growth.

**PRIDE Principles** will be fostered and encouraged, brought to life in the daily experiences of students, families and staff members. We:



**Persevere** through challenges, embracing resilience in our academic, personal, and community journeys.

**Respect** all identities, treating everyone with dignity and honoring the diversity that enriches our school.

**Inspire** each other to strive for excellence, creativity, and passion, encouraging personal and collective growth.

**Dare** to take bold steps, challenge norms, and stand up for what is right, fostering a culture of courage and advocacy.

**Empower** ourselves and others through education, leadership, and community engagement, driving positive change and equity.

### **1.3 EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY POLICY**

The School is an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) employer and supports the principles of equal opportunity and diversity in employment. The School seeks to ensure that no person encounters discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, ancestry or ethnicity, alienage or citizenship status, or any other federally protected category. In addition, School policy prohibits discrimination against any candidate or employee on the basis of marital status, partnership status, sexual orientation, gender identification, or domestic violence victim status. This commitment applies to all School employment practices including, but not limited to, hiring, termination, retention, promotion, recruitment, or compensation.

The board will support all compliance with these policies and the various Federal laws enacted to prohibit discrimination in all aspects of employment. These laws include but are not limited to:

- Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), as amended.
- Age Discrimination In Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA), as amended o Title I, Americans With Disabilities Act, as amended.
- Equal Pay Act of 1963 (EPA), as amended.
- Civil Rights Act of 1991, as amended.

Employee awareness of workplace discrimination, harassment and retaliation is essential in helping PROUD Academy achieve our goals. The School provides awareness training using a variety of methods including but not limited to special briefings for all new employees on their first workday, traditional classroom training, and the utilization of publications and technology to inform all employees of their legal obligations and protections in the context of daily work situations.

### **1.4 DISABILITY NON-DISCRIMINATION AND REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION**

PROUD Academy will not discriminate against any individual with a disability who is otherwise qualified for employment. Reasonable accommodation will be provided to individuals with a known physical or mental disability if such accommodation would not impose an undue hardship on the School and would enable the individual to apply for or perform the essential functions of the position in question. Any qualified employee or applicant with a disability who requires a reasonable accommodation in order to perform the essential functions of his or her job should notify his or her direct manager and/or the Principal and request such an accommodation. The School will then identify possible accommodations, if any, that will help to eliminate the limitation or barrier. If the accommodation is reasonable, will not impose an undue hardship and neither the employee nor the accommodation would pose a direct

threat to the health and/or safety of the individual or others, the School will make the accommodation. The individual is encouraged to fully cooperate with the School in seeking and evaluating alternatives and accommodations. The School may require medical verification of both the disability and the need for accommodation.

The School will attempt to make reasonable accommodations for staff members observance of religious holidays and sincerely held religious beliefs unless doing so would cause an undue hardship on School operations. If you desire a religious accommodation, you are required to make the request in writing to your direct manager and/or the Principal as far in advance as possible.

## **1.5 POLICY AGAINST SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

### **Policy Statement**

It is the policy of PROUD Academy to provide and maintain a work environment that is free from sexual harassment. Sexual harassment, like any other form of harassment, will not be tolerated at the School. This policy applies to all employees, at all levels of the School, regardless of their position. Sexual harassment in the workplace is unlawful and represents a serious violation of School policy.

Prohibited sexual harassment includes sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or offensive working environment. Sexual harassment also includes a direct manager, male or female, making submission to sexual advances, performance of sexual favors, or verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of employment or a basis for an employment decision.

An employee who engages in sexual harassment is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Sexual harassment refers to behavior: (1) that is not welcome; (2) that is, or would be, offensive to a person of reasonable sensitivity and sensibilities; (3) that fails to respect the rights of another; and (4) that unreasonably interferes with an employee's work performance and effectiveness or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment. Behavior with intentions to be playful in nature, or joking is unacceptable, and will be deemed the same as sexual harassment.

The following are examples of sexual harassment:

- An employee engages in a pattern of unwelcome sexual language or conduct that is sufficiently severe or pervasive that it interferes with the job performance of another employee.
- An employee refuses to have an affair with his or her direct manager, and, in retaliation, the direct manager terminates the employee's employment.

The following are examples of conduct that all employees should avoid. Such conduct may violate School policy against sexual harassment, whether or not it constitutes sexual harassment under the law.

This is not an exhaustive list.

- Unwanted sexual advances, flirtation, touching, propositions, or contact with direct managers or coworkers.
- Display of sexually suggestive objects, posters, or pictures.
- Unwelcome verbal remarks of a sexual nature, in the form of degrading comments, propositions, or jokes.
- Threats or suggestions that an employee's job, promotion, wages, or benefits are subject to or influenced by submission to sexual demands or tolerance of harassment.

- Repeating words or conduct of a sexual nature after the person addressed has indicated that such words and/or conduct are unwelcome.

### **Complaint Procedure**

If you believe that you have been subjected to sexual harassment, whether by a direct manager, co-worker, or any other person with whom you come into contact in connection with your work for PROUD Academy, you should immediately report the incident to your direct manager or the Principal. A complaint against the Principal should be reported directly to the Chair of the School's Board of Directors.

PROUD Academy will conduct a prompt and impartial investigation of the complaint. This investigation may include (but will not necessarily be limited to) interviews with the employee who made the complaint, interviews with the alleged harasser, and interviews with other employees who may have witnessed the reported incident or incidents.

The School strives to release information arising out of a complaint or an investigation of sexual harassment only on a need-to-know basis. You should be aware, however, that information must be shared in order to conduct an effective investigation. Likewise, PROUD Academy expects any direct manager who receives a complaint of sexual harassment from an employee, or who otherwise has reason to believe that an employee is being or has been subjected to sexual harassment, to report the incident or incidents promptly to the Principal for investigation.

PROUD Academy will make determinations as to claimed violations of this policy on a case-by-case basis after taking into account all of the relevant circumstances. It is the School's policy to impose discipline, up to and including termination of employment, on any employee who violates this policy.

Any employee who makes a report in good faith of harassment may do so without fear of reprisal. PROUD Academy will not tolerate retaliation against an employee for making such a complaint under this policy or for participating in an investigation regarding a claimed violation of this policy. Any such retaliation will result in discipline, up to and including termination.

An employee with a complaint of harassment may also contact the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO) or the Connecticut Department of Labor's CONN-OSHA Division.

### **1.6 POLICY AGAINST OTHER FORMS OF HARASSMENT**

PROUD Academy strives to provide and maintain a work environment that is free from intimidation, hostility, and other offenses that may interfere with employee work performance. Harassment of any kind, including use of verbal or physical harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, genetic information, or other legally protected status is unlawful and will not be tolerated. If you believe that you have been subject to any such harassment, you are encouraged to report the matter promptly, using the complaint procedure outlined in Section 1.5 (above) for sexual harassment matters.

No employee who in good faith reports a violation shall suffer harassment, retaliation or adverse employment consequences because of such a report. An employee who retaliates against someone who has reported a violation in good faith is subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment. The complete Whistleblower Policy is included in section 1.12 below and is intended to encourage and enable employees and others to raise serious concerns within the School prior to seeking resolution outside the School. The Whistleblower Policy is not an employment contract and does not

modify the employment relationship between the School and its employees, nor does it change the fact that employees of the School are employees at will. Where provisions exist elsewhere under law and/or School policy governing the disclosure of information and other obligations, and /or retaliation relative to such disclosure, such laws and/or School policies shall govern.

### **1.7 ALCOHOL, SMOKING, AND DRUG POLICY**

PROUD Academy is committed to providing an environment for its employees and students that is free of the problems associated with substance abuse. The School prohibits employees from reporting to work while impaired or under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or lawfully prescribed medication that is being abused or misused in any manner. The School also prohibits employees from smoking in all school buildings and on school buses and from unlawfully using, possessing, soliciting, distributing, transferring, or selling controlled substances on school premises. E-cigarettes, for the purposes of this policy, are considered under the same violation as regular cigarettes, and if needed by an employee must be used outside of the school premises and at least 20 feet away from school property. Violators of this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

The proper use of prescription medication, if prescribed for the employee by a licensed physician, is permitted, provided such use will not impair the employee's ability to do his or her job effectively or otherwise pose a risk to the safety of the employee, students, or others. Only the employee may use such medication. Distribution of prescription medicine to other employees or any other member of the school community is not allowed. Employees must advise their direct manager if they are taking any prescribed medication or over-the-counter medication that may adversely affect job performance or safety.

If you have knowledge of an incident involving smoking or alcohol or drug use in violation of school policy, you are responsible for immediately notifying your direct manager. All reports will be promptly investigated. The School strives to release information arising out of a report or an investigation only on a need-to-know basis. You should be aware, however, that information may need to be shared in order to conduct an effective investigation. If an investigation confirms that a violation of this policy has occurred, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken, up to and including termination of employment.

### **1.8 ETHICS AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST POLICY**

Employees are required to scrupulously avoid situations or positions that present an actual or potential conflict of interest (as defined below) or that may give rise to the appearance of a conflict or an actual conflict between the employee's personal interests and his or her duties to PROUD Academy.

If an employee believes he or she may have a conflict of interest, the employee is required to report such concerns in writing to his or her direct manager or the Principal as soon as possible. In this event, the employee shall refrain from further actions in pursuit of such conflict until such time as the conflict can be reviewed and resolved. Violators of this policy may face disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

A "conflict of interest" occurs when an individual is in a position to influence a decision that may result in a personal gain to the individual or a relative as a result of any transactions or business dealings involving the School. "Personal gain" may result when the employee or a relative receives any kickback, bribe, gift, job benefit, special compensation, or other special consideration as a result of any transaction or business dealings involving the School. For the purposes of this policy, an employee's "relatives" include those persons related to the employee by blood, marriage, or adoption, and all members of the employee's household.

## **Outside Employment and Activity Policy**

While PROUD Academy recognizes that its employees may desire to be involved in outside employment and activities, outside employment or activities must not interfere or conflict with an employee's position at PROUD Academy. Employees are required to report to their direct manager any outside employment or activities that may conflict with the employee's position at PROUD Academy.

PROUD Academy may not retain the services of any person employed by any of its funding sources. No employee, officer, or agent of PROUD Academy shall participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by federal funds if there is a conflict of interest or the appearance of conflict of interest. Officers, employees or agents of PROUD Academy shall not solicit or accept gratuities, favors or anything of monetary value for personal gain from contractors, potential contractors or parties to sub-agreements. No person may offer to give any officer or employee of any funding source any item of value pursuant to an understanding that such officers or employees vote, official action or judgment would be influenced thereby.

Employees are not permitted to accept gifts of any kind of a value exceeding one hundred dollars (\$100.00), including, but not limited to, money, goods, food, entertainment, or services, from students or their families. If an employee is offered a gift in excess of \$100.00, even if the employee refuses it, the employee must report the matter to the Principal immediately.

## **1.9 CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY**

Employees may develop, learn about, and/or have access to the School's Confidential Information (defined below). Employees are required to comply with the School's policies in effect from time to time for protecting Confidential Information and shall not, at any time during or after termination of employment for any reason, disclose or use the School's Confidential Information, other than as required by applicable law or for the proper performance of the employee's duties and responsibilities to the School.

PROUD Academy follows all procedures to ensure the protection of student education records consistent with the requirements of applicable law. Employees should consult with their direct manager, the Principal, or the Principal before releasing any information contained in a student's education records. Employees are strictly prohibited from disclosing information of a confidential or personal nature about a student to any unauthorized persons.

For purposes of this policy, "Confidential Information" refers to any and all information of the School or its affiliates, whether regarding the School's students, employees or otherwise, that is not publicly known or that is only publicly known through a wrongful act on the employee's part or on the part of any other person having an obligation of confidentiality to the School or its affiliates. Confidential Information includes any information that the School or its affiliates has received, or may receive, with any understanding, expressed or implied, that the information would not be disclosed. Confidential Information also includes information contained in student education records.

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Any materials containing Confidential Information must be returned to an employee's direct manager or the Principal upon termination of employment for any reason (including resignation). Please note that the confidentiality restrictions contained in this policy shall continue to apply after employment terminates, regardless of the reason for such termination.

## **1.10 MANDATORY REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE POLICY**

PROUD Academy strives to protect its students from child abuse and maltreatment and is committed to responding effectively to incidents involving either of the same. Consistent with this policy and the requirements of applicable law, the School will investigate, and report suspected child abuse and maltreatment.

All employees of PROUD Academy are “mandated reporters” under Connecticut law. This means that PROUD Academy employees are required to report suspected child abuse, maltreatment, or neglect, when you have reasonable cause to suspect that such abuse, maltreatment, or neglect has occurred or is occurring. For more information concerning your obligations, you should consult with the Principal and/or Manager of Student Supports, who will provide you with information concerning the School’s abuse and neglect policy. You can learn more about reporting on the Connecticut Department of Children and Families (DCF) website: <https://portal.ct.gov/dcf/1-dcf/reporting-child-abuse-and-neglect#MR>

Any employee who makes a report in good faith of child abuse, maltreatment, or neglect may do so without fear of reprisal. PROUD Academy will not tolerate retaliation against an employee for making such a complaint under this policy or for participating in an investigation regarding a claimed violation of this policy. Any such retaliation may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

## **1.11 POLICY AGAINST CORPORAL PUNISHMENT**

Corporal punishment is prohibited by PROUD Academy, is against the law, and will result in disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination of employment. If an employee becomes aware of an incident of corporal punishment, the employee must report the matter immediately to his or her direct manager, the Principal or the Principal. Failure to report corporal punishment will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

## **1.12 WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY**

The School requires all employees to observe a high standard of business and personal ethics as they relate to PROUD Academy in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities. Employees and representatives of the School must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling their responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws and regulations. Employees and representatives of the school are expected to be honest and to act with integrity in fulfilling their responsibilities and are expected to comply with all School policies and applicable laws and regulations.

The matters which should be reported under this policy include suspected fraud, theft, embezzlement, accounting or auditing irregularities, bribery, kickbacks, misuse of the Schools assets, or suspected regulatory, compliance, or ethics-related issues, concerns, or violations. Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSH Act), employees may file complaints with OSHA if they believe that they have experienced discrimination or retaliation for exercising any right afforded by the OSHA act. This includes incidents that are related to workplace safety or health hazards; or for participating in OSHA inspection conferences, hearings, or other OSHA-related activities. Under the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), employees may file complaints with OSHA if they believe they have experienced discrimination or retaliation for reporting alleged violations of environmental laws relating to asbestos in elementary and secondary school systems.

It is the responsibility of all employees to report violations of ethics or conduct or suspected violations in accordance with this Whistleblower Policy. Employees may make such a report to their direct manager or to the Principal. If an employee has a complaint about the Principal, the employee should report the matter immediately to the Chair of the School's Board of Directors.

## **2.1 AT-WILL EMPLOYMENT**

The Principal will be hired by the Board of Directors. All other personnel will be hired by the Principal or Principal. All persons selected will receive a written copy of the signed employment agreement which will include position, title, starting salary, exemption status, and overtime rate (if applicable).

Unless otherwise specified in writing in an employment contract between the employee and the Principals or the Principal of the School, all employees are employed by PROUD Academy "at-will," which means that both the employee and the School may terminate the employment relationship at any time for any reason, with or without notice. Employees are not guaranteed employment for any length of time.

This employee handbook is not intended to and does not establish any promise of continued employment, nor does it establish any contractual rights between you and PROUD Academy. Rather, this employee handbook is only intended to provide a general outline of the School's policies, practices and benefits in effect from time to time, which the School may change at its discretion at any time and from time to time.

## **2.2 CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS**

The State of Connecticut requires any person who is hired by a local or regional board of education (teacher, administrator, special service staff member, paraeducator, security worker, substitute teacher, custodian, cafeteria employee, etc.) to submit to a state and national criminal history record check, as well as a check for any record of child abuse, within the first 30 days of the date of employment.

Applicants are required under the law to provide a prospective employer with the name, address and telephone number of all current or former employers if such employer was a local or regional board of education, a governing council of a state or local charter school, an inter-district magnet school operator or if the employment caused the applicant to have contact with children.

All PROUD Academy employees are required to be fingerprinted. New hires will be advised of the online pre-enrollment and costs associated with registering for fingerprints. New hires will then be directed to the local police department and additional applicant fingerprinting locations. Please note that the police department charges an additional fee and requires that a photo ID be provided.

Fingerprints will be checked by the State Police Bureau of Identification and the F.B.I. The results of the criminal history record checks (both state and federal) will be reported to the employing school district. If the district receives notice of a conviction of a crime by a person holding a certificate, authorization or permit issued by the State Board of Education, the district shall notify the Bureau Educator Standards and Certification.

### **Convictions during Employment**

While background checks must be performed for all new staff members, it is vital that staff members are aware that they must disclose to the School any new convictions while employed.

Employees have a continuing obligation to inform the School of any convictions that occur during his/her employment at the school. Additionally, the School will receive any updates about arrests or convictions from state and federal authorities. If a conviction is reported or discovered, the School must investigate and determine whether termination is appropriate.

