

# Alabama Charter Renewal Application

**Charter Renewal Application #000666**

**Acceleration Day and Evening Academy**

**Location Code: 800**

**Submitted To:**

Alabama Public Charter School Commission  
Alabama Charter School Commission

50 North Ripley St.  
P.O. Box 302101  
Montgomery, AL 36104  
Phone: 334-694-4908

**Submitted By:**

Jeremiah Newell

# Table Of Contents

## General

- A. School Information
- B. Contact Person
- C. Enrollment Projections
- D. Board Members

## Executive Summary

- 1. Enrollment and Demographic Information

## Looking Back: The Record of Performance

- 1. Academic Performance
- 2. Financial Performance
- 3. Organizational Performance
- 4. Other Performance

## Looking to the Future

- 1. Adjustments to Performance Frameworks
- 2. Changes to School's Current Model
- 3. Other

## Exhibits

- 1. Projected Budget
- 2. Alabama Continuous Improvement Plan
- 3. ESSER Plans
- 4. Compliance Monitoring Report

# GENERAL

## A. School Information

School Type: **Middle / High**  
 Grade Levels: **[6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12]**  
 School District:  
 Neighborhood / Community: **Mobile**  
 Organization Type:  
 Sponsoring Entity: **Non-profit Organization**  
 Address: **3725 Airport Blvd , Suite 161, Mobile, AL 36608**  
 Phone: **251-301-0050**  
 Fax: **251-301-0051**  
 Web Site: **www.accelacademymobile.com**  
 Calendar Type: **- 180 instructional days**  
 Educational Service Provider: **(None)**

## B. Primary Contact Person

Name: **Jeremiah Newell**  
 Mailing Address:  
 Mobile Phone: **251-391-1272**  
 Alternate Phone: **251-301-0050**  
 Email: **jnewell@accelacademymobile.com**  
 Current Employer: **MAEF Public Charter Schools**

## C. Attendance Projections

Grade Level	Year 1 Enrollment		Year 2 Enrollment		Year 3 Enrollment		Year 4 Enrollment		Year 5 Enrollment	
	Min.	Max.	Min.	Max.	Min.	Max.	Min.	Max.	Min.	Max.
6	80	100	80	100	80	100	80	100	80	100
7	80	100	80	100	80	100	80	100	80	100
8	80	100	80	100	80	100	80	100	80	100
9	100	120	110	150	110	150	110	150	110	150
10	95	120	110	140	110	140	110	140	110	140
11	95	120	110	130	110	130	110	130	110	130
12	90	115	110	130	110	130	110	130	110	130
<b>Total</b>	<b>620</b>	<b>775</b>	<b>680</b>	<b>850</b>	<b>680</b>	<b>850</b>	<b>680</b>	<b>850</b>	<b>680</b>	<b>850</b>

## D. Board Members

Name	Title	Contact Information	Current Employer

Covan, Lance	Board Member	P: M: E: wlcovan@gmail.com	
Green, Charlotte	Board Secretary	P: M: E: greenecharlottev@gmail.com	
Jones, Jordan	Board Member	P: M: E: jjones@medorapartners.com	
McGinley, Robert	Board Member	P: M: E: rmcginley@mcdowellknight.com	
O'Connor, Henry	Board Member	P: M: E: hoconnor@joneswalker.com	
Perry, Richard	Board Chairperson	P: M: E: reperry101@aol.com	
Spivey, Mark	Board Treasurer	P: M: E: mspivey@bbandt.com	
Stashak, Sarah	Board Member	P: M: E: sstashak@southernco.com	
Triplett, Denisha	Board Member	P: M: E: mstriplett0325@gmail.com	
Wiggins, Kim	Board Member	P: M: E: kmcwiggins@gmail.com	

# Executive Summary

## 1. Enrollment and Demographic Information

Table A – Current Year Enrollment and Demographic Information **Enrollment**

# of Students Enrolled: 461

# of Students on Waiting List: 202

### Sex

# Male: 230

# Female: 231

### Ethnicity/Race

# American Indian/Alaskan Native: 3

# Asian: 0

# Black: 405

# Hispanic: 4

# Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander: 1

# White: 42

# Two or More Races: 6

**Special Populations**

# Students with Disabilities: 56

# English Language Learners: 1

# Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch: 350

# Highly Capable Students: 1 (Gifted)

***Acceleration (ACCEL) Day and Evening Academy (6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup>)***

ACCEL Day and Evening Academy is Alabama’s first charter school. It is a 6-12 public charter school beginning its fifth year of operation, serving 460 students. The vision of ACCEL Day and Evening Academy is to re-engage and inspire youth to unlock their academic potential and graduate high school as life-long learners ready for college, careers, and civic life. To achieve this vision, ACCEL's faculty and staff will connect to students’ gifts and passions through personalized learning pathways that build students’ social and emotional well-being, academic skills, and professional mindsets. There is currently no option in our community that prepares these at-risk high school students to graduate ready for college and careers. ACCEL Day and Evening Academy is designed to be that option. Accel focuses on serving uniquely vulnerable populations – those who are disinterested in the traditional learning environment, those who are disconnected from the learning environment, and those who are over-aged, under-credited, or have already dropped out of school. Accel’s model is a competency-based, student-centered, blended-learning model, which leverages wraparound services and case management supports to meet students’ needs and help all students persist and achieve their goals of graduating college and career ready.

At the high school level, ACCEL Academy prepares students through a four-part framework and intentionally designed wraparound support system.

- **Part 1-Success Seminars:** Individualized, small-group courses designed to accelerate learning for students who are not able to read on an 8<sup>th</sup> grade level or master pre-algebra concepts, as measured by a school-developed entry-level assessment of math and literacy.
- **Part 2- Blended Learning Lab:** Accel uses teacher-directed, blended learning as a central component of learning. Teachers customize student learning, based upon students’ needs. Furthermore, students pursue their interests through choice-based curriculum.
- **Part 3-Learning Studios:** To deepen students’ learning and ensure that they can truly think critically, as well as see the real-world connection to what they are learning, students in each core course engage in competency-based group projects that integrate the key learning of the courses and are designed to emphasize the essential skills for the ACT/SAT. These real-world projects require students to apply the content learned in the blended learning labs, reflect upon their areas of strength, and address their areas of weakness.

- **Part 4-College and Career Coursework:** Students are truly prepared for college and careers in the Mobile area by taking advanced placement courses, participating in academic and technical dual enrollment coursework at both Bishop State and Coastal Community colleges, as well as engaging in industry approved internship and apprenticeship programs with more than 30 business partners.

At the middle school level, ACCEL Academy prepares students to enter high school ready for rigorous coursework through a four-part framework.

- **Part 1: Literacy and Mathematics Workshops:** ACCEL takes a workshop-based approach to teaching literacy and numeracy skills. Students experience short mini lessons followed by deeper practice either as an individual, in small groups, or with a teacher. This workshop approach focuses on building reading skills, producing writing in its varied forms, and understanding the conceptual knowledge of mathematics. Each workshop is grounded by various standards-aligned performance tasks, which students produce to demonstrate proficiency on these standards.
- **Part 2: Learning Labs:** Students participate in Learning Lab as a way to extend their practice sessions in to build their skills in literacy and numeracy. During Learning Lab, students interact with computer-based curriculum to practice skills. Their teachers review their data to determine appropriate groupings for remediation and advancement
- **Part 3: STEM Studios:** Science have a highly integrated focus. In addition to teaching state content standards for the grade-level, teachers also build upon this knowledge by building authentic STEM projects that ask students to integrate science with mathematics, engineering, and technology. Students develop skills in such areas as coding, robotics, 3-D design, and computer applications.
- **Part 4: History, Civics, and Service (HCS) Seminars:** Students are taught the history content standards outlined in the Alabama Course of Study for their grade-level. Students are then asked to apply these lessons from history to current events using the Socratic method. Students have the opportunity to participate in service projects that teach them about the world they live in, beginning with their local community.

*Accel also provides the essential wraparound support through the Accel Mastery Program (AMP), including case management, counseling, community service, career exploration, and mentorship from community volunteers. These supports make a critical difference in helping students persist and achieve their goals of graduating college and career ready.*

- **Targeted Case Management:** Accel students are assigned an advocate counselor on staff who serves as the gatekeeper for student needs and concerns. Students and advocates check-in daily and meet formally once a week via scheduled office hours. The advocate counselor monitors students' attendance and academic progress. He/she serves as the front-line support to address any barriers to students' success.
- **Personal Mastery Development:** AMP provides students with a curriculum designed to develop personal mastery skills such as perseverance, leadership, personal agency, goal setting, and other factors that foster resiliency. This curriculum builds students' soft-skills and employability skills, as well as to give them the tools to overcome challenging circumstances and remain on the path to success.
- **Post-secondary Support:** AMP offers a variety of post-secondary support programming including college preparation programming, employability skill development, internships, and post-secondary placement services.

**Community Connections:** The MAEF Public Charter Schools, in partnership with the Mobile Area Education Foundation (the parent company for MAEF Public Charter Schools), has a strong track record of connecting the community to schools. MAEF has supported over 1,200

school/community partnerships in Mobile County public schools. As a school/community connector, MAEF and its subsidiary MAEF Public Charter Schools have approached the formation of Accel Day and Evening Academy in a similarly collaborative manner. The school partners with local business leaders, community college leaders, school district leaders, municipal leaders, and community advocates to achieve its mission. Specific partners include the City of Mobile, Bishop State Community College, Mobile Chamber of Commerce, Mobile County Public School System, the Chickasaw City School System, Southwest Alabama Partnerships for Training and Education, Coastal Alabama Community College, and the University of South Alabama.

## Leadership

- Dr. Jeremiah Newell serves as Superintendent/Head of School of Acceleration Day and Evening Academy. He is an educational leader with over 15 years of experience in state and district improvement, designing and leading dropout prevention and recovery school models, developing state-wide policies on high school graduation, school turnaround and teacher training programs, and building community/district collective impact partnerships.
- Amy Owens serves as the Director of Teaching and Learning/Principal of ACCEL Preparatory Academy (6-8). Amy has more than 15 years of experience as a teacher, assistant principal, and principal. As a result of her leadership as Principal of Rocketship Spark Academy, her school was the highest performing school in the San Jose area.
- Nathan Adams serves as the Principal of Acceleration Day and Evening Academy. With more than 10 years of experience, Nathan served as the founding Dean of Students for Acceleration Day and Evening Academy prior to his promotion to high school principal.
- Carolyn Akers is the founding Chief Executive Officer of the Mobile Area Education Foundation and has lead community support for public education innovation in Mobile County for more than 30 years. She has forged lasting partnerships between business and education and fostered innovation within the Mobile County Public Schools that has resulted in dramatic improvements in student academic achievement.
- Michelle Parson is the Chief Financial Officer of MAEF/MAEF Public Charter Schools. With more than 20 years of experience in non-profit finance, Michelle is responsible for oversight of all finance related activities including accounting, financial reporting, budgeting, independent audit, tax, financial planning and analysis, treasury, governance, financial risk and compliance activities to include performance contracts and grants.