## **2.3 EMPLOYMENT STATUS**

### **Regular Employment**

All employees of PROUD Academy shall be hired according to one of the following classes of employment. They are notified of their class of employment before they accept a position with PROUD Academy. Employees hired as full-time regular employees are eligible for all benefits as described in this manual. The School may also hire part-time employees. Part-time employees are those who are scheduled to work for fewer than 30 hours per workweek. Part-time employees are not eligible for benefits or paid leave as stated in this manual, with the following exception: all employees have worker's compensation coverage.

### **Full-time Employees**

Full-time employees are those who are assigned to an established position at the School with a regular work week of at least forty (40) hours. They receive all mandatory benefits and are generally eligible for all of PROUD Academy's discretionary employee benefits, subject to the terms, conditions and limitations of each employee benefit program, in effect from time to time.

Full-time employees may be employed either as eleven-month employees or twelve-month employees. PROUD Academy's teachers are typically eleven-month employees. PROUD Academy's administrative employees are typically twelve-month employees. This determination is made at the employee's time of hire or transfer to a new position.

### **Temporary Employees**

Temporary employees are those who are hired for short-term periods, usually no longer than six (6) months. They will receive all legally mandated benefits but are not currently eligible for PROUD Academy's discretionary employee benefits.

### **On-Call Employment**

An on-call employee has no specific period of employment and is hired on an as needed basis. On-call employees are not eligible for paid holidays, paid leave or any other benefit to which employees with regular status are entitled.

## **2.4 EMPLOYMENT CLASSIFICATIONS**

### **Fair Labor and Standards Act (FLSA)**

Positions that employees hold will also be classified as either exempt or non-exempt pursuant to the Fair Labor Standards Act and in respect to eligibility for overtime pay. An employee is exempt from the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act when s/he holds a position that meets specific standards for executive, administrative or professional categories provided by FLSA. An employee who is considered exempt is not paid overtime for hours worked in excess of forty (40) per week. A non-exempt employee is one which occupies a position which is covered by the overtime provisions of the

FLSA and must be paid time and one half for hours worked in excess of forty per week. The computation for hours worked in excess of forty does not include holidays, vacation, sick leave, or other time off. See the Overtime policy in the next section for additional information.

## **2.5 COMPENSATION**

### **Salary Advances**

No advances will be granted to any employee under any circumstances.

### **Wage Garnishment**

The School complies with any and all court orders, the Consumer Credit Protection Act, and any other applicable laws or orders with regards to wage garnishments and/or wage attachments. On receipt of a court order, the School will notify the employee immediately, begin withholding the specified portion of the employee's wages, and provide the employee a copy of the order.

### **Policies for Errors in Pay**

Every effort is made to avoid errors in your paycheck. If you believe an error has been made for any reason, including, but not limited to, an overpayment or underpayment, please contact the Principal or Principal immediately. Paycheck errors of less than \$200.00 (overpayment or underpayment) will be corrected on the next regularly scheduled payroll period. Paycheck errors over \$200.00 will be handled on an individual basis depending on the circumstances.

If an employee believes a mistake has occurred with respect to overtime pay or if the employee has any questions, the employee should use the complaint procedure set forth in the Fair Labor Standards Act Safe Harbor Policy below.

## **2.6 PAY DAYS**

Paychecks are issued on a semi-monthly basis. There are twenty-four (24) pay periods each year and contributions for benefits are allocated across the twenty-four paychecks. Staff members who begin employment in the middle of a pay period will be paid on a prorated basis from the first day they work. If the pay date falls on a weekend or holiday, employees will be paid on the prior business day.

### **Time and Place of Payment**

If you have direct deposit, your pay will be deposited into an account at your financial institution using the account information that you have provided. If you do not have direct deposit, your paycheck will be mailed to your home address on record with the School. We encourage employees to take advantage of the direct deposit option. All employees are encouraged to use direct deposit. Direct deposit enrollment forms will be provided to employees along with their hiring materials once they accept employment.

Paychecks will be administered on the 15th and the final day of the month. In the event that the 15th or the final day of the month falls on a weekend, the pay date may be the prior business day.

All employees are paid on a twelve-month schedule, regardless of whether they are eleven-month employees or twelve-month employees. A pay schedule will generally be circulated during staff pre-service for the academic year and is available upon request.

If an employee is given a paper paycheck and loses that check, he or she must submit a written request to his or her direct manager or the Principal for a new check to be issued. The request must indicate the date on the check, the pay period it covered, and the amount. The employee must also certify that he or she believes the check to be lost and that if the employee finds the check, he or she will return it to PROUD Academy's Director of Operations. A new paycheck will be issued to the employee as soon as practicable after the request is submitted.

### **Work Days and Work Week**

All employees are required to work according to a schedule determined by the School. Regular attendance is essential to the School's efficient operation and is a necessary condition of employment. Employees are expected to report to work as scheduled and on time. The standard work week for PROUD Academy instructional staff will be Monday to Friday 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; Professional Development sessions will be included during these work hours, and all staff are required to attend. The non-instructional staff schedule will be set at the discretion of the Principal or his or her designee.

The School reserves the right to make changes to its work schedule at any time as needs dictate. If it is impossible to report for work as scheduled, employees must call or text the Principal by 7:00 a.m. on the day the employee is scheduled to work (or earlier if possible). Employees will also need to send an email to the Director of Operations as well as the Principal and the direct manager. If the absence is to continue beyond the first day, the employee must notify the Principal or his/her designee on a daily basis unless otherwise arranged.

Absence for three consecutive workdays without notifying the Principal or his/her designee will be considered voluntary termination. If you're arriving to work late, you must advise the Principal when you expect to arrive for work. If you are unable to call in yourself because of an illness, emergency or for some other reason, you are required to have someone call for you.

### **Parent/Caregiver Workshops & Required Work Events**

Each year PROUD Academy has approximately 10 parent/caregiver and community focused events that occur on Weekday evenings and/or Saturday morning/afternoon. Community and family involvement is a core pillar of PROUD Academy; all employees are expected to be present at least 80% of these events. The events will be made known in the school calendar prior to the beginning of the school year and throughout the school year. If a staff member cannot attend one of these events, they are expected to notify the Principal or Assistant Principal two weeks prior to the event. Staff will not receive additional compensation for these events.

### **Summer Recess**

Non-exempt employees will not receive additional compensation during the summer for classroom preparation or planned professional development. Classroom preparation and professional development will not be compensated beyond the regular payment schedule.

### **Overtime Pay**

For non-exempt employees, hours worked in excess of forty (40) per week must have the Principal or Principal's advance approval.

## **2.7 EMPLOYMENT RECORDS**

It is PROUD Academy's policy and practice to accurately compensate employees and to do so in compliance with applicable state and federal laws. To ensure that the employee is paid properly for all time worked and that no improper deductions are made, the employee must record correctly all work time and review his or her paychecks promptly to identify and to report all errors. Non-exempt employees must not engage in any off-the-clock or unrecorded work.

### **Access to Employment Records**

In recognition of individual rights to privacy, we maintain only those records and collect only personal information that is necessary for organizational purposes. We make every effort to maintain the confidentiality of all personal information. However, the School will cooperate with and provide access to personnel files to local, state and federal agencies in accordance with applicable law. Employees who wish to inspect their personnel file may do so in the presence of a School representative. Employees will not be allowed to view investigation records or any letters of reference. Please contact your direct manager if you would like to review your personnel file. It is important that your personnel records are kept updated at all times. Please promptly report any changes in the following items to your Director of Operations:

1. Legal name
2. Home address
3. Home telephone number (or cell phone, if applicable)
4. Emergency contact person (and contact information)
5. Dependents/beneficiaries
6. Marital status
7. Change of insurance beneficiary(s)
8. Exemptions on your W-4 tax form.
9. Certification status
10. Professional licenses

### **Medical Records**

Confidential health and medical records are not included in your personnel file. The School will safeguard such records from disclosure and will divulge only that information:

- as allowed by law, as referenced in the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 ("HIPA") or other federal or state law.
- to the employee's personal physician upon written request of the employee.
- as required for Workers 'Compensation cases.
- on a need-to-know basis, in connection with matters in which the employee has put his or her health or ability to perform his or her job in issue; or
- as otherwise required by law.

### **Pre-employment**

Pre-employment and other background investigations are conducted in accordance with federal and state laws regarding individuals offered employment by the PROUD Academy.

### **Notification of Arrests**

Employees must notify the Principal or Principal within 48 hours of being arrested or charged with any local, state or federal crime, misdemeanor or other offense, unless the criminal action or proceeding has already been terminated in favor of the employee. Such notification will not necessarily disqualify you from continued employment.

### **Verification of Employment**

The School will provide dates of employment when employment verification is requested. The School will provide wage/salary information if the appropriate authorization and release has been provided by the employee. The School is not required to provide recommendations and/or terms of separation and/or rehire status unless required by law.

### **Form I-9**

The School is required to maintain employment eligibility verification on U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services Form I-9 for each of its employees, along with copies of the documents used to establish the employee's identity and employment authorization.

## **Section 3 - Insurance And Retirement Benefits**

### **3.1 BENEFITS SUMMARY**

All full-time regular staff members will receive the insurance and other benefits offered by the School. Eligibility, coverage, deductibles and carriers of such benefits are subject to modification or termination at any time at the sole discretion of the School or the respective insurance carriers. These benefits may be modified or discontinued at the sole discretion of the School at any time. Benefits are only available to full-time regular employees who are regularly scheduled to work a minimum of forty (40) hours per week. Part-time employees, temporary employees and employees who are regularly scheduled to work less than forty (40) hours per week may not be eligible to receive the benefits. If elected, health insurance coverage begins the first of the month following thirty days of employment as a full-time regular employee.

Certain other employee benefits, such as Workers' Compensation, Disability, Social Security, and Unemployment Insurance, are provided to all employees (regardless of whether full-time, part-time, or temporary), to the extent required by law.

### **Domestic Partner Policy**

PROUD Academy offers domestic partner health coverage along with individual and family plans. The employee requesting coverage for a domestic partner (or any other family member) must be able to show documentation of familial relationships as required by the selected policy.

### **Medicare**

All employees are required by federal statute to participate in the federal government Medicare program. Medicare is currently deducted at 1.45% of gross salary earnings. The federal government has the authority to change this rate in the future without notice.

### **3.2 MEDICAL AND DENTAL INSURANCE**

PROUD Academy will offer group medical and group dental insurance coverage to eligible full-time employees, consistent with the terms and requirements of applicable plan documents. Regular part-time employees and temporary employees are not currently eligible for group medical or group dental insurance coverage through the School. Group medical and dental insurance coverage is optional for eligible employees.

Employee co-payment for group medical and group dental insurance premiums will be required and will vary depending upon the level of coverage selected by the employee (e.g., individual or family coverage). Employee contributions to insurance premiums will be deducted from the employee's bi-monthly paychecks on a pre-tax basis.

### **3.3 403(B) RETIREMENT PLAN**

PROUD Academy will offer a 403(b) retirement plan to eligible full-time employees, consistent with the terms and requirements of applicable plan documents. Participating employees may elect to contribute to their 403(b) retirement plan through pre-tax compensation reduction. Contributions and the amount of compensation taken into account under the plan are subject to applicable limits under federal law. Participating employees may opt out of the 403(b) plan or make changes to their deferral elections in accordance with the administrative procedures established by the School or the plan administrator from time to time. PROUD Academy will make employer contributions to match the employee's deferral contributions to the 403(b) plan up to 3%. The School may, however, decide, in its discretion, in the future to modify, suspend, or terminate these employer contributions in whole or in part, with or without notice. In the event of a discrepancy between the summary provided in this handbook and the 403(b) plan's official plan documents, the official plan documents will control.

### **3.4 DISABILITY INSURANCE**

PROUD Academy provides disability insurance coverage for all employees in accordance with the requirements of the State of New York at no cost to the employee, consistent with the terms of applicable plan documents. Details of the School's disability insurance plan coverage, including benefit amounts, when benefits are payable, limitations, restrictions, and other exclusions are described in the summary plan description provided to eligible employees.

#### **Long-Term Disability**

PROUD Academy offers long-term disability ("LTD") insurance coverage to eligible full-time employees at no cost to the employee, consistent with the terms of applicable plan documents. Details of the School's current LTD insurance plan coverage, including benefit amounts, when benefits are payable, limitations, restrictions, and other exclusions are described in the summary plan description provided to eligible employees.

### **3.5 LIFE INSURANCE**

The Principal may select a life insurance policy that the School may offer.

### **3.6 WORKERS' COMPENSATION INSURANCE**

All employees of the School are covered by workers' compensation insurance for occupational illness or injury. If an employee sustains a work-related injury or illness, the employee must report the matter to his or her direct manager and the Director of Operations immediately. No matter how minor the illness or injury may seem, it is important that it be reported immediately. Failure to report an illness or injury

could jeopardize an employee's entitlement to benefits. Neither PROUD Academy nor the insurance carrier will be liable for the payment of Workers' Compensation benefits for injuries that occur during an employee's voluntary participation in any off-duty recreational, social, or athletic activity (regardless of whether sponsored by PROUD Academy), unless otherwise required by law.

### **3.7 UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE**

PROUD Academy provides unemployment insurance coverage for all employees in accordance with the requirements of the State of Connecticut at no cost to the employee.

### **3.8 COBRA**

Upon certain "qualifying events" (such as voluntary or involuntary job loss, certain reductions in hours worked, transition between jobs, the employee's death, and divorce) where coverage under group medical and group dental insurance plans might otherwise end, employees and their qualified beneficiaries who participate in the School's group health or group dental insurance coverage may be eligible to elect to continue their coverage at group rates for a period of time through the federal law known as "COBRA." Employees and their qualified beneficiaries who elect to continue their insurance coverage through COBRA must ordinarily pay the full monthly premium cost, plus a two percent (2%) administration fee.

## **Section 4 - Time Off and Breaks**

### **4.1 LEAVE POLICY**

From time to time, employees may need to take time off from work pursuant to one or more of the policies described below. Excessive absenteeism, even pursuant to the policies set forth below, may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Employees are expected to provide sufficient advance notice, to the extent possible, before taking time off from work pursuant to these policies.

For the purposes of calculating the leave allowances in this section, a "week" is the equivalent of five business days. Employees who need a reasonable accommodation to perform the essential functions of their job should notify their direct manager or the Principal pursuant to the Disability Non-Discrimination and Reasonable Accommodation policy set forth in Section 1.4 above.

#### **General Leave with or without Pay**

General leave with or without pay may be granted at the discretion of the Principal.

### **4.2 NO-FAULT DAYS AND SICK DAYS**

#### **No-Fault Days**

PROUD Academy expects its employees to report to work on-time for all scheduled work days. Employees are required to arrange for doctor's appointments and other personal business outside of the regular work day. The School recognizes, however, that there are times when an employee's personal life may interfere with the regularly scheduled work day. For this reason, among others, the School offers all full-time employees on the active payroll up to four (4) paid "no-fault" days each academic year, subject to the prior approval of the employee's direct manager. No-fault days may be requested for medical appointments or personal business that cannot be scheduled outside of the

regular school day, caring for a sick family member, or other personal reasons. Regular part-time employees and temporary employees are not eligible for no-fault days. Eligible full-time employees may request "half-day" no-fault days (which must start or end at 12:00 p.m., unless otherwise agreed to in writing by the employee's direct manager) or whole-day no-fault days.

Eligible full-time employees should request permission to take a no-fault day at least two (2) weeks in advance whenever possible, and if earlier notice is not possible, in all events no later than 4:20 p.m. on the business day prior to the requested no-fault day, or such other time specified by the employee's direct manager.

Approval is subject to staffing needs, student coverage, and other operational considerations at the School. For this reason, employees are encouraged to request no-fault days as far in advance as possible. Requests for no-fault days will not ordinarily be granted during the first few weeks and final few weeks of the academic year or during teacher or staff orientation or training, immediately before or after scheduled vacation days, school breaks or holidays, or during such other times determined by the School from time to time in its sole discretion.

Employees hired after August 1 in any given year are granted a pro rata portion of the four (4) no-fault days for that twelve (12) month period immediately upon the first day of employment. Unused personal leave days will roll-over from year to year up to five (5) total personal leave days. No-fault days are forfeited upon termination of employment (regardless of reason). Employees are not eligible to be compensated for unused no-fault days upon termination of employment or at any other time.

### **Sick Days**

PROUD Academy permits full-time employees to take up to four (4) paid sick days each academic year for days when the employee is unable to work because of his or her own illness or injury that is not job-related. (Employees should request no-fault days to care for a sick family member.) Regular part-time employees and temporary employees are not generally eligible for paid sick days. Sick days do not have to be scheduled in advance, but the employee must notify his or her direct manager by phone call or in person no later than 7:00 a.m. on each sick day that the employee is absent, unless the employee is physically unable to do so, as well as each day of absence thereafter, unless, in the case of a continuing absence, the direct manager has authorized less frequent call-ins. If the direct manager is not available, the employee must notify the Principal or his designee. Leaving a message with a coworker is not sufficient. Likewise, requesting that a doctor's office submit medical documentation regarding the need for a sick day does not satisfy the employee's obligation to notify his or her direct manager by telephone or in person regarding the absence. If an employee fails to notify his or her direct manager as required by this policy, unless otherwise physically unable to do so, the employee will be deemed a "no-call, no-show" and may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

An employee's account will only be charged for two (2) sick days in the event of an absence from work for three (3) or more consecutive days due to the employee's own illness or injury, when such illness or injury is supported by sufficient documentation from the employee's doctor. The School reserves the right to amend, terminate, suspend, or replace this policy from time to time as it determines appropriate, with or without notice.