**Governance:** MPCS is governed by a Board of Directors (the "MPCS Board"). Board members are experienced members of non-profit education boards. Of the ten members, there are two former chairmen of the MAEF Board, board members of private schools, the Alabama School of Math and Science, and members of the Mobile Chamber of Commerce Board. Furthermore, the Board consists of two parents of current students to provide the authentic engagement and focus on the students and families served. These board members have demonstrated commitment to the success of Accel and have strong local control over ACCEL Day and Evening Academy and any future charter schools it operates in Alabama. The MPCS Board members are mission-driven, engaged, intentional, locally rooted, and adroit in the skills needed to oversee successful charter schools. The MPCS Board is ultimately responsible for the successful operations and activities of ACCEL Day and Evening Academy. It accomplishes its tasks by adopting and directing a long-term strategic plan, monitoring the budget to achieve the plan's goals and employing and evaluating the school leader. Its focus is on ensuring that the school's students are achieving academic success, the program is operationally, financially and legally sound, and the leadership is in place to execute on the mission of MPCS, and by extension, ACCEL Day and Evening Academy.

- Richard Perry (Chairman), Global Director of Dupont Corporation (Retired), experienced corporate leader in facilities building, operations, and process management.
- Mark Spivey (Treasurer), Vice President of BB&T, Chairman of Mobile Area Education



- Foundation Board, experienced commercial banker.
- Rev. Charlotte Green (Secretary), Associate Pastor Bethel A.M.E. Church and President of the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance of Greater Mobile.
- Rob McGinley, Partner at McDowell, Knight, Roedder, and Sledge L.L.C, former Chairman of the Mobile Area Education Foundation Board, and experienced corporate attorney with experience in establishment of for-profit and non-profit organizatio
- Henry O'Connor, Partner at Jones Walker LLP, and United Way of Southwest Alabama Campaign Chair, responsible for raising \$3.5 Million to support education, healthcare, and life essential activities in Mobile.
- Sarah Stashak, Director of Investor Relations for The Southern Company
- Lance Covan, Chairman of Board, Mitternight Boiler Works and Founder of Bonsecour Capital Holdings, LLC.
- Jordan Jones, Managing Partner, Medora Investment Firm
- Kim Wiggins, ACCEL Parent
- Denisha Triplett, ACCEL Parent

## **Attachments**

### **Section 1: Enrollment and Demographic Information**

– No Attachments –

# Looking Back: The Record of Performance

## 1. Academic Performance

According to ACCEL's Renewal Performance Report, ACCEL met academic performance standards as outlined in its Commission approved Charter Performance Framework.

According to NWEA Performance Testing of ACCEL students, 63% of high school students come to ACCEL reading at the 7<sup>th</sup> grade level or lower, and 76% of students come to ACCEL performing at the 7<sup>th</sup> grade level or lower in mathematics. What's more, 68% of students are one or more grade levels behind in the school (e.g. The student enters as a 10<sup>th</sup> grader, but should be in the 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grades), and 22% of students have dropped out of high school at some point before enrolling in ACCEL. These significant skill deficiencies are not overcome quickly. It requires deliberate focus and time to help students become proficient in high school level content.

ACCEL's progress towards achieving this goal is promising. In its first year of ACT testing, ACCEL ranked #1 in academic achievement among high poverty high schools in Mobile County. (Note: "High poverty" is defined by the US Department of Education at least 75% of a school's student body being economically disadvantaged.) In its second year, ACCEL ranked #1 for academic growth among high poverty high schools in Mobile County. In its third year, ACCEL's 4-year on-time graduation rate was 30 percentage points above the national average of back-on-track alternative education campuses (ACCEL -75% vs. National Average - 45%). In its fourth year, despite the challenges of a pandemic, ACCEL met the overall charter school academic performance indicator outlined in its approved performance framework.

In ACCEL's Renewal Performance Report, the single sub-indicator that did not meet performance averages was the measure of students graduating college and career ready, according to the Alabama State Department of Education's definition. During the first two years of the school's operations, ACCEL did not yet have career and technical education (CTE) programming approved for use in the school, which is a major strategy for reaching college and career readiness in public schools across the state. Despite this challenge, ACCEL implemented several college and career readiness strategies, including advanced placement, dual enrollment, apprenticeships, and internships. As a result of these strategies, the 2/4-year college acceptance rate for graduating seniors was 89%. During the third year, the CTE programming was piloted, but this pilot was interrupted by school closures due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. During its fourth year, ACCEL fully implemented its career technical program, despite the challenges of Covid-19, and met its charter performance sub-indicator goal.

ACCEL's staff has built a robust, multi-pronged strategy for college and career readiness that now includes career technical education programming, dual enrollment, advanced placement, apprenticeships, and internship opportunities for its scholars. This strategy will ensure ACCEL continues to meet or exceed this charter performance metric for years to come.

## Attachments

### Section 1: Academic Performance

– No Attachments –

## 2. Financial Performance

According to the Charter Renewal Performance Report, ACCEL has met the overall financial performance objectives established by the Alabama Public Charter Commission.

There are two sub-categories where the school did not meet the recommended targets of the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA), specifically Days of Cash on Hand and Operating Margin. For Days of Cash on Hand, NACSA recommends between 30 and 60 days of available cash to fund operations. While the school maintained these levels during the first three school years, Accel had numerous additional expenses related to opening school during the pandemic in the fourth year of operations. These expenses included additional technology costs, equipment costs, sanitation expenses, and increased staffing to support virtual learning. These expenses were covered by Federal Covid relief funds, but their reimbursements were not received before the end of the fiscal year. Thus, \$315,644 of cash was owed to the school when the fiscal year ended. During the 2020-21 school year, these funds were received, and as this current fiscal year ends, ACCEL holds approximately 75 days of cash on hand, exceeding NACSA's standards.

Covid related expenses also affected the operating margin at the end of FY2021. While the school had a net positive average operating margin of 2% over the first three fiscal years, the increase in expenses and loss of revenues during the pandemic caused the third year's annual operating margin to be -1%. These challenges have been corrected during FY2022. As FY2022 ends, the school currently has an extremely strong 8% operating margin.

### Attachments

#### Section 2: Financial Performance

2.1	<a href="#">August 2021 Approved Financials</a>	Newell, Jeremiah, 10/1/21 2:44 PM	PDF / 291.655 KB
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## 3. Organizational Performance

According to the Charter Renewal Performance Report, ACCEL has met every organizational performance objective established by the Alabama Public Charter Commission. In addition to these measures, ACCEL has also met additional internal organizational measures including the following: (1) 90% or greater annual staff retention, (2) 80% or greater annual student retention, (3) 100% of annual financial audits with no findings, (4) 0% employee or parent grievances filed with the Board, and (5) timely facility acquisition and renovation to meet an expanded program.

### Attachments

#### Section 3: Organizational Performance

– No Attachments –

## 4. Other Performance

As additional evidence of performance, please find attached four years of performance evaluations, which show a strong track record of performance and improvement.

## Attachments

### Section 4: Other Performance

4.1	<a href="#">Year 1 Report</a>	Newell, Jeremiah, 10/1/21 2:45 PM	PDF / 572.795 KB
4.2	<a href="#">Year 2 Report</a>	Newell, Jeremiah, 10/1/21 2:45 PM	PDF / 184.032 KB
4.3	<a href="#">Year 3 Report</a>	Newell, Jeremiah, 10/1/21 2:45 PM	PDF / 759.382 KB
4.4	<a href="#">Year 4 Report</a>	Newell, Jeremiah, 10/1/21 2:45 PM	PDF / 715.188 KB

# Looking to the Future

## 1. Adjustments to Performance Frameworks

ACCEL **does not request** any changes to the existing approved charter performance framework. The framework can be found below.

## Approved Performance Framework

Type	Indicator	Metric	Below	N
ALSDE	Academic Achievement	Percent of students proficient on ACAP/ACT	0-22%	2
ALSDE	Academic Growth	Percent of students growing their performance on ACAP and Pre-ACT to ACT	0-71%	7
ALSDE	On-Time Graduation	Percent of students who graduate within four years of entering high school for the first time (4-year ACGR)	0-49%	5
Mission Specific	Extended Graduation	Percent of students who graduate within 5 years of entering high school for the first time (5-yr ACGR)	0-59%	6
ALSDE	Chronic Absenteeism	Percent of students missing 18 or more days during a school year	100-45%	4
ALSDE	CCR	Percent of four-year ACGR cohort members who graduate meeting ALSDE definition of College and Career Ready	0-49%	5
Mission Specific	Credit Earning	Percent of students earning six or more high school credits annually	0-64%	6

- **Academic Achievement (6-12)** measures at the 6-8 grade levels the percent of students proficient on the ACAP Summative Assessment and, in grades 9-12, the percent of students proficient on the ACT. It sets a target of meeting or exceeding the performance of traditional public schools in the Mobile Area and commits to perform 10 percentage points above the national average for similar schools as a minimum expectation.
- **Academic Growth (6-12)** measures the increase in achievement from one year to the next at the 6-8 grade levels using the ACAP and from the Pre-ACT to the ACT at the 9-12 grade levels. It sets a target of meeting or exceeding the performance of traditional public schools in the Mobile Area and commits to perform above the bottom 10 percent of schools in the Mobile area.
- **On-time Graduation (9-12)** measures the number of students graduating in 4-years. It sets a target of graduating students at the federally established rate for traditional public schools and commits to perform five percentages points above the national average for similar schools.

- **Extended Graduation (9-12)** measures the number of students graduating in 5-years. It sets a target of graduating students at the average rate of traditional schools in the Mobile area and commits to perform five percentage points above the national average for similar schools.
- **College and Career Ready (9-12)** measures the number of students graduating with a college and career ready indicator in 4-years (per Alabama rules). This target mirrors the on-time graduation measure and thus commits to graduating 100% of students ready for college and careers.
- **Credit Earning (9-12)** measures the number of students earning 6 or more high school credits annually and thus matriculating to the next high school grade level.
- **Chronic Absenteeism (6-12)** measures the number of students missing 18 or more days. This target is set to meet the average performance of traditional schools in the Mobile area and sets a minimum expectation of five percentage points above the national average for similar schools.

## Attachments

### Section 1: Adjustments to Performance Frameworks

– No Attachments –

## 2.Changes to School's Current Model

ACCEL **does not request** any changes to the existing approved school model serving grades 6-12. A summary of our current model can be found below.

### A. Education Plan

#### Vision and Mission

The vision of ACCEL Day and Evening Academy is to re-engage and inspire youth to unlock their academic potential and graduate high school as life-long learners ready for college, careers, and civic life. To achieve this vision, ACCEL's faculty and staff will connect to students' gifts and passions through personalized learning pathways that build students' social and emotional well-being, academic skills, and professional mindsets. There is currently no option in our community that prepares these at-risk high school students to graduate ready for college and careers. ACCEL Day and Evening Academy is designed to be that option. ACCEL focuses on serving uniquely vulnerable populations – those who are disinterested in the traditional learning environment, those who are disconnected from the learning environment, and those who are over-aged, under-credited, or have already dropped out of school. ACCEL's model is a competency-based, student-centered, blended-learning model, which leverages wraparound services and case management supports to meet students' needs and help all students persist and achieve their goals of graduating college and career ready.