If the employee is absent from work for three (3) or more consecutive days due to an illness or injury, or for repeated periods of lesser duration, or in other circumstances where the School deems it appropriate, the School may require medical certification or other documentation regarding the absence and medical clearance to return to work, where applicable, through the employee's doctor.

Sick days do not carry over from one academic year to the next and are forfeited upon termination of employment (regardless of reason). Employees are not eligible to be compensated for unused sick days upon termination of employment or at any other time.

#### **4.3 VACATION DAYS**

##### **Vacation Days for Eleven-Month Employees**

Full-time and regular part-time eleven-month employees, including those employees who start mid-year, are eligible to take vacation days as outlined in the School calendar. Eleven-month employees are required, however, to attend in-service training, even when this training is scheduled during a School break. Vacation days do not carry over from one academic year to the next and are forfeited upon termination of employment (regardless of reason). Eleven-month employees are not eligible to be compensated for unused vacation days upon termination of employment or at any other time.

##### **Vacation Days for Twelve-Month Employees**

Full-time twelve-month employees on the active payroll accrue up to eleven (11) days of vacation annually. Regular part-time twelve-month employees on the active payroll are eligible for vacation time on a prorated basis, depending on the number of hours they are regularly scheduled to work each week. For example, an eligible part-time employee who is regularly scheduled to work twenty (20) hours per week is eligible for up to five and one half (5.5) days of vacation annually.

Twelve-month employees may not use more than one (1) vacation day in each of the first three months of the academic year, unless they specifically request and receive prior approval from a direct manager. In addition, eligible twelve-month employees may be permitted to take vacation days as outlined in the School calendar, subject to the prior approval from the employee's direct manager. A twelve-month employee, however, should generally be prepared to work during School breaks.

Eligible twelve-month employees should request vacation days as far in advance as possible, but not less than two (2) weeks prior to the first day of any requested vacation. Employees will be notified by their direct manager regarding whether their request to take a vacation day has been granted. Approval is subject to staffing needs, student coverage, and other operational considerations at the School. For this reason, employees are encouraged to request vacation days as far in advance as possible. Requests for vacation days will not ordinarily be granted during the first few weeks and final few weeks of the academic year, during teacher or staff orientation or training, or during such other times determined by the School from time to time in its sole discretion.

Eligible twelve-month employees who work on the Instructional Leadership Team generally may not take more than two (2) consecutive days of vacation time during days when School is in session and are encouraged to use vacation days when School is out of session. Severe Weather and Emergency Conditions

Other eligible twelve-month employees generally may not take more than five (5) consecutive days of vacation time during days when School is in session. Extended vacation time should be planned to coincide with school breaks or during the summer when School is out of session.

Generally, unused vacation days do not carry over from one academic year to the next and are forfeited upon termination of employment (regardless of reason). However, twelve-month employees may carry-over up to five (5) vacation days from the previous academic year, which must be used before summer orientation begins in August for the following academic year. Any days that are carried over, but not

used as of the start of orientation will be forfeited. The School reserves the right to amend, terminate, suspend, or replace this policy from time to time as it determines appropriate, with or without notice.

Employees who fail to comply with this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

#### **4.4 HOLIDAYS, SCHOOL CLOSURE, AND OTHER BREAKS**

PROUD Academy closes on certain holidays and other days, all of which are indicated on the School calendar. In cases of conflict, the School calendar prevails, and PROUD Academy reserves the right to amend its School calendar as needed at any time with the approval of the Board of Directors.

Holidays and School closure days will not be deducted from an employee's accrued vacation time. All full-time employees are eligible for pay at their regular rate on these holidays. Regular part-time employees may be eligible for pay at their regular rate for the hours they are regularly scheduled to work on a holiday. Temporary employees are not eligible to receive holiday pay.

##### **School Closure**

The School will close due to inclement weather or other conditions whenever the local public School district (e.g., Ansonia) closes all of its Schools. Additionally, notices will be placed on the School's voicemail system and website. At the discretion of the Executive or his/her designee, any classroom days lost to closure due to inclement weather or other reasons may be made up by adding an equal number of days during or at the end of the School year.

In the event of severe weather conditions or other emergencies, the Principal may decide to close the School for all or part of the day. If this decision is made, you will be notified as soon as possible. For full time employees, no loss of pay will occur as a result of early dismissal for this reason. Likewise, if such employees report to work and find that the School is unexpectedly closed due to an emergency, no loss of pay will occur. Any employee who was on a previously approved leave day during a declared emergency shall not be charged leave for the emergency period.

##### **Lunch Hours**

Each full-time employee and part-time employee working more than 6 hours per day may select to take either a half hour or full hour lunch without pay as approved and scheduled by the Principal. For day shift staff, lunch hours may be taken from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. For staff starting at 3:00 p.m. or later, lunch hour shall be taken between 6:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. The Principal may approve a different lunch hour for employees who work split shifts.

##### **Nursing Parent Policy**

The School will abide by the "Breastfeeding Mothers Bill of Rights" which requires employers to provide reasonable break time for an employee to express breast milk for her nursing child for one year after the child's birth each time that employee has need to express milk. The School will make a concerted effort to accommodate mothers who choose to continue to breastfeed after returning to work.

The School will attempt to provide a private room, other than a bathroom or toilet stall, that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from coworkers and the public, or space that is sanitary and close to an employee's work area, to express milk during work hours. The School will endeavor to provide a room with an electrical outlet, comfortable chair and nearby access to running water. Employees who

have a private office area may use it for breastfeeding or milk expression. Employees will provide their own breast pump. Employees may use their own cooler packs to store expressed breast milk or may store milk in a designated refrigerator/freezer. Employees should provide their own containers, clearly labeled with their name and the date. The School will attempt to provide a breastfeeding employee with adequate breaks for flexible breastfeeding or pumping. The time used for these purposes should not exceed the normal time allowed for lunch and breaks unless prior approval has been granted by the Principal or Principal.

#### **4.5 LEAVES OF ABSENCE**

Although PROUD Academy is not a covered employer under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act, the School voluntarily chooses to grant leaves of absence to eligible employees in accordance with the provisions set forth below.

##### **Eligibility for Leave**

A full-time or regular part-time employee may request an unpaid leave of absence for medical or other urgent personal reasons. Temporary employees are not generally eligible for a leave of absence.

Except for leaves required by state or federal law, all unpaid leaves of absence and extensions are granted at the discretion of the School on a case-by-case basis. In addition to considering the staffing and other needs of the School in deciding whether to grant a requested leave or extension of leave, PROUD Academy will consider the employee's length of service, attendance record and work performance, the likelihood of the employee's continued employment with the School, and the reason or reasons for the request.

##### **Requests for Leave**

A request for leave must be made to the employee's direct manager as far in advance of the proposed starting date of the leave as possible. The School may require documentation before considering requests for leave (or an extension).

##### **Benefits During Leave**

A leave of absence is unpaid. However, a full-time employee may use available sick days and a twelve-month employee may choose to draw down unused vacation time during any otherwise unpaid portion of the leave. Such time will be payable at the usual pay periods. In addition, an employee who is unable to work as a result of a work-related injury may be eligible for workers' compensation insurance benefits and may also qualify for New York State Disability Insurance benefits.

If an employee is on an unpaid leave of absence, he/she may maintain participation in the School's health, dental, and vision plans by continuing to pay the full premium cost of coverage from month to month during the leave. Participation in any other School benefit plans during leave is determined by the terms of the applicable plan, as in effect from time to time, and will be at the employee's cost.

Because the School has limited staff, when an employee is on a leave of absence, it may be necessary to fill the employee's position, depending on the duration of the leave, the nature of the employee's position, staffing, coverage and/or other considerations. Therefore, PROUD Academy cannot guarantee reinstatement following leave. Whenever practicable, however, an employee who returns from leave will be reinstated to his/her original position or to one comparable to it. If such a position is not

available, the employee may be given preferential consideration when a comparable position for which the employee is then qualified becomes available.

An employee returning from medical leave must provide the School with certification from his or her treating physician that the employee is medically able to return to work. An employee who is reinstated at the conclusion of a leave of absence will retain his or her continuity of service as of the date his/her leave began and will retain all benefits earned prior to the commencement of the leave, except to the extent such benefits were used or exhausted during the course of the leave.

If, due to medical reasons, an employee is unable to return to work at the end of a leave of absence, or at the end of any extension granted by the School, his or her employment may be terminated. An employee who otherwise fails to return to work at the end of a leave of absence, or at the end of any extension granted by the Company, will be considered to have resigned without notice.

#### **Reporting While on Leave**

During any leave of absence, an employee is expected to maintain periodic contact with his or her direct manager, the Principal and/or the Principal to advise them of his or her progress and anticipated return-to-work date.

#### **No Retaliation**

The School does not retaliate against any employee for requesting a leave of absence under this policy in good faith or who takes a leave of absence under this policy in accordance with its terms.

### **4.6 FAMILY CARE: MATERNITY, PATERNITY, AND ADOPTIVE LEAVE**

Full-time employees who have been employed by the School for at least ninety (90) days will be entitled to a paid or unpaid leave of absence for family care, maternity, paternity, or adoption based on employee status and reason.

An employee may apply for a family care leave of absence to care for certain members of one's immediate family (parent/caregivers, children, spouse, domestic partner, siblings, and grandparent/caregivers) due to the family member's serious health condition. Family care leaves of absence may be authorized for up to 12 weeks and are generally unpaid.

An employee may request up to twelve (12) weeks of leave per year for purposes of the birth or adopting a child and subsequently caring for that newborn or adopted child. Generally, one (1) week of the 12-week leave for this purpose will be paid. An additional period of up to seven (7) weeks of the

12-week leave will be paid to eligible employees during the period of the employee's disability after giving birth. The remaining portion of the leave is unpaid. However, twelve-month employees may elect to draw down their unused vacation time during any unpaid portion of leave. Employees may not use consecutive no-fault days or sick days to cover the unpaid portion of the leave. To avoid any doubt, both paid and unpaid leave run and are calculated regardless of School holidays. For example, if an employee is on paid leave during a one-week December holiday, that week is still counted towards the seven weeks of paid postpartum disability leave.

#### **Adoption Leave Requests**

Employees who are adoptive parent/caregivers will be permitted to take the same leave and upon the same terms as natural parent/caregivers for the adoption of a child upon the start of the parent/caregiver-child relationship.

Requested leave of absence for adoption (and/or foster care) will be granted on a case-by-case basis, and leave will be permitted to employees who adopt children of preschool age or younger or who are under the age of 18 and deemed to be "hard to place" or handicapped under the New York Social Services law.

A request for leave under this policy must be made in writing to the employee's direct manager and the Principal as far in advance as possible, and in all events at least two (2) weeks prior to the proposed starting date of the leave, except when such notice is not possible because of early delivery or unexpected placement of a child for adoption. Such notice must indicate the anticipated date of departure; an intention to return to work; and the anticipated date of return.

#### **4.7 LEAVE TO DONATE BLOOD**

Employees will be provided with up to three (3) hours of leave time in each calendar year to donate blood. Employees seeking leave to donate blood must give reasonable notice to their direct managers of at least three (3) working days prior to taking leave for blood donation. Non-exempt employees will receive paid leave to donate blood if the donation occurs at a blood drive at the School or at a School sponsored blood drive. Leave to donate blood will be unpaid, however, if the nonexempt employee's donation occurs at a blood drive or facility that is not sponsored or otherwise connected with the School.

As required by the Fair Labor Standards Act, exempt employees taking leave to donate blood under this policy will do so without a loss or reduction in pay. All employees taking leave to donate blood through a non-School-sponsored blood drive or at a blood drive away from the School may be required to provide proof of their blood donation. The School will not retaliate or tolerate retaliation against an employee for requesting or taking blood donation leave.

#### **4.8 LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR BONE MARROW DONATIONS**

PROUD Academy will grant a leave of absence to an employee who is regularly scheduled to work at the School at least twenty (20) hours per week for purposes of undergoing a medical procedure to donate bone marrow, consistent with the requirements of applicable law. The length of leave will be determined by the employee's treating physician but may not exceed twenty-four (24) work hours. This leave will be unpaid, unless otherwise required by law.

Employees requesting leave under this policy must provide the employee's direct manager with at least two (2) weeks' notice, except in cases of medical emergencies attested to in writing by the treating doctor. The School may require verification from the employee's doctor about the purposes and length of leave requested under this policy.

#### **4.9 BEREAVEMENT LEAVE**

PROUD Academy understands that the loss of a loved one can be a very difficult and stressful period and therefore provides full-time employees with paid bereavement leave for such circumstances. In the event of a death of an employee's immediate family member (as defined in this policy), full-time employees may take up to four (5) consecutive work days of paid bereavement leave. Requests for additional days of paid or unpaid bereavement leave may be granted at the discretion of the Principal.

“Immediate family members” include an employee’s spouse, domestic partner, child, sibling, grandparent/caregiver, grandchild, parent/caregiver/guardian, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, cousin, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, parent/caregiver of a domestic partner, and child of a domestic partner.

An employee who needs to take bereavement leave should notify his or her direct manager as early as possible so that arrangements can be made to cover in the employee’s absence. In the event that bereavement leave is requested for a non-immediate family member, the employee shall make a request, and it can be accepted or denied, with or without pay, at the discretion of the Principal.

#### **4.10 LEAVE TO SERVE ON JURY OR TO APPEAR AS A WITNESS IN A CRIMINAL TRIAL**

PROUD Academy understands that employees must fulfill their civic responsibilities by serving jury duty when required. The school expects and strongly urges that employees will make efforts to postpone their jury duty service to coincide with the School’s vacation schedule whenever possible.

##### **Jury Duty**

Full-time regular employees who are called for and report to jury duty will be paid their regular rate of pay. An employee must provide his/her direct manager with written notification of the jury duty obligation as soon as possible (preferably the next business day or within 48 hours of receiving jury summons) following his or her receipt of notice.

At the end of jury duty, employees must provide certification of having served jury duty and the amount of money that was received in connection with such service, if any. Employees who have the option to serve “on call” are required to do so and to report to work if they are not called for the day. Employees must report to work when excused or dismissed from jury duty.

##### **Leave to Appear as Witness or Victim in Criminal Proceeding**

PROUD Academy permits employees to take a leave of absence to serve as a witness in a criminal trial. Leave for this purpose is generally unpaid, unless otherwise required by law. An employee requesting leave to serve as a witness in a criminal trial must submit the request in writing at least two (2) weeks in advance of the requested leave date. The employee will be required to provide verification of the subpoena or similar document requesting or requiring his attendance as a witness.

#### **4.11 MILITARY LEAVE**

The School will grant an unpaid leave of absence to employees for military or reserve duty, including service with the Reserves, National Guard or other Uniformed Services (collectively referred to as “military leave”) in accordance with the provisions of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (“USERRA”) and applicable state law. Military leave will be granted regardless of whether the employee is called to duty or volunteers for duty. Employees are required to submit copies of their military orders to their direct manager as soon as possible after receiving them. Military leave is unpaid. However, a twelve-month employee may choose to draw down unused but unused vacation during any otherwise unpaid portion of the leave.

Full-time and regular, part-time employees who serve in the Uniformed Services shall normally be permitted to return to PROUD Academy with all seniority, status and pay, as if they had not taken a leave of absence. ReinstateMENT rights are limited to those available under USERRA or applicable state law and do not apply to temporary employees, to employees who are discharged from the military

under a disqualifying discharge or other than honorable conditions, to employees whose cumulative absences from the School for reason of service in the Uniformed Services exceed five (5) years (subject to certain exceptions), and/or for other reasons set forth in USERRA and/or applicable state law. Employees are required to report back to work in a timely manner, within such time periods as specified by applicable law.

#### **Military Spouse Leave**

An employee who is the spouse of a member of the United States armed forces, national guard or reserves who has been deployed during a period of military conflict (to a combat zone of operations or a combat theater) may be allowed up to ten days unpaid leave to be used when the employee's spouse is on leave. An employee who seeks leave under this section may be required to provide documentation to support their request for leave. For purposes of this policy, "period of military conflict" means a period of war declared by the U.S. Congress or in which a member of a reserve component of the armed forces is ordered to active duty.

#### **4.12 CANCER SCREENING LEAVE**

Employees are eligible to take up to a maximum of four (4) hours of excused, paid leave each school year to obtain a screening for breast or prostate cancer. Such leave will not be deducted from accrued sick leave or any other accrued leave. Employees are required to submit a written request for such leave to the Principal or the Principal at least one (1) week in advance. The employee must provide documentation from his or her physician immediately after such leave is taken.

#### **4.13 TIME OFF TO VOTE**

The School encourages all employees to fulfill their civic responsibilities and to vote in public elections. Most employees' schedules provide sufficient time to vote either before or after working hours. Employees will be provided with time off to vote where they do not have sufficient time outside of their working hours to do so.

Up to two hours' time off for this purpose will be permitted without loss of pay. However, if the polls are open for at least four consecutive hours before or after your scheduled workday, you are deemed to have sufficient time outside of work hours to vote. Employees intending to take leave to vote should inform their direct manager that they will need leave to vote at least two (2) working days prior to the election. The School will not penalize any employee for properly requesting leave or properly taking leave under this policy.