ACCEL Day and Evening Academy is uniquely designed to prepare the community's most vulnerable youth for the workplace and careers of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. It will do this by building upon the three R's of education (1) **Rigor**: offering challenging curriculum that gives students the knowledge and skills needed for life after high school, (2) **Relevance**: creating direct connections between the classroom and the real-world through student-led projects and workplace

experiences that keep students engaged in the learning process, and (3) **Relationships**: building strong mentorship between youth and adults to ensure students have the support network needed to experience future success. Building upon the research of Dr. David Conley, ACCEL creates a learning environment that prepares students to “think, know, act, and go”. By think, we mean students can think critically. Students can process, examine, question, and look at patterns in content knowledge. By know, we mean students put forth the effort to develop the key foundational knowledge in the core academic subjects that are aligned to the college and workforce entrance requirements. By act, we mean students feel empowered to take ownership in their own learning through exploration and exposure to career and college opportunities. Lastly, by go, we mean students have the exposure and confidence to navigate the transition from middle school to high school and from high school to college and careers. To prepare students to think, know, act, and go, we utilize a student-centered learning framework that empowers students to master content, think deeply, and explore topics of interests through a combination of personalized-learning (learning at the student’s individual pace), student-owned learning (exploration of student’s career interests and passions), competency-based learning (showing mastery of content and skills through real-world projects), and lastly, any-time, any-where learning (use of computer-based curriculum outside of school to expand learning opportunities to 24 hours a day).

At the high school level, ACCEL Academy prepares students through a four-part framework and intentionally designed wraparound support system.

*Accel ensures that at-risk high school students are able to graduate from high school ready for work and ready for college.* It achieves this goal through a four-part, student-centered instructional model.

- **Part 1-Success Seminars**: Individualized, small-group courses designed to accelerate learning for students who are not able to read on an 8<sup>th</sup> grade level or master pre-algebra concepts, as measured by a school-developed entry-level assessment of math and literacy.
- **Part 2- Blended Learning Lab**: ACCEL uses teacher-directed, blended learning as a central component of learning. Teachers customize student learning, based upon students’ needs. Furthermore, students pursue their interests through choice-based curriculum.
- **Part 3-Learning Studios**: To deepen students’ learning and ensure that they can truly think critically, as well as see the real-world connection to what they are learning, students in each core course engage in competency-based group projects that integrate the key learning of the courses and are designed to emphasize the essential skills for the ACT/SAT. These real-world projects require students to apply the content learned in the blended learning labs, reflect upon their areas of strength, and address their areas of weakness.
- **Part 4-College and Career Coursework**: Students are truly prepared for college and careers in the Mobile area by taking advanced placement courses, participating in academic and technical dual enrollment coursework at both Bishop State and Coastal Community colleges, as well as engaging in industry approved internship and apprenticeship programs with more than 30 business partners.

*#2: Accel also provides the essential wraparound support through the Accel Mastery Program (AMP), including case management, counseling, community service, career exploration, and mentorship from community volunteers. These supports make a critical difference in helping students persist and achieve their goals of graduating college and career ready.*

- **Targeted Case Management**: ACCEL's students are assigned an advocate counselor on staff who serves as the gatekeeper for student needs and concerns. Students and

advocates check-in daily and meet formally once a week via scheduled office hours. The advocate counselor monitors students' attendance and academic progress. He/she serves as the front-line support to address any barriers to students' success.

- **Personal Mastery Development:** AMP provides students with a curriculum designed to develop personal mastery skills such as perseverance, leadership, personal agency, goal setting, and other factors that foster resiliency. This curriculum builds students' soft-skills and employability skills, as well as to give them the tools to overcome challenging circumstances and remain on the path to success.
- **Post-secondary Support:** AMP offers a variety of post-secondary support programming including college preparation programming, employability skill development, internships, and post-secondary placement services.

At the middle school level, ACCEL Academy prepares students to enter high school ready for rigorous coursework through a four-part framework.

- **Part 1: Literacy and Mathematics Workshops:** ACCEL will take a workshop-based approach to teaching literacy and numeracy skills. Students will experience short mini-lessons followed by deeper practice either as an individual, in small groups, or with a teacher. This workshop approach will focus on building reading skills, producing writing in its varied forms, and understanding the conceptual knowledge of mathematics. Each workshop will be grounded by various standards-aligned performance tasks, which students will produce to demonstrate proficiency on these standards.
- **Part 2: Learning Labs:** Students will participate in Learning Lab to extend their practice sessions in to build their skills in literacy and numeracy. During Learning Lab, students will interact with computer-based curriculum to practice skills. Their teachers will review their data to determine appropriate groupings for remediation and advancement
- **Part 3: STEM Studios:** Science will have a highly integrated focus. In addition to teaching state content standards for the grade-level, teachers will also build upon this knowledge by building authentic STEM projects that ask students to integrate science with mathematics, engineering, and technology. Students will develop skills in such areas as coding, robotics, 3-D design, and computer applications.
- **Part 4: History, Civics, and Service (HCS) Seminars:** Students will be taught the history content standards outlined in the Alabama Course of Study for their grade-level. Students will then be asked to apply these lessons from history to current events using the Socratic method. Students will have the opportunity to participate in service projects that teach them about the world they live in, beginning with their local community.

## Special Student Populations

ACCEL Academy is committed to identifying and meeting the learning needs of all its students, including students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), Section 504 Plans, English Learners (EL), students identified as intellectually gifted, and students at risk of academic failure or dropping out. ACCEL will be solely responsible for compliance with federal and state laws regarding serving special populations and special educational students, including the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and The Americans with Disabilities (ADA). Furthermore, no students with access to Accel will be denied admission due to special needs or disabilities.

ACCEL's curriculum design can serve the differentiated learning needs of its students with a high level of support. ACCEL's use of a workshop model, learning lab, online learning platforms, and Foundation/Acceleration blocks provide multiple avenues of differentiation to ensure each student achieves significant growth regardless of their starting point. These instructional models vary the pace, entry point, and learning styles to address each student's needs or preferences. Easy access to student progress on the online learning platforms, in addition to a centralized data



system showing NWEA MAP progress and standards mastery, allows teachers and counselors to identify struggling students early and to provide intervention. ACCEL will use a MTSS framework and Student Success Teams (SST) to provide the appropriate levels of assistance and continued monitoring. Resource aids and specialists will provide accommodations and special education services for students with IEPs and 504 Plans. Special education students will follow the daily schedule with the rest of the school as much as possible, but when appropriate, their daily schedule will be adapted to accommodate special classes, programs, or other services. Special education plans will be designed to meet the learning needs of students in the least restrictive environment.