### **Section 5 - Professional Expectations & Professional Development**

#### **5.1 EMPLOYEES' PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES**

Employees are required to perform the duties and responsibilities outlined in the offer letter or employment contract signed by the employee and the Principal, as well as any other duties and responsibilities that the School may reasonably assign to the employee from time to time. Staff members are also expected to perform regularly assigned duties each school day including but not limited to supporting breakfast, lunch, recess, snack-time, and dismissal.

PROUD Academy believes that meaningful professional development results in higher levels of student achievement. Employees will be required to participate in regular professional development, both on and off-site during school hours. Staff may also be asked to attend such professional development

outside of work hours without additional pay and will be able to accept or deny this opportunity at the employee's sole discretion.

### **Political Activities**

Employment will not be offered as a consideration or reward for the political support of any political party or candidate for public office. No employee may use work time, property or materials of PROUD Academy to try to affect proposed legislation.

### **Reporting and Investigation**

PROUD Academy is unable to effectively address bullying if incidents aren't reported. Members of our school community are encouraged and expected to make verbal and/or written complaints to any school personnel in accordance with the training and guidelines provided. At all times, complaints will be documented, tracked and handled in accordance with the regulations and procedures accompanying this policy, or, if applicable, [0100, Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination, or 0110, Sexual Harassment]. If a staff person is unsure of the reporting procedure, he/she is expected to inquire about how to proceed by speaking with their direct manager or the Principal.

All school personnel are required to report any incidents of student-to-student and staff-to-student bullying that they observe to their direct manager, or the Principal. The results of any investigation will be reported to both the target and the accused in accordance with the accompanying regulation. If either of the parties disagrees with the results of the investigation, they can appeal the findings in accordance with the regulations that accompany this policy.

### **Disciplinary Consequences/Remediation**

While we commit to a steady focus on prevention of bullying, when these incidents do occur offenders will be given remedial supports with in-school guidance regarding making positive choices in their relationships with others. If appropriate, disciplinary action will be taken by the administration. If the behavior rises to the level of criminal activity, law enforcement will be contacted. Consequences for a student who commits an act of bullying shall be unique to the individual incident and will vary in method and severity according to the nature of the behavior, the developmental age of the student, and will be consistent with both the districts and PROUD Academy's Code of Conduct.

### **5.2 HOURS OF WORK**

All employees are expected to sign in and sign out on each school day at the times specified in their respective employment contracts, unless a later start or earlier finish is required by the employee's direct manager or the Principal or otherwise approved in advance.

All full-time employees are encouraged and, in some cases, required to attend School events occurring outside of school hours. Employees are generally expected to attend and assist with Progress Report Conference Nights and occasional after-hours events, such as pot-luck dinners, picnics, and other events and activities identified by the School from time to time, but no more than two (2) days per month.

The School reserves the right to make exceptions to assigned start times and finishes in individual cases so that employees can pursue advanced degrees or continuing education programs that do not interfere with classroom instruction or other business critical meetings, including without limitation child study team meetings, grade level meetings, professional development sessions, and report card nights, among others. The School's decision about whether to grant an exception in a particular case shall be in the

School's sole discretion and may depend on a number of factors, including the employee's tenure at the School, the employee's performance to date, the School's business needs, and other business considerations.

### **5.3 ATTENDANCE, PUNCTUALITY, AND PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING TARDINESS AND ABSENCES**

PROUD Academy expects regular attendance and punctuality from all employees. Employees are expected to make medical and other personal appointments during non-working hours whenever possible. If an employee knows that he or she will be unable to report to work or is going to be late, the employee must notify his or her direct manager in person or by telephone as early as possible, but no later than 7:00 a.m. on the day of the absence or lateness, unless physically unable to do so, as well as each day of absence or lateness thereafter, unless, in the case of a continuing absence, the direct manager has authorized less frequent call-ins. If the direct manager is not available, the employee must notify the Principal or Principal. Leaving a message with a coworker is not sufficient. Likewise, requesting that a doctor's office submit medical documentation regarding the need for a sick day does not satisfy the employee's obligation to notify his or her direct manager by telephone or in person regarding the absence.

If the employee is absent from work for five (5) or more consecutive days due to an illness, injury, or other reason, or for repeated periods of lesser duration, or in other circumstances where the School deems it appropriate, the School may require medical certification or other documentation regarding the absence and medical clearance to return to work, where applicable, through the employee's doctor. Employees who have more than two (2) unplanned absences during the academic year may, among other things, be required to provide their direct manager with requested documentation for any additional lateness or absence, regardless of duration.

If an employee fails to notify his or her direct manager as required by this policy, unless otherwise physically unable to do so, the employee will be deemed a "no-call, no-show" and may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. An absence for three (3) consecutive days without proper notification is regarded as a voluntary resignation without notice, effective as of the start of the third workday.

Excessive absenteeism, repeated tardiness, and failure to properly notify the employee's direct manager are all violations of the School's attendance policy that may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Nothing contained in this policy, however, is intended to or does alter the at-will nature of the employment relationship. The School in its sole discretion shall make determinations as to whether termination of employment is appropriate in a particular case.

### **5.4 PROFESSIONAL DRESS**

PROUD Academy strives to demonstrate to families, students and the larger community the importance of our School's work and the professionalism of our educators. PROUD Academy requires employees to dress professionally in neat and clean attire that is not distracting to students or others whenever employees report to work and during School-related meetings and events, especially during parent/caregiver-teacher conferences. A neat appearance and personal hygiene are required regardless of whether you are a member of the administrative staff or work in a classroom. Typically, male employees are expected to wear a shirt and tie and female employees are expected to wear comparably professional attire. PROUD Academy will sponsor events from time to time when employees are permitted to wear more casual attire, including, for example, jeans and sneakers. Some examples of clothing that should not be worn, even when more casual clothing is permitted include tight or revealing attire, such as uncovered tank or halter tops, mini-skirts, bike shorts, cut-off shorts, exercise clothing,

tee-shirts (unless identifiable as promoting an educational institution), beach wear, and sandals/ flip-flops.

Employees who violate the School's dress policy may be subject to discipline and may be sent home to change clothing. Nothing contained in this policy, however, is intended to or does alter the at-will nature of the employment relationship. The School in its sole discretion shall make determinations as to whether termination of employment is appropriate in a particular case.

## **5.5 PROFESSIONAL EVALUATION PROCESS**

PROUD Academy is committed to constant improvement and learning and considers all instructional time an opportunity to improve. Observations of instructional and professional practice will occur on a regular, ongoing basis and will include formal, informal, and pop-in classroom visits and observations. Educators will be observed in formal as well as informal settings, and all interactions at the workplace, or during an off-site experience as a representative of PROUD Academy are considered experiences that are part of your professional obligations. Most observations will be unannounced with the goal of viewing instruction and interactions at different points in the academic schedule. Observations will be followed by prompt written and/or face-to-face feedback that outlines next steps for improving practice.

Formal evaluation meetings will be a culmination of formal and informal observations, professional expectations, and general job performance. Staff will be evaluated in alignment with the Connecticut Guidelines for Educator and Leader Evaluation and Support.<sup>2</sup> From time to time, student achievement results (both growth and absolute achievement) will also be included in evaluations. Areas of strength and areas where growth is required will be discussed and goals will be set for further development in those areas.

### **Results of Negative Performance Evaluations**

PROUD Academy expects that all employees will carry out their responsibilities fully and to the best of their abilities and conduct themselves in a manner that best serves the School's interests. If an employee's work performance does not meet satisfactory standards, his or her direct manager, in conjunction with the Principal, may decide to take any one or more of the following steps, among others:

- Meet with the employee to identify areas of weakness and create a Plan to address deficiencies, called a "Performance Improvement Plan" (PIP).
- Counsel and recommend ways to address weaknesses within a specified time frame.
- Warn the employee verbally or in writing, with a copy to the employee's personnel file.
- Impose other discipline, such as an unpaid suspension.
- Terminate the employee's employment.

The steps outlined above are not progressive in nature and do not alter the at-will nature of employment. The School reserves the right in each case to take whatever corrective or disciplinary action it deems appropriate, up to and including termination of employment.

The PIP focuses primarily on area(s) in which the employee must demonstrate improvement, and outlines explicit, time-specific goals that the employee should work to meet. The PIP also defines the support and supervision that the employee can expect to receive from his or her direct manager while working to meet those goals. The School reserves the right to administer a PIP at any time, not just

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<sup>2</sup><https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/digest/2023-24/ctguidelines2023.pdf>

following a formal evaluation. Additionally, failure to show growth in specified areas on a Professional Improvement Plan could lead to further disciplinary action up to and including termination.

### **Corrective Action**

PROUD Academy expects the highest quality performance from all employees. An employee's failure to meet these expectations may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. All forms of substandard performance, work of unacceptable quality or quantity, excessive absenteeism or tardiness, violations of school policies or procedures, misconduct, insubordination, any other form of improper conduct, and conduct which presents even the appearance of impropriety may result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge. Most performance problems will be addressed using progressive discipline, which may include an oral warning, a written warning, a probation period, and then discharge. In cases of serious misconduct, however, certain steps of the progressive discipline process may be skipped, or immediate discharge may be warranted.

## **5.6 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

PROUD Academy believes that the professional development of teachers and staff is integral to the academic success of students. We are committed to providing opportunities for professional development to all employees. Many of these opportunities will occur at the School and will be led by a member of the PROUD Academy staff or an outside consultant. PROUD Academy may also support employee participation in off-site professional development activities conducted by outside organizations; however, these opportunities may not be guaranteed. An employee can request such additional Professional Development by reaching out to his/her direct manager. Further, the school may request that an employee attend training; in this event, all costs associated with the required professional development would be covered by the school.

### **Educational Assistance Program**

As part of its commitment to professional development, PROUD Academy has established an Educational Assistance Program to provide educational benefits under Section 127 of the Internal Revenue Code to eligible employees of the School.

### **Eligible Educational Opportunities and Expenses**

Through the Educational Assistance Program, PROUD Academy will provide financial assistance to help employees pay for courses, certification programs, and examinations requested by the School or voluntarily pursued by employees interested in furthering their formal education particularly in the area of special education, and EL/ML or intervention services. PROUD Academy's financial assistance may be used to pay for expenses including tuition, fees, and books, but may not be used to pay for meal, lodging, or transportation expenses incurred by the employee while pursuing the educational opportunity. The educational opportunities and expenses covered through this Educational Assistance Program must be approved in advance by the School.

### **Eligible Employees**

Educational assistance is available to all teachers employed by PROUD Academy and will be considered for any other educator who is interested in pursuing certification in special education, EL/ML services, or other similar licensure that will empower that employee to best serve students with exceptional needs. Employees may pursue educational opportunities during active employment or during an approved leave of absence; each case will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

## **Program Benefits**

PROUD Academy will require specific programs, with costs covered by the school, for all teachers. Additionally, the school will consider financial assistance totaling \$1,000 per calendar year to each eligible employee (non-teachers) interested in furthering certification and/or licensure needed to support students with exceptional needs. The School will consider offering greater financial assistance to eligible employees on a discretionary basis. For tax purposes, an eligible employee who receives financial assistance through this Educational Assistance Program is entitled to exclude the assistance from their gross income, up to a maximum of \$5,250 per calendar year.

While successful completion of a course of study improves an employee's educational background, such accomplishment does not obligate PROUD Academy to reward an employee who participates in this Educational Assistance Program with promotion, reassignment, compensation increase, or other employment-related benefits.

## **Program Procedures**

Employees interested in participating in this Educational Assistance Program (those that are not employed as "Teacher Residents") must contact the Director of Operations as well as his/her direct manager for approval at least thirty (30) days before course, program, or examination registration. Following approval, PROUD Academy will determine the amount of educational assistance and the appropriate method of payment (i.e., reimbursing the employee or paying the educational institution directly on the employee's behalf).

Upon the employee's completion of an approved course, program, or examination, PROUD Academy reserves the right to receive a copy of the employee's grade report.

## **5.7 NO SOLICITATION OR DISTRIBUTION POLICY**

It is the policy of PROUD Academy not to permit private or personal solicitation by one School employee of another employee for any purpose during working time or in student areas. Distribution by School employees of private or personal advertising materials, handbills, or printed or written literature of any kind to any other employee during working time or in student areas is also prohibited. In addition, employees are not permitted to use the School's e-mail systems to solicit for outside commercial ventures, religious or political causes, or third-party organizations. Loitering by School employees on or about the premises after work hours is not permitted.

This policy does not apply to solicitation or distribution of materials, handbills, or printed or written literature by the School or its management for legitimate business purposes (as determined by the School in its sole discretion).

## **5.8 SCHOOL PROPERTY**

All School property belongs to PROUD Academy, including but not limited to, desks, chairs, bookcases, laptop computers, school phones, and file cabinets. Employees do not have any right to privacy with respect to this property. School equipment is intended for school-related business, and personal use should be kept to a minimum without prior approval from the Principal.

## **5.9 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY**

It is the policy of PROUD Academy to encourage educational innovation among its staff. As a result, any writings and other creations that an employee prepares, creates, writes, initiates or otherwise develops on they, them, his or her own, without relying on previously created or developed PROUD Academy materials, belongs to the employee. However, all employees have agreed to, and are bound by, a Confidentiality / Ownership of Intellectual Property / Work Product or similar provision in their signed offer letter which guarantees that the School will forever have the right to use such intellectual property free of charge. Those provisions also prohibit employees from trying to sell intellectual property developed in connection with their employment at PROUD Academy while they remain employed by the School.

To avoid any confusion or doubt, any creations or materials specifically developed in exchange for additional compensation are considered to be the intellectual property of the School.

## **5.10 EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENTS**

All expenses must be approved in advance by the Principal. Requested reimbursement for all expenses must meet the following requirements to be eligible for reimbursement:

- The request must be made within six (6) weeks (thirty (30) business days) of the date the expense was incurred.
- The request must be in writing to the employee's direct manager as well as the Principal.
- The request must list each expense incurred and must provide an accompanying receipt (or, in the case of mileage reimbursement, a written description of the location of the professional development activity and the number of miles traveled).

The final decision on whether to reimburse an employee for any expense will be made by either the Principal or the Principal. Sales Tax will not be reimbursed; employees will be encouraged to show proof of NFP status of the school when purchasing items to avoid this expense.

## **5.11 PERSONAL PROPERTY**

PROUD Academy is not responsible for loss or damage of the personal property or any employee, even if the damage or loss occurs on School grounds. Employees are expected to take precautions to protect their personal property and should leave valuable property at home.

## **Section 6 - Separations and Terminations**

### **6.1 VOLUNTARY TERMINATIONS**

While employment is at-will and the employee may resign at any time, the School asks all employees who decide to resign from employment to submit a written notice of resignation to the Principal and Principal at least one (1) month (or 4 weeks) prior to the suggested resignation date. Whenever feasible, the School asks employees to provide more notification if possible. The Principal, upon resignation, is asked to provide at least two (2) months' written notice to the Board of Directors.

### **6.2 INVOLUNTARY TERMINATION**

To ensure orderly operations and provide the best possible work environment, PROUD Academy expects employees to follow rules of conduct that protect the interests and safety of the School and its students, employees, and other service providers. Employees should remember that unless otherwise specified in an offer letter or employment contract, your employment is "at-will," which means that both you and

the School may terminate the employment relationship at any time, for any reason, with or without notice or cause.

The School reserves the to take whatever corrective or disciplinary action it deems appropriate, up to and including termination of employment in situations in which school rules have been broken, safety is compromised, or where the day-to-day operations of the school are unstable as a result of the actions of an employee.

### **6.3 POST-TERMINATION BENEFITS AND POLICIES**

The final date of employment is the final date on which the employee serves his or her duties at PROUD Academy and not necessarily the date upon which the employee receives his or her final paycheck. Employees who are terminated or who resign for any reason will be entitled to all earned but unpaid salary or wages through the date of termination.

Each of the following applies to employees who are terminated from employment with the School or who resign or decide not to return to the School for any reason:

- Employees will generally not receive compensation for unused vacation days, no-fault time, or sick days.
- Employees will not generally be entitled to severance pay.
- Employees will be advised of their rights, if any, under the federal law known as "COBRA" to continue group health and group dental insurance coverage for themselves and their dependents at group rates, but at their own expense.
- Employees must return all school property, materials and supplies in their possession or control to the employee's direct manager.
- Employees may not take any documents, files, or copies of such documents or files, including, but not limited to memos, computer-stored items, lists, or other similar information without the express permission of their direct manager or the Principal.

### **6.4 EMPLOYEE REFERENCES**

It is the School's general policy to provide only the following information in response to reference inquiries: confirmation of name, dates of employment, job titles during employment, and if asked, final wages or salary.

## **Section 7 Workplace Safety and Environment**

### **7.1 CODE OF CONDUCT**

Each employee has an obligation to observe and follow the School's policies and to maintain proper standards of conduct at all times. All employees must avoid any behavior that might be harmful to themselves, co-workers, students or the School, or that might be viewed unfavorably by those with whom the School does business, by our students or families, or by the community. The following list includes unacceptable activities (this is not an exhaustive list) of conduct that can result in disciplinary action, up to and including suspension without pay and/or termination, and that nothing in this section of the Manual or on this list alters the at-will nature of employment at PROUD Academy.

1. Violation of any School rule or any action that is detrimental to the School's efforts to operate successfully.
2. Negligence or any careless action which endangers the safety of another person.

3. Possession, use or sale of any controlled substances (except medications prescribed by a physician that do not impair work performance) during working hours.
4. Engaging in criminal conduct or acts of violence or making threats of violence toward anyone on School premises or when representing the School; fighting, or provoking a fight on School property, or negligent damage of property;
5. Insubordination or refusing to obey instructions properly issued by your direct manager or the Principal pertaining to your work or the refusal to perform a special assignment.
6. Theft or unauthorized possession of School property.
7. Dishonesty or misrepresentation on any official school paperwork, including but not limited to application for employment, resume, status of teacher certification or other important and official documentation.
8. Immoral conduct or indecency on School property.
9. Unsatisfactory or careless work; failure to meet performance standards as outlined by a direct manager, in your job description, or as explained and trained in a professional development or meeting.
10. Excessive tardiness or absences; leaving work before the end of a workday or not being ready to work at the start of a workday without explicit approval of the Principal.
11. Sleeping or loitering during working hours
12. Obscene or abusive language toward any member of the school community; rudeness towards parent/caregivers, students or employees; and/or antagonistic conduct on the School premises; and
13. Failure to immediately report injury or harm to a student.

## **7.2 DIGNITY FOR ALL**

### **Dignity Act: Respect for All**

All pupils have the right to attend a safe, secure, and peaceful school environment. PROUD Academy recognizes that all forms of discrimination including but not limited to harassment, hazing and bullying are detrimental to student outcomes. PROUD Academy prohibits all forms of discrimination on school grounds, school buses and at all school-sponsored activities, programs and events. Discrimination, harassment, hazing or bullying that commences outside of school grounds that can be reasonably expected to materially and substantially interfere with operation of the school or impinge on the rights of students are also prohibited, and may be subject to disciplinary consequences. This includes acts that are motivated by a pupil's actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry or ethnicity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, age, physical, mental, emotional, or learning disability, gender, gender identity and expression, obesity, or other distinguishing personal characteristics, or based on association with any person identified in any of the above categories.

### **Bullying**

Bullying is understood to be a hostile activity which harms or induces fear through the threat of further aggression. In order to facilitate implementation of this policy and to prevent behaviors from rising to a violation of law, this policy will use the term bullying (which is usually subsumed under the term "harassment") to describe a range of misbehaviors such as harassment, hazing, intimidation or discrimination.

### **Discrimination**

Discrimination is the act of denying rights, benefits, justice, equitable treatment or access afforded to all others, to an individual or group of people because of the group, class or category to which that person belongs.

### **Hazing**

Hazing is an induction, initiation or membership process involving harassment which leads to public humiliation, physical or emotional discomfort, bodily injury or public ridicule or creates a situation where public humiliation, physical or emotional discomfort, bodily injury or public ridicule is likely to occur.

### **Harassment**

The Dignity for All Students Act (10-18 of Education Law) defines harassment as the creation of a hostile environment by conduct or by verbal threats, intimidation or abuse that has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits, or mental, emotional or physical well-being; or conduct, verbal threats, intimidation or abuse that reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause a student to fear for his or her physical safety. The harassing behavior may be based on any characteristic, including but not limited to a person's actual or perceived: race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sex, sexual orientation, or gender (including gender identity and expression). In some instances, bullying or harassment may constitute a violation of an individual's civil rights.

### **Prevention**

The School setting provides an opportunity to teach children, and emphasize among staff, that an inclusive school environment means that we have a deep respect and seek to gain understanding of others. PROUD Academy's core pillars are designed to prevent incidents of bullying and support our school community to have supportive relationships among staff, students, and families. Staff members and students will be sensitized, through professional development and instruction, to the warning signs of bullying, as well as to their responsibility to become actively involved in the prevention of bullying before overt acts occur.

### **Intervention**

Intervention by adults and bystanders is an important step in preventing escalation and resolving issues regarding bullying and discrimination. Intervention and remedial responses to such incidents are essential to building the school community that allows PROUD Academy to be inclusive of all types of people and learners. Staff is expected, when aware of bullying, to either refer the student to designated resources for assistance, or to intervene in accordance with this policy and regulation. Staff is prohibited from any behavior that could constitute bullying, harassment, or discrimination; whether it be among fellow staff, or in regard to students and should one staff member become aware of these actions by another staff member, s/he must report it to his/her direct manager or the Principal.

### **Provisions for Students Who Don't Feel Safe at School**

Students who do not feel safe at school are limited in their capacity to learn and reach their academic potential. Staff, when aware of bullying, should determine if accommodations are needed in order to help ensure the safety of the student and bring this to the attention of the Principal. The school team with the student and his/her family will work together to define and implement any needed accommodations. Each case will be handled individually, and the student, parent/caregiver/guardian,

and school administration will collaborate to establish safety provisions that best meet the needs of the targeted student. Follow-up discussion and/or meetings will be scheduled, as needed, to ensure that safety concerns have been adequately addressed and to determine when and if accommodations need to be changed or discontinued.

### **Non-Retaliation**

All complainants and those who participate in the investigation (as long as they have been in complete compliance with the law), who have acted reasonably and in good faith, have the right to be free from retaliation of any kind.

### **False Claims**

Students or staff who make false claims of harassment or bullying will be subject to disciplinary action as defined by this policy.

### **Dissemination, Monitoring, Review, and Reporting**

This policy, or a plain language summary, shall be published in student registration materials, student, parent/caregiver and employee handbooks. A bullying complaint form will be available through the main office, and through the school social worker. The School will ensure that reporting of information to the public will be in a manner that complies with student privacy rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

## **7.3 RELATIONSHIPS**

The success of the School depends upon the quality of the relationships between the School, our educators, parents/caregivers, students and the general public.

### **FERPA**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents/caregivers and students over eighteen (18) years of age certain rights with respect to the student's education records. The Model Notification of Rights and the school's directory information public notice are posted in a public employee area and will be addressed in detail during faculty orientation.

### **Relationships with Stakeholders**

The perception parents/caregivers' have of the School and their interest and willingness to enroll their children in PROUD Academy depends on the people who serve them. Regardless of your position at the school, as an employee you become a School ambassador. We ask that all employees assume the benefit of the doubt, follow the procedures outlined in this handbook to solve frustrations with the school, and that you help give parents/caregivers and students a good impression of the PROUD Academy. We expect all employees to:

1. Act competently and perform your responsibilities to the best of your ability.
2. Be courteous and respectful at all times when you are representing PROUD Academy.
3. Communicate pleasantly and respectfully with others.
4. Seek support when you need it and accept feedback as support.
5. Follow up on concerns and questions promptly and provide professional replies to inquiries and requests.

6. Take pride in your work.

### **Relationships with Students**

School employees are strictly prohibited from engaging in personal relationships with students, which are outside the scope of a professional adult/student relationship regardless of the location of this relationship. Similarly, employees are forbidden from engaging in relationships with students that have an appearance of being outside of a professional adult/student relationship. Employees who violate this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination. If the conduct is believed to constitute a crime under state laws, PROUD Academy has the obligation to report the relationship to law enforcement agencies and/or Child Protective Services as well as the family of the student involved in the relationship.

PROUD Academy recognizes that employees may develop personal relationships in the course of their employment. Co-workers are strongly discouraged from dating or pursuing romantic or sexual relationships with each other and should report such relationships to direct managers. There will be no retaliation for such reporting.

To avoid conflicts of interest or other concerns, direct managers are not permitted to date or engage in sexual relationships with subordinate employees. In the event that a dating or sexual relationship develops between a direct manager and a subordinate, the direct manager is required to promptly report the relationship to his or her immediate direct manager and the Principal. One of the parties may be required to transfer, if a position is available, or they may be required to choose which of them will resign. Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

### **Nepotism**

If a PROUD Academy staff member has an immediate family member that is also hired at PROUD Academy, certain policies regarding nepotism will apply. Any family member in a direct manager role may not be in a direct manager role to his/her family member under any circumstances. All such familial relationships must be reported to the board; if the relationship is deemed to create an unfair or to create a conflict of interest, action may need to be taken. One of the parties may be required to transfer, if a position is available, or they may be required to choose which of them will resign. Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Additionally, regarding relationships with family members also employed at PROUD Academy:

- Employees cannot be directly managed by members of their own family.
- Employees may be coached and supported by family members.
- Evaluations for all staff members must be completed by someone other than a family member.
- In the event that a family member is coached by his/her family member, any evaluation must be reviewed by the Principal, who will provide input.
- Only non-family members can recommend an employee for promotion; this ultimate decision will be at the discretion of the Principal.

### **7.4 IMMIGRATION LAW COMPLIANCE**

PROUD Academy does not hire anyone that is not a citizen of the United States or is not a non-citizen that is authorized to work in the United States under the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986. As a condition of employment, all new and past employees must show valid proof that they are eligible to work in the United States.

## **7.5 E-MAIL AND INTERNET – TELECOMMUNICATIONS POLICIES**

### **Right to Access, Review, and Limit Employees' Use of Technology**

PROUD Academy provides computer and communication systems to support the School's business activities. The School's "computer and communication systems" include, but are not limited to, laptops and personal computers, software, cell phone and/or telephone, voicemail and email systems, all centralized computer equipment, networks, and access to the Internet through this equipment.

All data stored in PROUD Academy's computer and communication systems (including, but not limited to, documents, and other electronic files, e-mail and recorded voicemail messages) is the property of PROUD Academy and is subject to monitoring, consistent with the requirements of applicable law. The School reserves the right, among other things, to access and review employee's voicemail messages, e-mail messages, and internet activity, including reviewing a list of websites accessed by individual users on PROUD Academy's computer and communication systems. Employees should not expect that any message transmitted using this equipment or these systems will be private.

The School may disclose the contents of voicemail and e-mail messages and Internet activity when it determines that there is a business or other appropriate reason to do so. All such messages and records of Internet activity are also subject to "backup" or other form of electronic storage or reproduction. PROUD Academy may also restrict access to certain websites that it deems are not necessary for business purposes.

### **Appropriate Use of School Technology**

Voicemail, e-mail, and Internet access are provided by the School for use by School employees primarily for School business. When employees transmit material by email (internally or externally), voicemail, or the Internet, or by "posting" to an Internet web site from School equipment, employees must comply with good business practice, common sense, and all School policies regarding communications with third parties or the public at large (especially with respect to protecting the disclosure of confidential information, about students, other employees, or otherwise). In composing and sending e-mail, employees should also take into consideration the fact that e-mail messages are considered documents, just like any other writing, and might be subject to discovery in any litigation or dispute involving the employee or the School.

PROUD Academy's computer and communication systems may not be used to create, transmit, access, receive, print, download or solicit material that is illegal, unauthorized, inappropriate, derogatory, obscene, sexually explicit or offensive, including material containing slurs, epithets, or anything that may be construed as harassment or disparagement based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, genetic information, or other protected category or characteristic. For example, the display or transmission of sexually explicit images, messages, jokes and cartoons is not allowed.

Similarly, PROUD Academy's email systems may not be used to solicit for outside commercial ventures, religious or political causes. In addition, employees are not permitted to download or disseminate copyrighted material, load or execute unlicensed software on PROUD Academy's computers or conduct any other activity in violation of applicable laws, regulations, or School policies. Employees are prohibited from intentionally disrupting the network, destracting or altering information, interfering with private information, and providing access to confidential information to unauthorized persons.

An employee who violates this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Employees should notify their immediate direct manager or the Principal upon learning of any violation of this policy.

### **Responsibility of the Employee to the School for Damages to School Property**

Employees assume all risks associated with using the School's computers and communications systems; the school will work with the employee to replace any damaged, broken, or stolen items, however it is the ultimate responsibility of the employee to take care of these belongings. Employees will be required to indemnify the School and hold it harmless to the fullest extent permitted by law, if the School is required to pay for damages caused by the employee on or through the School's property.

### **7.6 VIOLENCE-FREE WORKPLACE**

PROUD Academy strives to provide a workplace that is safe and free from all threatening and intimidating conduct. Therefore, PROUD Academy will not tolerate violence or threats of violence of any form in the workplace, at work-related functions, or outside of work if it affects the workplace. This policy applies to PROUD Academy employees, students, guests, vendors, and persons doing business with PROUD Academy. It will be a violation of this policy for any individual to engage in any conduct, verbal or physical, which intimidates, endangers, or creates the perception of intent to harm persons or property. Any violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action.

### **7.7 DISPUTE RESOLUTION**

It is the policy of PROUD Academy to treat employees in a fair and impartial manner and believes that all conflicts should be addressed in a transparent/caregiver manner in order to allow for quick resolution that best supports the whole school community. A grievance is any significant and documented employee concern that arises in the application of personnel breaches or in violation of personnel practices, either between employees and their coworkers or between employer and employees. Verbal complaints will not necessarily be considered grievances; employees who require a formal grievance procedure will be required to put this request into writing addressed to both the immediate direct manager and the Principal. In the event that an employee wishes to file a grievance against the Principal, this should be sent directly to the Chair of the Board. Employees who seek resolution of employment situations by using established procedures are assured that they will not be subjected to discrimination or retaliation or be penalized in any way for their use of these procedures.

Employees are encouraged to take complaints involving a co-worker directly to that person for discussion and resolution and to respectfully resolve conflicts in a mutually beneficial way. If the two employees are unable to resolve their differences, they may at any time request a mediation meeting with their direct manager and/or the Principal where both employees are present. The resolution of the Principal shall be considered final. Section 1 of this handbook includes additional details about complaints.

### **7.8 NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

PROUD Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, religion, disability and national and ethnic origin in administration of its policies and programs.

PROUD Academy commits to working relentlessly to empower all members of our school community of all racial and ethnic backgrounds to achieve their full potential. The adult community of the School will model the best practices and professional behavior of a diverse team. Any grievance regarding

discrimination shall be handled through the Principal and in consultation with the Board of Directors when appropriate.

No person within PROUD Academy shall intentionally commit any of the following acts for reasons prohibited by this policy:

- Discriminate in the recruitment, hiring, training, compensation, benefits, promotion, transfer termination, lay-off, reduction in workforce, or any other terms or conditions of employment.
- Make any comments, display, or distribute any materials that constitute unlawful harassment based on an individual's membership in a legally protected class.
- Deny a person any service or other program benefits based on the individual's legally protected classification.
- An employee who has become aware of violations of this provision has the affirmative obligation to report the conduct to their immediate direct manager, or if the direct manager is engrossed in the conduct, to another member of the leadership team.
- It is the policy of the School, its students, faculty, and its volunteers to provide information and program services to any and all interested parties in need of said services and for those interested in serving in a volunteer capacity, without regard to race, color, sexual orientation, age, national origin, handicap, gender, ability to pay, or any other status as protected by law.

## **7.9 ACCOMMODATIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES**

Qualified individuals with a disability may make a request for reasonable accommodation to the Principal. On receipt of an accommodation request, the Principal will meet with the requesting individual to discuss and identify the precise limitations resulting from the disability and the potential reasonable accommodation that PROUD Academy might make to help overcome those limitations. PROUD Academy may request medical certification from the individual's doctor in order to verify the disability and the precise nature of the limitations.

## **7.10 WORKPLACE SEARCHES**

To safeguard the safety and property of our employees, students and PROUD Academy, the School reserves the right to inspect any packages, parcels, purses, handbags, briefcases, or any other possession or articles carried to and from work areas. Therefore, there is no reasonable expectation of privacy with regard to items brought onto the school premises. It is considered to be part of each employee's job at PROUD Academy to cooperate fully with such searches. Refusal to cooperate may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT OF PERSONNEL POLICIES**

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the PROUD Academy Personnel Policies Handbook. I agree to read all policies and abide by the policies and procedures contained therein.

I understand that the policies, procedures and benefits contained in this handbook may be added to, modified, suspended, or terminated at the sole discretion of the School at any time. I understand that the most current version of this handbook replaces any and all prior handbooks and policies of the company.

I have entered into my employment relationship with PROUD Academy voluntarily and understand that unless my offer letter or employment contract between me and the School specifies otherwise, my employment with the School is "at-will," meaning that my employment relationship with PROUD Academy may be terminated by me or the School at any time, with or without notice or cause.

I understand that nothing contained in this handbook, or any other statement of policy or procedure shall be construed as guaranteeing my employment for a fixed term or definite period of time or any promise of future employment with, or benefits from, PROUD Academy. I understand that PROUD Academy may vary from the general guidelines contained within this handbook on a case-by-case basis and whenever the School deems it appropriate to do so.

I understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies contained in this handbook and any revisions made to it from time to time. I understand that I should consult with my direct manager regarding any questions I have that are not answered in this handbook.