## **Assessment**

ACCEL's performance standards will be driven by the approved set of Alabama standards for grades 6-8 and 9-12. These standards are aligned to Common Core State Standards and include additional standards approved by the Alabama State Board of Education. ACCEL will use these standards to drive curriculum choices and ensure student readiness for high school, college acceptance, and beyond. ACCEL will use the full set of Alabama standards for each grade and course, with more foundational standards addressed earlier and more often in each course to ensure students perform on grade level in reading and math. The state standards will be developed further to have performance rubrics for each priority standard. These priority standard rubrics will detail specific students' skills, understandings, and competencies students will be expected to demonstrate in traditional assessments and performance tasks. These rubrics will drive more authentic assessment and a focus on transferable knowledge as opposed to rote memorization or content "coverage."

## **School Climate and Discipline**

ACCEL's students and staff will be guided by five core values: achievement, collaboration, care, empowerment, and life-long learning.

- Achievement underscores the belief that we can reach our goals through focus and hard work.
- Collaboration reminds us that we can be our best and achieve the most when we work well with others.
- Care emphasizes that we must show appreciation and concern for our community and fellow-man.
- Empowerment means that we must take the initiative to give voice and power to our interests in a responsible way.
- Lifelong-Learning encourages students to seek "learning" in and out of school for the rest of their lives.

The school will focus on making these values a cornerstone of culture and common practice at ACCEL through intentional structures and systems. For example, students will have daily SEL (Yale's RULER & Mood Meter) check-ins and weekly advisory sessions where they get to practice and develop life skills and build the social and emotional skills. Additionally, the school will have a "weekly huddle" where student and faculty achievements are celebrated publicly with energy and excitement. Friendly schoolwide competitions around achievement, bringing your best self, and engagement will speak to students' desire to engage with their peers and be part of a collective. Through universal social-emotional screeners, staff will identify students who need another layer of support to overcome attendance, behavior, or mental health challenges. These Tier 2 supports

will include check-in/check-out and small-group SEL lessons with counselors to address specific self-regulation or communication needs. If students need more intensive support, they may receive weekly one-on-one counseling or referrals to outside agencies for wraparound supports.

ACCEL Day and Evening Academy is committed to creating a safe, respectful, and thriving learning environment for students. To achieve its mission, Accel's students and staff will be guided by five core values: achievement, collaboration, care, empowerment, and life-long learning. The core value of "care", namely that we must show appreciation and concern for our community and fellow man guides Accel's approach to discipline. ACCEL will use a positive behavior intervention and support system (PBIS) to promote a caring environment. PBIS is guided by five key elements (1) clear behavior expectations, (2) teaching appropriate behavior, (3) celebrating positive behavior, (4) responding to behavior, and (5) use of data.

To set clear behavior expectations, staff will be trained on shared classroom management strategies that ensure clear articulation of classroom rules and procedures. Staff will also engage in ongoing practice using created and actual scenarios to norm responses and develop consistency across the school, which will support students' feelings of safety and commitment to shared norms in every classroom. All classroom expectations will be positively framed, developed in collaboration with students, posted in each classroom, and discussed during whole school announcements to promote excellence in displaying the core values.

To teach appropriate behavior, staff will be trained to implement the RULER SEL curriculum. The SEL lessons will be taught over multiple days each week, with time for students to have low-stakes practice implementing the strategies. Teachers will also develop lesson plans for the first week of school to introduce students to the core values, school expectations, and school- and class-specific procedures. These lessons will include practice with ongoing feedback – favoring positive reinforcement and non-judgmental "re-do's," while avoiding serious negative consequences until a true baseline understanding of expectations has been developed.

Positive behavior will be celebrated through a merit earning system, quarter awards ceremonies, surprise incentives for exemplary behavior, and class competition incentive systems. Teachers will also be trained on the effects and best practices of positive narration – striving for 3 positive interactions with a student for every 1 negative.

Behaviors will be responded to using a tiered response system. These responses will be uniform across all staff and all spaces to ensure student clarity, fairness, and buy-in. Level 1 behaviors (minor disruptions, interruptions to learning, etc.) will be addressed through verbal warnings followed by demerits. Demerits accumulate through the week, escalating to a phone call home, parent conference, and detention. Level 2 behaviors (major disruptions or incidents of disrespect, eloping) will merit automatic detention and a restorative conversation. Level 3 incidents (major safety infractions, theft, possession of controlled substances, drugs, weapons) will warrant an out-of-school suspension with the potential to recommend for expulsion.

Data will be used provide additional counseling, teaching of replacement behaviors, or mental health supports to students any time they are suspended or following a student's second detention in a 9-week term. The school's culture team (including select teachers, counselors, and an administrator) will also review behavior data each month to determine trends in time of day, location, root causes, students, and personnel to determine next steps to decrease negative incidents. The team will also design incentives to promote the teaching and use of positive behaviors not fully integrated into the culture.

## **B. Organizational Plan**

### **School Calendar and Daily Schedule**

ACCEL Day and Evening Academy will operate from mid August until the early June annually. With a focus on supporting struggling students, Accel must implement an academic schedule that is extensive and intensive. This expanded academic schedule will allow students who are already behind to have the added instructional time to accelerate their credit accumulation and meet rigorous graduation requirements for college and career readiness. The school calendar will ensure students have 180 days of instruction during the academic year.