PRINTED NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

**Pre-Opening Budget Statement Format**  
**Start-Up Explanation of Revenues and Expenditures**

Jan 2026 -June 2026

**Revenue**

CSP Start Up Grant	340,000.00
Private contributions (for example: Foundation X grant for \$\$)	300,000.00
Total Revenue	<b>\$ 640,000.00</b>

**Expenditures**

**Salaries and Benefits**

Salary-Administrators (for example: 10 weeks for 2 administrators)	111A	142,500.00
Salary-Teachers (for example: 6 weeks for 5 teachers)	111B	-
Salary-Other	112A	-
Salary-Support staff	112B	-
Benefits	200	27,075.00
	Subtotal	<b>\$ 169,575.00</b>

**Services and Activities**

In-service staff development	322	10,000.00
Pupil services	323	-
Field trips	324	-
Parent activities	325	-
Professional tech services	330	75,000.00
Accounting	330	50,000.00
Audit	331	-
Student transportation	510	-
Communication	530	3,000.00
Telephone	530	9,000.00
Postage and shipping	530	1,500.00
Travel	580	-
	Subtotal	<b>\$ 148,500.00</b>

**Physical Plant**

Rent	400	12,000.00
Utilities	400	\$ 480.00
Custodial services	400	-
Maintenance and repairs	400	-
Renovations/expansion	400	-
	Subtotal	<b>\$ 12,480.00</b>

**Marketing and Development**

Charter Management Org.	590	-
Advertising	590	10,000.00
Printing	590	750.00
Insurance	590	5,000.00
	Subtotal	<b>\$ 15,750.00</b>

**Supplies and Equipment**

Supplies-Instructional	611	28,000.00
Supplies-Administrative	612	9,000.00
Supplies-General	690	-
Text books	641	30,000.00
Library books	642	4,000.00
Computers	700	28,250.00
Furniture	700	60,750.00
Vehicles	700	-
Other equipment	700	29,755.00
	Subtotal	<b>\$ 189,755.00</b>

**Other Objects**

Other objects (e.g., in-kind)	800	-
	Subtotal	<b>\$ -</b>

**Loan Repayments**

Interest	900	-
Principal	900	-
	Subtotal	<b>\$ -</b>

**Total Expenditures**

**INCOME LESS EXPENDITURES**

**\$ 536,060.00**

**\$ 103,940.00**

## Projected Five Year Budget Statement Format

### Revenue

Number of students  
Per-pupil revenue  
Student entitlements (\$12,615 average per pupil for 2023-24)  
Grants CSP/Title and E-Rate  
In-kind services  
Private contributions- PCLB

	FY 1 2025-26	FY 2 2026-27	FY 3 2027-28	FY 4 2028-29	FY 5 2029-30
	50	100	150	150	150
\$	630,750	\$ 1,261,500	\$ 1,892,250	\$ 1,892,250	\$ 1,892,250
\$	132,458	\$ 264,915	\$ 397,373	\$ 397,373	\$ 397,373
	442,200.00	272,200.00	102,200.00	102,200.00	102,200.00
\$	525,000.00	\$ 450,000.00	\$ 450,000.00	\$ 225,000.00	\$ 225,000.00
\$	1,730,407.50	\$ 2,248,615.00	\$ 2,841,822.50	\$ 2,616,822.50	\$ 2,616,822.50

### Notes

Based on \$12,615 per student  
Based on Enrollment schedule SPED  
CSP and Title Grants and E-Rate based on 85% of \$32K  
PCLB Grant- Yr 1 includes \$75K of other private funding

### Expenditures

#### Salaries and Benefits

Salary-Administrators	\$ 437,500.00	\$ 460,000.00	\$ 572,500.00	\$ 572,500.00	\$ 572,500.00
Salary-Teachers	\$ 483,000.00	\$ 592,000.00	\$ 645,000.00	\$ 645,000.00	\$ 645,000.00
Salary-Other	-	-	-	-	-
Salary-Support staff	\$ 56,000.00	\$ 112,000.00	\$ 168,000.00	\$ 168,000.00	\$ 168,000.00
Benefits	\$ 185,535.00	\$ 221,160.00	\$ 263,245.00	\$ 263,245.00	\$ 263,245.00
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 1,162,035.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,385,160.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,648,745.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,648,745.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,648,745.00</b>

Based on 19% of salaries

#### Services and Activities

In-service development staff	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 17,500.00	\$ 26,250.00	\$ 26,250.00	\$ 26,250.00
Pupil services	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 135,500.00	\$ 197,075.00	\$ 222,229.00	\$ 230,465.00
Field trips	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 12,000.00
Parent activities	\$ 918.00	\$ 2,184.00	\$ 3,498.00	\$ 3,498.00	\$ 3,498.00
Professional tech services - E-Rate	\$ 32,000.00	\$ 44,000.00	\$ 45,384.00	\$ 46,125.00	\$ 48,538.00
Accounting	\$ 110,000.00	\$ 126,000.00	\$ 134,064.00	\$ 134,945.00	\$ 134,945.00
Audit	\$ 24,000.00	\$ 24,240.00	\$ 24,482.40	\$ 24,727.22	\$ 24,974.50
Student transportation	\$ 8,750.00	\$ 17,500.00	\$ 26,250.00	\$ 26,250.00	\$ 26,250.00
Communication Parent Square	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 3,366.00	\$ 4,362.00	\$ 5,290.00	\$ 6,448.00
Telephone	\$ 18,000.00	\$ 19,800.00	\$ 21,780.00	\$ 23,958.00	\$ 26,354.00
Postage and shipping	\$ 750.00	\$ 900.00	\$ 1,050.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00
Travel	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 280,918.00</b>	<b>\$ 400,490.00</b>	<b>\$ 498,195.40</b>	<b>\$ 528,472.22</b>	<b>\$ 542,922.50</b>

Consultant/Professional services for student population

E-Rate portion is flat at \$32K annually; remaining is other Tech expenses

Metro Card for half the student population for 10 months

#### Physical Plant

Rent	\$ 36,000.00	\$ 72,000.00	\$ 108,000.00	\$ 108,000.00	\$ 108,000.00
Utilities	\$ 1,440.00	\$ 1,440.00	\$ 1,440.00	\$ 1,440.00	\$ 1,440.00
Custodial services	-	-	-	-	-
Maintenance and repairs	-	-	-	-	-
Renovations/expansion	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 37,440.00</b>	<b>\$ 73,440.00</b>	<b>\$ 109,440.00</b>	<b>\$ 109,440.00</b>	<b>\$ 109,440.00</b>

4% of Rent expense

#### Marketing and Development

Charter Management Org.	-	-	-	-	-
Advertising	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 18,750.00	\$ 18,750.00	\$ 18,750.00
Printing	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
Insurance	\$ 11,000.00	\$ 13,200.00	\$ 14,520.00	\$ 15,972.00	\$ 17,569.20
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 27,000.00</b>	<b>\$ 39,200.00</b>	<b>\$ 34,270.00</b>	<b>\$ 35,722.00</b>	<b>\$ 37,319.20</b>

Student recruitment

Full year insurance yr growth of 25% and then 10%

#### Supplies and Equipment

Supplies-Instructional	\$ 35,800	\$ 103,248	\$ 134,014	\$ 134,014	\$ 134,014
Supplies-Administrative	\$ 2,000	\$ 4,160	\$ 5,300	\$ 5,400	\$ 5,500
Text books	\$ 55,000	\$ 55,000	\$ 55,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000
Library books	\$ 3,200	\$ 11,600	\$ 11,561	\$ 15,000	\$ 20,000
Supplies-General	\$ 24,000	\$ 25,200	\$ 26,460	\$ 26,460	\$ 26,460
Computers	\$ 28,250	\$ 56,500	\$ 14,125	\$ 14,125	\$ 14,125
Furniture	\$ 37,500	\$ 59,500	\$ 14,875	\$ 14,875	\$ 12,650
Vehicles	-	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 185,750.00</b>	<b>\$ 315,208.00</b>	<b>\$ 261,335.00</b>	<b>\$ 239,874.00</b>	<b>\$ 242,749.00</b>

To be capitalized

To be capitalized

#### Other Objects

Other objects (e.g., in-kind)	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ -</b>				

#### Loan Repayments

Interest	-	-	-	-	-
Principal	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ -</b>				

Total Expenditures	\$ 1,693,143.00	\$ 2,213,498.00	\$ 2,551,985.40	\$ 2,562,253.22	\$ 2,581,175.70
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INCOME LESS EXPENDITURE	\$ 37,264.50	\$ 35,117.00	\$ 289,837.10	\$ 54,569.28	\$ 35,646.80
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## Charter School Cash Flow Schedule For Year One of Operation

### Charter School Name

	Yr 1														
	Budget	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	Totals	
<b>Beginning Balance</b>	\$ 103,940.00	\$ 103,940.00	\$ 541,569.75	\$ 443,762.01	\$ 489,241.76	\$ 377,034.01	\$ 334,826.27	\$ 222,618.52	\$ 268,098.27	\$ 225,890.53	\$ 113,682.78	\$ 205,815.03	\$ 140,259.79		
<b>Revenue</b>															
Number of students	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	
Per-pupil revenue	\$ 630,750.00	\$ 157,687.50		\$ 157,687.50				\$ 157,687.50			\$ 157,687.50			\$ 630,750.00	
Student entitlements	\$ 132,457.50										\$ 44,152.50	\$ 44,152.50	\$ 44,152.50	\$ 132,457.50	
Grants	\$ 442,200.00	\$ 72,266.67	\$ 72,266.67	\$ 9,766.67	\$ 9,766.67	\$ 79,766.67	\$ 9,766.67	\$ 9,766.67	\$ 79,766.67	\$ 9,766.67	\$ 9,766.67	\$ 9,766.67	\$ 69,766.63	\$ 442,200.00	
In-kind services	-													-	
Private contributions	\$ 525,000.00	\$ 450,000.00	\$ 6,500.00	\$ 6,500.00	\$ 6,500.00	\$ 6,500.00	\$ 6,500.00	\$ 6,500.00	\$ 6,500.00	\$ 6,500.00	\$ 6,500.00	\$ 6,500.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 525,000.00	
<b>Total Revenue</b>	\$ 1,730,407.50	\$ 679,954.17	\$ 78,766.67	\$ 173,954.17	\$ 16,266.67	\$ 86,266.67	\$ 16,266.67	\$ 173,954.17	\$ 86,266.67	\$ 16,266.67	\$ 218,106.67	\$ 60,419.17	\$ 123,919.13	\$ 1,730,407.50	
<b>Expenditures</b>															
<b>Salaries and Benefits</b>															
Salary-Administrators	111A	\$ 437,500.00	\$ 36,458.33	\$ 36,458.33	\$ 36,458.33	\$ 36,458.33	\$ 36,458.33	\$ 36,458.33	\$ 36,458.33	\$ 36,458.33	\$ 36,458.33	\$ 36,458.33	\$ 36,458.33	\$ 437,500.00	
Salary-Teachers	111B	\$ 483,000.00	\$ 40,250.00	\$ 40,250.00	\$ 40,250.00	\$ 40,250.00	\$ 40,250.00	\$ 40,250.00	\$ 40,250.00	\$ 40,250.00	\$ 40,250.00	\$ 40,250.00	\$ 40,250.00	\$ 483,000.00	
Salary-Other	112A	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Salary-Support staff	112B	\$ 56,000.00	\$ 4,666.67	\$ 4,666.67	\$ 4,666.67	\$ 4,666.67	\$ 4,666.67	\$ 4,666.67	\$ 4,666.67	\$ 4,666.67	\$ 4,666.67	\$ 4,666.67	\$ 4,666.67	\$ 56,000.00	
Benefits	200	\$ 185,535.00	\$ 15,461.25	\$ 15,461.25	\$ 15,461.25	\$ 15,461.25	\$ 15,461.25	\$ 15,461.25	\$ 15,461.25	\$ 15,461.25	\$ 15,461.25	\$ 15,461.25	\$ 15,461.25	\$ 185,535.00	
<b>Subtotal</b>		\$ 1,162,035.00	\$ 96,836.25	\$ 96,836.25	\$ 96,836.25	\$ 96,836.25	\$ 96,836.25	\$ 96,836.25	\$ 96,836.25	\$ 96,836.25	\$ 96,836.25	\$ 96,836.25	\$ 96,836.25	\$ 1,162,035.00	
<b>Services and Activities</b>															
In-service development staff	322	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 20,000.00	
Pupil services	323	\$ 50,000.00		\$ 10,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 50,000.00	
Field trips	324	\$ 2,500.00		\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	
Parent activities	325	\$ 918.00	\$ 76.50	\$ 76.50	\$ 76.50	\$ 76.50	\$ 76.50	\$ 76.50	\$ 76.50	\$ 76.50	\$ 76.50	\$ 76.50	\$ 76.50	\$ 918.00	
Professional tech services	340	\$ 32,000.00	\$ 2,666.67	\$ 2,666.67	\$ 2,666.67	\$ 2,666.67	\$ 2,666.67	\$ 2,666.67	\$ 2,666.67	\$ 2,666.67	\$ 2,666.67	\$ 2,666.67	\$ 2,666.67	\$ 32,000.00	
Accounting	330	\$ 110,000.00	\$ 9,166.67	\$ 9,166.67	\$ 9,166.67	\$ 9,166.67	\$ 9,166.67	\$ 9,166.67	\$ 9,166.67	\$ 9,166.67	\$ 9,166.67	\$ 9,166.67	\$ 9,166.67	\$ 110,000.00	
Audit	341	\$ 24,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 24,000.00	
Student transportation	510	\$ 8,750.00	\$ 729.17	\$ 729.17	\$ 729.17	\$ 729.17	\$ 729.17	\$ 729.17	\$ 729.17	\$ 729.17	\$ 729.17	\$ 729.17	\$ 729.17	\$ 8,750.00	
Communication	530	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 12,000.00	
Telephone	530	\$ 18,000.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 18,000.00	
Postage and shipping	530	\$ 750.00	\$ 62.50	\$ 62.50	\$ 62.50	\$ 62.50	\$ 62.50	\$ 62.50	\$ 62.50	\$ 62.50	\$ 62.50	\$ 62.50	\$ 62.50	\$ 750.00	
Travel	580	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 2,000.00	
<b>Subtotal</b>		\$ 280,918.00	\$ 25,368.17	\$ 34,868.17	\$ 23,118.17	\$ 23,118.17	\$ 23,118.17	\$ 23,118.17	\$ 23,118.17	\$ 23,118.17	\$ 20,618.17	\$ 20,618.17	\$ 17,618.17	\$ 280,918.00	
<b>Physical Plant</b>															
Rent	400	\$ 36,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 36,000.00	
Utilities	400	\$ 1,440.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 1,440.00	
Custodial services	400	\$ -												\$ -	
Maintenance and repairs	400	\$ -												\$ -	
Renovations/expansion	400	\$ -												\$ -	
<b>Subtotal</b>		\$ 37,440.00	\$ 3,120.00	\$ 3,120.00	\$ 3,120.00	\$ 3,120.00	\$ 3,120.00	\$ 3,120.00	\$ 3,120.00	\$ 3,120.00	\$ 3,120.00	\$ 3,120.00	\$ 3,120.00	\$ 37,440.00	
<b>Marketing and Development</b>															
Charter Management Org.	590	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 15,000.00	
Advertising	590	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 83.33	\$ 83.33	\$ 83.33	\$ 83.33	\$ 83.33	\$ 83.33	\$ 83.33	\$ 83.33	\$ 83.33	\$ 83.33	\$ 83.33	\$ 1,000.00	
Printing	590	\$ 11,000.00	\$ 916.67	\$ 916.67	\$ 916.67	\$ 916.67	\$ 916.67	\$ 916.67	\$ 916.67	\$ 916.67	\$ 916.67	\$ 916.67	\$ 916.67	\$ 11,000.00	
Insurance	590	\$ 27,000.00	\$ 2,250.00	\$ 2,250.00	\$ 2,250.00	\$ 2,250.00	\$ 2,250.00	\$ 2,250.00	\$ 2,250.00	\$ 2,250.00	\$ 2,250.00	\$ 2,250.00	\$ 2,250.00	\$ 27,000.00	
<b>Subtotal</b>		\$ 185,750.00	\$ 114,750.00	\$ 39,500.00	\$ 3,150.00	\$ 3,150.00	\$ 3,150.00	\$ 3,150.00	\$ 3,150.00	\$ 3,150.00	\$ 3,150.00	\$ 3,150.00	\$ 3,150.00	\$ 185,750.00	
<b>Supplies and Equipment</b>															
Supplies-Instructional	611	\$ 35,800.00	\$ 2,983.33	\$ 2,983.33	\$ 2,983.33	\$ 2,983.33	\$ 2,983.33	\$ 2,983.33	\$ 2,983.33	\$ 2,983.33	\$ 2,983.33	\$ 2,983.33	\$ 2,983.33	\$ 35,800.00	
Supplies-Administrative	612	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 2,000.00	
Text books	641	\$ 55,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 25,000.00										\$ 55,000.00	
Library books	642	\$ 3,200.00	\$ 1,600.00	\$ 1,600.00										\$ 3,200.00	
Supplies-General	690	\$ 24,000.00	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 4,000.00										\$ 24,000.00	
Computers	700	\$ 28,250.00	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 3,250.00										\$ 28,250.00	
Furniture	700	\$ 37,500.00	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 2,500.00										\$ 37,500.00	
Vehicles	700	\$ -												\$ -	
Other Equipment	700	\$ -												\$ -	
<b>Subtotal</b>		\$ 185,750.00	\$ 114,750.00	\$ 39,500.00	\$ 3,150.00	\$ 3,150.00	\$ 3,150.00	\$ 3,150.00	\$ 3,150.00	\$ 3,150.00	\$ 3,150.00	\$ 3,150.00	\$ 3,150.00	\$ 185,750.00	
<b>Other Objects</b>															
Other objects (e.g., in-kind)	800	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
<b>Subtotal</b>		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
<b>Loan Repayments</b>															
Interest	900	\$ -												\$ -	
Principal	900	\$ -												\$ -	
<b>Subtotal</b>		\$ -												\$ -	
<b>Total Expenditures</b>		\$ 1,693,143.00	\$ 242,324.42	\$ 176,574.42	\$ 128,474.42	\$ 128,474.42	\$ 128,474.42	\$ 128,474.42	\$ 128,474.42	\$ 128,474.42	\$ 128,474.42	\$ 128,474.42	\$ 125,974.42	\$ 125,974.42	
<b>ENDING CASH BALANCE</b>		\$ 141,204.50	\$ 541,569.75	\$ 443,762.01	\$ 489,241.76	\$ 377,034.01	\$ 334,826.27	\$ 222,618.52	\$ 268,098.27	\$ 225,890.53	\$ 113,682.78	\$ 205,815.03	\$ 140,259.79	\$ 141,204.50	\$ 141,204.50

## Charter School Cash Flow Schedule For Year Two of Operation

### Charter School Name

	Yr 2														
	Budget	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	Totals	
<b>Beginning Balance</b>	\$ 541,569.75	\$ 541,569.75	\$ 1,073,534.92	\$ 919,800.09	\$ 1,074,840.26	\$ 914,505.43	\$ 780,670.60	\$ 620,335.77	\$ 775,375.94	\$ 641,541.11	\$ 481,206.28	\$ 724,551.45	\$ 623,681.62		
<b>Revenue</b>															
Number of students	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100		
Per-pupil revenue	\$ 1,261,500.00	\$ 315,375.00		\$ 315,375.00				\$ 315,375.00			\$ 315,375.00			\$ 1,261,500.00	
Student entitlements	\$ 264,915.00										\$ 88,305.00	\$ 88,305.00	\$ 88,305.00	\$ 264,915.00	
Grants	\$ 272,200.00	\$ 36,266.67	\$ 72,266.67	\$ 9,766.67	\$ 9,766.67	\$ 36,266.67	\$ 9,766.67	\$ 36,266.67	\$ 9,766.67	\$ 9,766.67	\$ 9,766.67	\$ 9,766.67	\$ 22,766.63	\$ 272,200.00	
In-kind services	-													\$ -	
Private contributions	\$ 450,000.00	\$ 450,000.00												\$ 450,000.00	
<b>Total Revenue</b>	\$ 2,248,615.00	\$ 801,641.67	\$ 72,266.67	\$ 325,141.67	\$ 9,766.67	\$ 36,266.67	\$ 9,766.67	\$ 325,141.67	\$ 36,266.67	\$ 9,766.67	\$ 413,446.67	\$ 98,071.67	\$ 111,071.63	\$ 2,248,615.00	
<b>Expenditures</b>															
<b>Salaries and Benefits</b>															
Salary-Administrators	\$ 460,000.00	\$ 38,333.33	\$ 38,333.33	\$ 38,333.33	\$ 38,333.33	\$ 38,333.33	\$ 38,333.33	\$ 38,333.33	\$ 38,333.33	\$ 38,333.33	\$ 38,333.33	\$ 38,333.33	\$ 38,333.33	\$ 460,000.00	
Salary-Teachers	\$ 592,000.00	\$ 49,333.33	\$ 49,333.33	\$ 49,333.33	\$ 49,333.33	\$ 49,333.33	\$ 49,333.33	\$ 49,333.33	\$ 49,333.33	\$ 49,333.33	\$ 49,333.33	\$ 49,333.33	\$ 49,333.33	\$ 592,000.00	
Salary-Other	-	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Salary-Support staff	\$ 112,000.00	\$ 9,333.33	\$ 9,333.33	\$ 9,333.33	\$ 9,333.33	\$ 9,333.33	\$ 9,333.33	\$ 9,333.33	\$ 9,333.33	\$ 9,333.33	\$ 9,333.33	\$ 9,333.33	\$ 9,333.33	\$ 112,000.00	
Benefits	\$ 221,160.00	\$ 18,430.00	\$ 18,430.00	\$ 18,430.00	\$ 18,430.00	\$ 18,430.00	\$ 18,430.00	\$ 18,430.00	\$ 18,430.00	\$ 18,430.00	\$ 18,430.00	\$ 18,430.00	\$ 18,430.00	\$ 221,160.00	
<b>Subtotal</b>	\$ 1,385,160.00	\$ 115,430.00	\$ 115,430.00	\$ 115,430.00	\$ 115,430.00	\$ 115,430.00	\$ 115,430.00	\$ 115,430.00	\$ 115,430.00	\$ 115,430.00	\$ 115,430.00	\$ 115,430.00	\$ 115,430.00	\$ 1,385,160.00	
<b>Services and Activities</b>															
In-service development staff	322	\$ 17,500.00	\$ 8,750.00	\$ 875.00	\$ 875.00	\$ 875.00	\$ 875.00	\$ 875.00	\$ 875.00	\$ 875.00	\$ 875.00	\$ 875.00	\$ 875.00	\$ 17,500.00	
Pupil services	323	\$ 135,500.00		\$ 10,000.00	\$ 13,550.00	\$ 13,550.00	\$ 13,550.00	\$ 13,550.00	\$ 13,550.00	\$ 13,550.00	\$ 13,550.00	\$ 13,550.00	\$ 13,550.00	\$ 135,500.00	
Field trips	324	\$ 7,500.00			\$ 750.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 7,500.00	
Parent activities	325	\$ 2,184.00	\$ 182.00	\$ 182.00	\$ 182.00	\$ 182.00	\$ 182.00	\$ 182.00	\$ 182.00	\$ 182.00	\$ 182.00	\$ 182.00	\$ 182.00	\$ 2,184.00	
Professional tech services	340	\$ 44,000.00	\$ 3,666.67	\$ 3,666.67	\$ 3,666.67	\$ 3,666.67	\$ 3,666.67	\$ 3,666.67	\$ 3,666.67	\$ 3,666.67	\$ 3,666.67	\$ 3,666.67	\$ 3,666.67	\$ 44,000.00	
Accounting	330	\$ 126,000.00	\$ 10,500.00	\$ 10,500.00	\$ 10,500.00	\$ 10,500.00	\$ 10,500.00	\$ 10,500.00	\$ 10,500.00	\$ 10,500.00	\$ 10,500.00	\$ 10,500.00	\$ 10,500.00	\$ 126,000.00	
Audit	341	\$ 24,240.00	\$ 2,020.00	\$ 2,020.00	\$ 2,020.00	\$ 2,020.00	\$ 2,020.00	\$ 2,020.00	\$ 2,020.00	\$ 2,020.00	\$ 2,020.00	\$ 2,020.00	\$ 2,020.00	\$ 24,240.00	
Student transportation	510	\$ 17,500.00	\$ 1,458.33	\$ 1,458.33	\$ 1,458.33	\$ 1,458.33	\$ 1,458.33	\$ 1,458.33	\$ 1,458.33	\$ 1,458.33	\$ 1,458.33	\$ 1,458.33	\$ 1,458.33	\$ 17,500.00	
Communication	530	\$ 3,366.00	\$ 280.50	\$ 280.50	\$ 280.50	\$ 280.50	\$ 280.50	\$ 280.50	\$ 280.50	\$ 280.50	\$ 280.50	\$ 280.50	\$ 280.50	\$ 3,366.00	
Telephone	530	\$ 19,800.00	\$ 1,650.00	\$ 1,650.00	\$ 1,650.00	\$ 1,650.00	\$ 1,650.00	\$ 1,650.00	\$ 1,650.00	\$ 1,650.00	\$ 1,650.00	\$ 1,650.00	\$ 1,650.00	\$ 19,800.00	
Postage and shipping	530	\$ 900.00	\$ 75.00	\$ 75.00	\$ 75.00	\$ 75.00	\$ 75.00	\$ 75.00	\$ 75.00	\$ 75.00	\$ 75.00	\$ 75.00	\$ 75.00	\$ 900.00	
Travel	580	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 2,000.00	
<b>Subtotal</b>	\$ 400,490.00	\$ 28,749.17	\$ 30,874.17	\$ 35,174.17	\$ 35,174.17	\$ 35,174.17	\$ 35,174.17	\$ 35,174.17	\$ 35,174.17	\$ 35,174.17	\$ 35,174.17	\$ 35,174.17	\$ 35,174.17	\$ 24,299.17	
<b>Physical Plant</b>															
Rent	400	\$ 72,000.00	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 72,000.00	
Utilities	400	\$ 1,440.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 1,440.00	
Custodial services	400	-												\$ -	
Maintenance and repairs	400	-												\$ -	
Renovations/expansion	400	-												\$ -	
<b>Subtotal</b>	\$ 73,440.00	\$ 6,120.00	\$ 6,120.00	\$ 6,120.00	\$ 6,120.00	\$ 6,120.00	\$ 6,120.00	\$ 6,120.00	\$ 6,120.00	\$ 6,120.00	\$ 6,120.00	\$ 6,120.00	\$ 6,120.00	\$ 73,440.00	
<b>Marketing and Development</b>															
Charter Management Org.	590	-												\$ -	
Advertising	590	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 2,083.33	\$ 2,083.33	\$ 2,083.33	\$ 2,083.33	\$ 2,083.33	\$ 2,083.33	\$ 2,083.33	\$ 2,083.33	\$ 2,083.33	\$ 2,083.33	\$ 2,083.33	\$ 25,000.00	
Printing	590	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 83.33	\$ 83.33	\$ 83.33	\$ 83.33	\$ 83.33	\$ 83.33	\$ 83.33	\$ 83.33	\$ 83.33	\$ 83.33	\$ 83.33	\$ 1,000.00	
Insurance	590	\$ 13,200.00	\$ 1,100.00	\$ 1,100.00	\$ 1,100.00	\$ 1,100.00	\$ 1,100.00	\$ 1,100.00	\$ 1,100.00	\$ 1,100.00	\$ 1,100.00	\$ 1,100.00	\$ 1,100.00	\$ 13,200.00	
<b>Subtotal</b>	\$ 39,200.00	\$ 3,266.67	\$ 3,266.67	\$ 3,266.67	\$ 3,266.67	\$ 3,266.67	\$ 3,266.67	\$ 3,266.67	\$ 3,266.67	\$ 3,266.67	\$ 3,266.67	\$ 3,266.67	\$ 3,266.67	\$ 39,200.00	
<b>Supplies and Equipment</b>															
Supplies-Instructional	611	\$ 103,248.00	\$ 8,604.00	\$ 8,604.00	\$ 8,604.00	\$ 8,604.00	\$ 8,604.00	\$ 8,604.00	\$ 8,604.00	\$ 8,604.00	\$ 8,604.00	\$ 8,604.00	\$ 8,604.00	\$ 103,248.00	
Supplies-Administrative	612	\$ 4,160.00	\$ 346.67	\$ 346.67	\$ 346.67	\$ 346.67	\$ 346.67	\$ 346.67	\$ 346.67	\$ 346.67	\$ 346.67	\$ 346.67	\$ 346.67	\$ 4,160.00	
Text books	641	\$ 55,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 25,000.00										\$ 55,000.00	
Library books	642	\$ 11,600.00	\$ 1,160.00	\$ 1,160.00	\$ 1,160.00	\$ 1,160.00	\$ 1,160.00	\$ 1,160.00	\$ 1,160.00	\$ 1,160.00	\$ 1,160.00	\$ 1,160.00	\$ 1,160.00	\$ 11,600.00	
Supplies-General	690	\$ 25,200.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 5,200.00										\$ 25,200.00	
Computers	700	\$ 56,500.00	\$ 26,500.00	\$ 15,000.00										\$ 56,500.00	
Furniture	700	\$ 59,500.00	\$ 29,500.00	\$ 15,000.00										\$ 59,500.00	
Vehicles	700	-												\$ -	
Other Equipment	700	-												\$ -	
<b>Subtotal</b>	\$ 315,208.00	\$ 116,110.67	\$ 70,310.67	\$ 10,110.67	\$ 10,110.67	\$ 10,110.67	\$ 10,110.67	\$ 10,110.67	\$ 10,110.67	\$ 10,110.67	\$ 10,110.67	\$ 10,110.67	\$ 10,110.67	\$ 38,950.67	
<b>Other Objects</b>	800	-	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Other objects (e.g., in-kind)	Subtotal	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
<b>Loan Repayments</b>															
Interest	900	-												\$ -	
Principal	900	-												\$ -	
<b>Subtotal</b>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
<b>Total Expenditures</b>		\$ 2,213,498.00	\$ 269,676.50	\$ 226,001.50	\$ 170,101.50	\$ 170,101.50	\$ 170,101.50	\$ 170,101.50	\$ 170,101.50	\$ 170,101.50	\$ 170,101.50	\$ 170,101.50	\$ 170,101.50	\$ 198,941.50	
<b>ENDING CASH BALANCE</b>		\$ 576,686.75	\$ 1,073,534.92	\$ 919,800.09	#####	\$ 914,505.43	\$ 780,670.60	\$ 620,335.77	\$ 775,375.94	\$ 641,541.11	\$ 481,206.28	\$ 724,551.45	\$ 623,681.62	\$ 576,686.75	\$ 576,686.75

## Charter School Cash Flow Schedule For Year Three of Operation

### Charter School Name

Yr 3	Budget	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	Totals
Beginning Balance	\$ 1,073,534.92	\$ 1,073,534.92	\$ 1,722,696.37	\$ 1,498,147.82	\$ 1,774,714.25	\$ 1,578,218.20	\$ 1,381,722.15	\$ 1,185,226.11	\$ 1,461,792.56	\$ 1,265,296.51	\$ 1,068,800.47	\$ 1,477,824.42	\$ 1,414,941.97	

### Revenue

Number of students	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	
Per-pupil revenue	\$ 1,892,250.00	\$ 473,062.50		\$ 473,062.50				\$ 473,062.50			\$ 473,062.50			\$ 1,892,250.00
Student entitlements	\$ 397,372.50										\$ 132,457.50	\$ 132,457.50	\$ 132,457.50	\$ 397,372.50
Grants	\$ 102,200.00	\$ 2,266.67	\$ 2,266.67	\$ 9,766.64	\$ 9,766.67	\$ 9,766.67	\$ 9,766.67	\$ 9,766.67	\$ 9,766.67	\$ 9,766.67	\$ 9,766.67	\$ 9,766.67	\$ 9,766.67	\$ 102,200.00
In-kind services	-													\$ -
Private contributions	\$ 450,000.00	\$ 450,000.00												\$ 450,000.00
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 2,841,822.50</b>	<b>\$ 925,329.17</b>	<b>\$ 2,266.67</b>	<b>\$ 482,829.14</b>	<b>\$ 9,766.67</b>	<b>\$ 9,766.67</b>	<b>\$ 9,766.67</b>	<b>\$ 482,829.17</b>	<b>\$ 9,766.67</b>	<b>\$ 9,766.67</b>	<b>\$ 615,286.67</b>	<b>\$ 142,224.17</b>	<b>\$ 142,224.17</b>	<b>\$ 2,841,822.50</b>

### Expenditures

#### Salaries and Benefits

Salary-Administrators	111A	\$ 572,500.00	\$ 47,708.33	\$ 47,708.33	\$ 47,708.33	\$ 47,708.33	\$ 47,708.33	\$ 47,708.33	\$ 47,708.33	\$ 47,708.33	\$ 47,708.33	\$ 47,708.33	\$ 47,708.33	\$ 572,500.00
Salary-Teachers	111B	\$ 645,000.00	\$ 53,750.00	\$ 53,750.00	\$ 53,750.00	\$ 53,750.00	\$ 53,750.00	\$ 53,750.00	\$ 53,750.00	\$ 53,750.00	\$ 53,750.00	\$ 53,750.00	\$ 53,750.00	\$ 645,000.00
Salary-Other	112A	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Salary-Support staff	112B	\$ 168,000.00	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 168,000.00
Benefits	200	\$ 263,245.00	\$ 21,937.08	\$ 21,937.08	\$ 21,937.08	\$ 21,937.08	\$ 21,937.08	\$ 21,937.08	\$ 21,937.08	\$ 21,937.08	\$ 21,937.08	\$ 21,937.08	\$ 21,937.08	\$ 263,245.00
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$ 1,648,745.00</b>	<b>\$ 137,395.42</b>	<b>\$ 1,648,745.00</b>										