A full day (7:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.) will run Mondays through Thursdays. The full day schedule includes 55 minutes for each block, including the four core contents, learning lab, and physical education. Running a 55-minute block schedule will assist in retaining student attention through lessons. Further, by working literacy and STEM skills into multiple blocks throughout the day, each teacher can prioritize differentiating for a discrete part of each student's academic growth. Students will have 25 minutes for lunch and two 10-minute brain breaks during a full day. Brain breaks are designed to give space for time to meet their social, emotional, or physical energy needs to ready themselves for their next block of learning. On Fridays, students will have two 75-minute blocks personalized to their mastery of competencies and standards. These two blocks, "Foundation" and "Accelerate," will develop student skills in an area of need and provide time to explore a talent, interest, or strength. These blocks will change and personalize for each student every 9 weeks, ensuring urgency in closing gaps identified in student intervention plans. After students dismiss at noon on Fridays, staff will stay on campus to engage in strategic collaborative planning and data-driven professional development. Creating tailored intervention plans and cross-curricular projects will require an intensive amount of collaborative planning that would not be possible during a typical school day. Given the diverse needs of our scholars, investing in strategic planning time will net more effective instruction throughout the entirety of the week.

### **Student Recruitment and Enrollment**

ACCEL will employ a variety of marketing strategies to ensure that students with economic disadvantage and academic disadvantage are reached. These strategies will be broadly implemented throughout Mobile and Baldwin counties. While ACCEL may be a preferred option for a variety of high school students, its target community is overaged, undercredited students who have dropped out or who are at risk of dropping out. ACCEL's staff will make clear in recruitment open houses and other communications that students with special needs and limited English proficiency will be offered quality instruction and support to meet their needs. It will also be widely communicated that ACCEL provides a unique program with extensive support to serve the needs of students from economically disadvantaged families, students at risk of dropping out, and students who do not meet minimum standards of academic proficiency. Additionally, enrollment will take place via lottery. Once the lottery has been run, enrollment will be awarded on a first-come basis until all available seats have been filled.

### **Staffing and Human Resources**

Employees of ACCEL will receive an annual employment contract, which outlines their terms of employment, annual pay, supervisor, and job description. This contract will be renewed every year and represents the defined expectations between employee and employer.

### **Management and Operations**

The relationship between the MPCS Leadership Team consists of the Head of School, the High School Principal, and Director of Teaching and Learning/Middle School Principal. This leadership team meets weekly to discuss, monitor, and track the major strategy of the school. Leadership Team members will provide updates from each of their departments (teachers, counselors, administrative) and establish shared plans for moving the school forward. These leadership team

members then cascade the ideas/decisions and seek input from the rest of the staff. The rest of the staff offers additional input during weekly whole school staff meetings held on Fridays.

## **Parent and Community Development**

To build community support for ACCEL, MAEF has engaged with municipal and county elected officials, school superintendents, school principals, business leaders, and community-based organizations to describe the plans for the school and solicit advice and direction on how to make the school most effective. Parent engagement is a crucial component of ACCEL's success at the 9-12 and will continue to be for grades 6-8. ACCEL will build strong family-school partnerships by focusing on three elements (1) effective communication, (2) welcoming and inviting school atmosphere, and (3) parent involvement in school governance.

## **C. Governance Plan**

MPCS is governed by a Board of Directors (the "MPCS Board"). Board members are experienced members of non-profit education boards. Of the ten members, there are two former chairmen of the MAEF Board, board members of private schools, the Alabama School of Math and Science, and members of the Mobile Chamber of Commerce Board. Furthermore, the Board consists of two parents of current and former students to provide the authentic engagement and focus on the students and families served. These board members have demonstrated commitment to the success of Accel and have strong local control over the ACCEL Day and Evening Academy and any future charter schools it operates in Alabama.

The MPCS Board members are mission-driven, engaged, intentional, locally rooted, and adroit in the skills needed to oversee successful charter schools. The MPCS Board is ultimately responsible for the successful operations and activities of the ACCEL Day and Evening Academy. It accomplishes its tasks by adopting and directing a long-term strategic plan, monitoring the budget to achieve the plan's goals and employing and evaluating the school leader. Its focus is on ensuring that the school's students are achieving academic success, the program is operationally, financially and legally sound, and the leadership is in place to execute on the mission of MPCS, and by extension, ACCEL Day and Evening Academy.

The MPCS Board consists of ten members. Each MPCS Board member serves a three-year term. Terms are staggered to ensure that at any given time no more than one third of the members has less than one year of experience on the MPCS Board, with the exception of the initial MPCS Board. Board members are not subject to a limit on the number of terms they may serve. Furthermore, at least 20 percent of board members will be current or prior parents of the school. To further boost parental engagement and involvement, ACCEL's Parent Advisory Council meets quarterly and provides feedback and support to the Head of School and members of the Governing Board.

MPCS Board members have expertise in many varying fields including education, finance, corporate management, accounting, human resources, legal, and fundraising. Overall, MAEF and MPCS look for board members who are strongly mission-aligned, highly-trained, experienced in making strategic organizational decisions, and understand the key responsibilities of a well-operating Board.

## **D. Business and Financial Services**

### **Budget**

The CFO will work with ACCEL's school leaders to plan and monitor the budgets. In monthly meetings, the CFO will train the school leader on financial management, analysis of budget versus

actuals, variances, and cash monitoring. This will be a collaborative relationship where the school leader has significant ownership over the school-site budget and a strong partnership with an experienced expert to ensure success. After the CFO and the school leader create budgets, they are reviewed with the Head of School, and the finance committee of MAEF Public Charter Schools Boards. Then the budget is taken to the full MAEF Public Charter School Board at a public Board meeting for approval. Budgets are revised through out the year. In addition to presenting the one-year budget in detail, the CFO also presents a multi-year model for context and planning.