#### Services and Activities

In-service development staff	322	\$ 26,250.00	\$ 13,125.00	\$ 1,312.50	\$ 1,312.50	\$ 1,312.50	\$ 1,312.50	\$ 1,312.50	\$ 1,312.50	\$ 1,312.50	\$ 1,312.50	\$ 1,312.50	\$ 1,312.50	\$ 26,250.00	
Pupil services	323	\$ 197,075.00		\$ 10,000.00	\$ 19,707.50	\$ 19,707.50	\$ 19,707.50	\$ 19,707.50	\$ 19,707.50	\$ 19,707.50	\$ 19,707.50	\$ 19,707.50	\$ 19,707.50	\$ 197,075.00	
Field trips	324	\$ 12,000.00			\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 12,000.00	
Parent activities	325	\$ 3,498.00	\$ 291.50	\$ 291.50	\$ 291.50	\$ 291.50	\$ 291.50	\$ 291.50	\$ 291.50	\$ 291.50	\$ 291.50	\$ 291.50	\$ 291.50	\$ 3,498.00	
Professional tech services	340	\$ 45,384.00	\$ 3,782.00	\$ 3,782.00	\$ 3,782.00	\$ 3,782.00	\$ 3,782.00	\$ 3,782.00	\$ 3,782.00	\$ 3,782.00	\$ 3,782.00	\$ 3,782.00	\$ 3,782.00	\$ 45,384.00	
Accounting	330	\$ 134,064.00	\$ 11,172.00	\$ 11,172.00	\$ 11,172.00	\$ 11,172.00	\$ 11,172.00	\$ 11,172.00	\$ 11,172.00	\$ 11,172.00	\$ 11,172.00	\$ 11,172.00	\$ 11,172.00	\$ 134,064.00	
Audit	341	\$ 24,482.40	\$ 2,040.20	\$ 2,040.20	\$ 2,040.20	\$ 2,040.20	\$ 2,040.20	\$ 2,040.20	\$ 2,040.20	\$ 2,040.20	\$ 2,040.20	\$ 2,040.20	\$ 2,040.20	\$ 24,482.40	
Student transportation	510	\$ 26,250.00	\$ 2,187.50	\$ 2,187.50	\$ 2,187.50	\$ 2,187.50	\$ 2,187.50	\$ 2,187.50	\$ 2,187.50	\$ 2,187.50	\$ 2,187.50	\$ 2,187.50	\$ 2,187.50	\$ 26,250.00	
Communication	530	\$ 4,362.00	\$ 363.50	\$ 363.50	\$ 363.50	\$ 363.50	\$ 363.50	\$ 363.50	\$ 363.50	\$ 363.50	\$ 363.50	\$ 363.50	\$ 363.50	\$ 4,362.00	
Telephone	530	\$ 21,780.00	\$ 1,815.00	\$ 1,815.00	\$ 1,815.00	\$ 1,815.00	\$ 1,815.00	\$ 1,815.00	\$ 1,815.00	\$ 1,815.00	\$ 1,815.00	\$ 1,815.00	\$ 1,815.00	\$ 21,780.00	
Postage and shipping	530	\$ 1,050.00	\$ 87.50	\$ 87.50	\$ 87.50	\$ 87.50	\$ 87.50	\$ 87.50	\$ 87.50	\$ 87.50	\$ 87.50	\$ 87.50	\$ 87.50	\$ 1,050.00	
Travel	580	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 2,000.00	
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$ 498,195.40</b>	<b>\$ 35,030.87</b>	<b>\$ 33,218.37</b>	<b>\$ 44,125.87</b>	<b>\$ 32,813.37</b>	<b>\$ 498,195.40</b>								

#### Physical Plant

Rent	400	\$ 108,000.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 108,000.00
Utilities	400	\$ 1,440.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 1,440.00
Custodial services	400	-												-
Maintenance and repairs	400	-												-
Renovations/expansion	400	-												-
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$ 109,440.00</b>	<b>\$ 9,120.00</b>	<b>\$ 109,440.00</b>										

#### Marketing and Development

Charter Management Org.	590	-												\$ -
Advertising	590	\$ 18,750.00	\$ 1,562.50	\$ 1,562.50	\$ 1,562.50	\$ 1,562.50	\$ 1,562.50	\$ 1,562.50	\$ 1,562.50	\$ 1,562.50	\$ 1,562.50	\$ 1,562.50	\$ 1,562.50	\$ 18,750.00
Printing	590	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 83.33	\$ 83.33	\$ 83.33	\$ 83.33	\$ 83.33	\$ 83.33	\$ 83.33	\$ 83.33	\$ 83.33	\$ 83.33	\$ 83.33	\$ 1,000.00
Insurance	590	\$ 14,520.00	\$ 1,210.00	\$ 1,210.00	\$ 1,210.00	\$ 1,210.00	\$ 1,210.00	\$ 1,210.00	\$ 1,210.00	\$ 1,210.00	\$ 1,210.00	\$ 1,210.00	\$ 1,210.00	\$ 14,520.00
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$ 34,270.00</b>	<b>\$ 2,855.83</b>	<b>\$ 34,270.00</b>										

#### Supplies and Equipment

Supplies-Instructional	611	\$ 134,014.00	\$ 11,167.83	\$ 11,167.83	\$ 11,167.83	\$ 11,167.83	\$ 11,167.83	\$ 11,167.83	\$ 11,167.83	\$ 11,167.83	\$ 11,167.83	\$ 11,167.83	\$ 11,167.83	\$ 134,014.00
Supplies-Administrative	612	\$ 5,300.00	\$ 441.67	\$ 441.67	\$ 441.67	\$ 441.67	\$ 441.67	\$ 441.67	\$ 441.67	\$ 441.67	\$ 441.67	\$ 441.67	\$ 441.67	\$ 5,300.00
Text books	641	\$ 55,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 25,000.00										\$ 55,000.00
Library books	642	\$ 11,561.00	\$ 1,156.10	\$ 1,156.10	\$ 1,156.10	\$ 1,156.10	\$ 1,156.10	\$ 1,156.10	\$ 1,156.10	\$ 1,156.10	\$ 1,156.10	\$ 1,156.10	\$ 1,156.10	\$ 11,561.00
Supplies-General	690	\$ 26,460.00	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 6,460.00										\$ 26,460.00
Computers	700	\$ 14,125.00	\$ 14,125.00											\$ 14,125.00
Furniture	700	\$ 14,875.00	\$ 14,875.00											\$ 14,875.00
Vehicles	700	-												\$ -
Other Equipment	700	-												\$ -
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$ 261,335.00</b>	<b>\$ 91,765.60</b>	<b>\$ 44,225.60</b>	<b>\$ 12,765.60</b>	<b>\$ 12,765.60</b>	<b>\$ 12,765.60</b>	<b						

## Charter School Cash Flow Schedule For Year Four of Operation

## Charter School Cash Flow Schedule For Year Five of Operation

### Charter School Name

	Yr 5													
	Budget	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	Totals
<b>Beginning Balance</b>	\$ 2,160,957.69	\$ 2,160,957.69	\$ 2,600,284.71	\$ 2,383,676.74	\$ 2,654,844.77	\$ 2,452,950.30	\$ 2,251,055.82	\$ 2,049,161.35	\$ 2,320,329.38	\$ 2,118,434.91	\$ 1,916,540.44	\$ 2,320,165.97	\$ 2,252,728.97	
<b>Revenue</b>														
Number of students	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	
Per-pupil revenue	\$ 1,892,250.00	\$ 473,062.50		\$ 473,062.50				\$ 473,062.50		\$ 473,062.50			\$ 1,892,250.00	
Student entitlements	\$ 397,372.50												\$ 397,372.50	
Grants	\$ 102,200.00	\$ 2,266.67	\$ 2,266.67	\$ 9,766.67	\$ 9,766.67	\$ 9,766.67	\$ 9,766.67	\$ 9,766.67	\$ 9,766.67	\$ 9,766.67	\$ 9,766.67	\$ 9,766.67	\$ 102,200.00	
In-kind services	-												\$ -	
Private contributions	\$ 225,000.00	\$ 225,000.00											\$ 225,000.00	
<b>Total Revenue</b>	\$ 2,616,822.50	\$ 700,329.17	\$ 2,266.67	\$ 482,829.17	\$ 9,766.67	\$ 9,766.67	\$ 9,766.67	\$ 482,829.17	\$ 9,766.67	\$ 9,766.67	\$ 615,286.67	\$ 142,224.14	\$ 142,224.17	\$ 2,616,822.50
<b>Expenditures</b>														
<b>Salaries and Benefits</b>														
Salary-Administrators	111A	\$ 572,500.00	\$ 47,708.33	\$ 47,708.33	\$ 47,708.33	\$ 47,708.33	\$ 47,708.33	\$ 47,708.33	\$ 47,708.33	\$ 47,708.33	\$ 47,708.33	\$ 47,708.33	\$ 572,500.00	
Salary-Teachers	111B	\$ 645,000.00	\$ 53,750.00	\$ 53,750.00	\$ 53,750.00	\$ 53,750.00	\$ 53,750.00	\$ 53,750.00	\$ 53,750.00	\$ 53,750.00	\$ 53,750.00	\$ 53,750.00	\$ 645,000.00	
Salary-Other	112A	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$ -	
Salary-Support staff	112B	\$ 168,000.00	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 168,000.00	
Benefits	200	\$ 263,245.00	\$ 21,937.08	\$ 21,937.08	\$ 21,937.08	\$ 21,937.08	\$ 21,937.08	\$ 21,937.08	\$ 21,937.08	\$ 21,937.08	\$ 21,937.08	\$ 21,937.08	\$ 263,245.00	
<b>Subtotal</b>		\$ 1,648,745.00	\$ 137,395.42	\$ 137,395.42	\$ 137,395.42	\$ 137,395.42	\$ 137,395.42	\$ 137,395.42	\$ 137,395.42	\$ 137,395.42	\$ 137,395.42	\$ 137,395.42	\$ 1,648,745.00	
<b>Services and Activities</b>														
In-service development staff	322	\$ 26,250.00	\$ 13,125.00	\$ 1,312.50	\$ 1,312.50	\$ 1,312.50	\$ 1,312.50	\$ 1,312.50	\$ 1,312.50	\$ 1,312.50	\$ 1,312.50	\$ 1,312.50	\$ 26,250.00	
Pupil services	323	\$ 230,465.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 23,046.50	\$ 23,046.50	\$ 23,046.50	\$ 23,046.50	\$ 23,046.50	\$ 23,046.50	\$ 23,046.50	\$ 23,046.50	\$ 23,046.50	\$ 230,465.00	
Field trips	324	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 12,000.00	
Parent activities	325	\$ 3,498.00	\$ 291.50	\$ 291.50	\$ 291.50	\$ 291.50	\$ 291.50	\$ 291.50	\$ 291.50	\$ 291.50	\$ 291.50	\$ 291.50	\$ 3,498.00	
Professional tech services	340	\$ 48,538.00	\$ 4,044.83	\$ 4,044.83	\$ 4,044.83	\$ 4,044.83	\$ 4,044.83	\$ 4,044.83	\$ 4,044.83	\$ 4,044.83	\$ 4,044.83	\$ 4,044.83	\$ 48,538.00	
Accounting	330	\$ 134,945.00	\$ 11,245.42	\$ 11,245.42	\$ 11,245.42	\$ 11,245.42	\$ 11,245.42	\$ 11,245.42	\$ 11,245.42	\$ 11,245.42	\$ 11,245.42	\$ 11,245.42	\$ 134,945.00	
Audit	341	\$ 24,974.50	\$ 2,081.21	\$ 2,081.21	\$ 2,081.21	\$ 2,081.21	\$ 2,081.21	\$ 2,081.21	\$ 2,081.21	\$ 2,081.21	\$ 2,081.21	\$ 2,081.21	\$ 24,974.50	
Student transportation	510	\$ 26,250.00	\$ 2,187.50	\$ 2,187.50	\$ 2,187.50	\$ 2,187.50	\$ 2,187.50	\$ 2,187.50	\$ 2,187.50	\$ 2,187.50	\$ 2,187.50	\$ 2,187.50	\$ 26,250.00	
Communication	530	\$ 6,448.00	\$ 537.33	\$ 537.33	\$ 537.33	\$ 537.33	\$ 537.33	\$ 537.33	\$ 537.33	\$ 537.33	\$ 537.33	\$ 537.33	\$ 6,448.00	
Telephone	530	\$ 26,354.00	\$ 2,196.17	\$ 2,196.17	\$ 2,196.17	\$ 2,196.17	\$ 2,196.17	\$ 2,196.17	\$ 2,196.17	\$ 2,196.17	\$ 2,196.17	\$ 2,196.17	\$ 26,354.00	
Postage and shipping	530	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 1,200.00	
Travel	580	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 166.67	\$ 2,000.00	
<b>Subtotal</b>		\$ 542,922.50	\$ 35,975.62	\$ 34,163.12	\$ 48,409.62	\$ 48,409.62	\$ 48,409.62	\$ 48,409.62	\$ 48,409.62	\$ 48,409.62	\$ 48,409.62	\$ 48,409.62	\$ 37,097.12	\$ 542,922.50
<b>Physical Plant</b>														
Rent	400	\$ 108,000.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 108,000.00	
Utilities	400	\$ 1,440.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 120.00	\$ 1,440.00	
Custodial services	400	-											\$ -	
Maintenance and repairs	400	-											\$ -	
Renovations/expansion	400	-											\$ -	
<b>Subtotal</b>		\$ 109,440.00	\$ 9,120.00	\$ 9,120.00	\$ 9,120.00	\$ 9,120.00	\$ 9,120.00	\$ 9,120.00	\$ 9,120.00	\$ 9,120.00	\$ 9,120.00	\$ 9,120.00	\$ 109,440.00	
<b>Marketing and Development</b>														
Charter Management Org.	590	-											\$ -	
Advertising	590	\$ 18,750.00	\$ 1,562.50	\$ 1,562.50	\$ 1,562.50	\$ 1,562.50	\$ 1,562.50	\$ 1,562.50	\$ 1,562.50	\$ 1,562.50	\$ 1,562.50	\$ 1,562.50	\$ 18,750.00	
Printing	590	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 83.33	\$ 83.33	\$ 83.33	\$ 83.33	\$ 83.33	\$ 83.33	\$ 83.33	\$ 83.33	\$ 83.33	\$ 83.33	\$ 1,000.00	
Insurance	590	\$ 17,569.20	\$ 1,464.10	\$ 1,464.10	\$ 1,464.10	\$ 1,464.10	\$ 1,464.10	\$ 1,464.10	\$ 1,464.10	\$ 1,464.10	\$ 1,464.10	\$ 1,464.10	\$ 17,569.20	
<b>Subtotal</b>		\$ 37,319.20	\$ 3,109.93	\$ 3,109.93	\$ 3,109.93	\$ 3,109.93	\$ 3,109.93	\$ 3,109.93	\$ 3,109.93	\$ 3,109.93	\$ 3,109.93	\$ 3,109.93	\$ 37,319.20	
<b>Supplies and Equipment</b>														
Supplies-Instructional	611	\$ 134,014.00	\$ 11,167.83	\$ 11,167.83	\$ 11,167.83	\$ 11,167.83	\$ 11,167.83	\$ 11,167.83	\$ 11,167.83	\$ 11,167.83	\$ 11,167.83	\$ 11,167.83	\$ 134,014.00	
Supplies-Administrative	612	\$ 5,500.00	\$ 458.33	\$ 458.33	\$ 458.33	\$ 458.33	\$ 458.33	\$ 458.33	\$ 458.33	\$ 458.33	\$ 458.33	\$ 458.33	\$ 5,500.00	
Text books	641	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,000.00									\$ 30,000.00	
Library books	642	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 20,000.00	
Supplies-General	690	\$ 26,460.00	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 6,460.00									\$ 26,460.00	
Computers	700	\$ 14,125.00	\$ 14,125.00										\$ 14,125.00	
Furniture	700	\$ 12,650.00	\$ 12,650.00										\$ 12,650.00	
Vehicles	700	-											\$ -	
Other Equipment	700	-											\$ -	
<b>Subtotal</b>		\$ 242,749.00	\$ 75,401.17	\$ 35,086.17	\$ 13,626.17	\$ 13,626.17	\$ 13,626.17	\$ 13,626.17	\$ 13,626.17	\$ 13,626.17	\$ 13,626.17	\$ 13,626.17	\$ 242,749.00	
<b>Other Objects</b>														
Other objects (e.g., in-kind)	800	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
<b>Subtotal</b>		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
<b>Loan Repayments</b>														
Interest	900	-											\$ -	
Principal	900	-											\$ -	
<b>Subtotal</b>		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
<b>Total Expenditures</b>		\$ 2,581,175.70	\$ 261,002.14	\$ 218,874.64	\$ 211,661.14	\$ 211,661.14	\$ 211,661.14	\$ 211,661.14	\$ 211,661.14	\$ 211,661.14	\$ 211,661.14	\$ 211,661.14	\$ 2,581,175.70	
<b>ENDING CASH BALANCE</b>		\$ 2,196,604.49	\$ 2,600,284.71	\$ 2,383,676.74	\$ 2,654,844.77	\$ 2,452,950.30	\$ 2,251,055.82	\$ 2,049,161.35	\$ 2,320,329.38	\$ 2,118,434.91	\$ 1,916,540.44	\$ 2,320,165.97	\$ 2,252,728.97	\$ 2,196,604.50

### Proud Academy Enrollment

Grade	25-26	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30
	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
6	50	50	50	50	50
7	0	50	50	50	50
8	0	0	50	50	50
9	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Student Count</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>150</b>
Class Size	25	25	25	25	25
# Classrooms	2	4	6	6	6
SPED %	21%	21%	21%	21%	21%
SPED Student Count	10.5	21	31.5	31.5	31.5
EL %	18%	18%	18%	18%	18%
EL Stud Count	9	18	27	27	27
F/R%	57%	57%	57%	57%	57%
Free/Red Count	28.5	57	85.5	85.5	85.5
Avg Daily Attend %	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%
Avg Daily Attend Count	47.5	95	142.5	142.5	142.5