### Financial Management

#### Finance Team

- Mark Spivey, Vice President of BB&T, Chairman of Mobile Area Education Foundation Board, experienced commercial banker.
- Henry O'Connor, Partner at Jones Walker LLP, and United Way of Southwest Alabama Campaign Chair, responsible for raising \$3.5 Million to support education, healthcare, and life essential activities in Mobile.
- Rob McGinley, Partner at McDowell, Knight, Roedder, and Sledge L.L.C, former Chairman of the Mobile Area Education Foundation Board, and experienced corporate attorney with experience in establishment of for-profit and non-profit organizations.
- Carolyn Akers, CEO of MAEF, experienced non-profit CEO with 30+ years of management experience and overseeing organizations with \$5 million+ budgets
- Michelle Parson, CFO of MAEF, over 20 years of experience in the non-profit finance. Responsible for oversight of all finance related activities including accounting, financial reporting, budgeting, independent audit, tax, financial planning and analysis, treasury, governance, financial risk and compliance activities to include performance contracts and grants.
- Caryn Rainey Scott, Accountant, over 10 years of experience in for-profit and non-profit finance. Responsible for accounts receivable, accounts payable, and payroll activities.
- Alisha Cochran-Spencer , Financial Auditor MAEF, over 30 years as a CPA. She has worked as a Financial Auditing Director for PriceWaterhouse Coopers and KPMG Peat Marwick Auditing Houses. She has experience as a comptroller for not-for-profit organizations and for-profit organizations and as a Corporate Auditor for AmSouth Bank and Springhill Health Services.

Activity	Accel (School Site)	MAEF Finance Team	MAEF CFO	Head of School (CEO)	MAEF Public Charter School Board
Budget	Gives input		Leads Development	Proposes	Finance Committee Reviews/ Board Approves
Audit		Provides Input	Leads process		Audit Committee Reviews/Board Approves

Accounts Receivable/Payable		Leads Process	Recommends for Approval	Signs Checks	Reviews Balance Sheet
Budget Monitoring	Variations and Forecasts Reviewed with School Principal Monthly		Leads process	Variations and Forecasts Reviewed Monthly	Finance Committee Reviews
Payroll		Leads Process		Approves all compensation	Finance Committee Reviews
Cash Management			Leads Process		Approves any loans
Authorizer Reporting	Provides Input	Provide Input	Leads Process		Approves

**Facilities**

The MAEF Public Charter Schools Board has secured a 60,000+ sq/ft facility with ample space to meet the educational, social-emotional, and recreational needs of its students. The facility is centrally located in Mobile County, located on a public bus route, and has been designed and approved by the Alabama Department of Construction Management and the Alabama State Department of Education's School Architect.

**Transportation**

ACCEL Academy does not provide student transportation to and from school.

**Insurance**

MAEF Public Charter Schools currently holds required liability insurance. The CFO ensures that appropriate insurance is maintained at all times with a high-quality insurance agency. The CFO maintains the files of insurance policies, including an up-to-date copy of all certificates of insurance, insurance policies and procedures, and related claim forms. The CFO carefully reviews insurance policies on an annual basis, prior to renewal. Insurance includes general liability, worker's compensation, student accident, professional liability, and directors' and officers' coverage. Supplementary coverage covers after-hours and weekend activities.

**Food Services**

ACCEL operates a state-approved federal school lunch program overseen by the Alabama

State Department of Education. Due to its high poverty rates, the school participates in the community eligibility program, which ensures all students eat breakfast and lunch for free.

**E. Education Service Providers: N/A**

**Attachments**

**Section 2: Changes to School's Current Model**

– No Attachments –

**3.Other**

To support the whole-child development of our students, ACCEL will begin participating in the Alabama High School Athletic Association's competitive sports programming. It will offer a variety of organized sports to meet the diverse interests and needs of our scholars in grades 6-12.

**Attachments**

**Section 3: Other**

– No Attachments –

# Exhibits

## 1. Projected Budget

Please find attached three years of audits (2018, 2019, 2020) and a 5-year projected budget for the school.

### Attachments

#### Section 1: Projected Budget

1.1	<a href="#">5-Year Budget</a>	Newell, Jeremiah, 10/1/21 3:14 PM	XLSX / 31.397 KB
1.2	<a href="#">2018 Audit</a>	Newell, Jeremiah, 10/1/21 3:08 PM	PDF / 445.526 KB
1.3	<a href="#">2020 Audit</a>	Newell, Jeremiah, 10/1/21 3:07 PM	PDF / 430.042 KB
1.4	<a href="#">2019 Audit</a>	Newell, Jeremiah, 10/1/21 3:07 PM	PDF / 414.468 KB

## 2. Alabama Continuous Improvement Plan

When Governor Kay Ivey directed the closing of schools in March 2020 due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, ACCEL Academy immediately moved to asynchronous virtual instruction. Teachers worked over the Spring Break to build course content that could be accessed by students at any time. The school also distributed all available computers to ensure any student who needed access to technology had it. Because ACCEL Academy already utilized elements of personalized learning, students were familiar with the technology tools used. Teachers made themselves available virtually for office hours and tutoring to ensure students stayed on track. As a result, despite the pandemic, ACCEL had its largest graduating class in its history.

During the summer, the academic team developed an approach to learning that built upon the success of the last quarter of the previous academic year. The faculty and staff purchased classroom videoconferencing technology to allow for synchronous instruction. This allowed students to maintain a level of engagement, even if they were attending school virtually. Ultimately, the school's leadership offered a three-pronged approach to education during the pandemic: (1) socially distanced in-person learning, (2) synchronous virtual learning, and (3) extremely small and supportive night school learning. The most difficult element of this strategy was maintaining the engagement of the 40% of students who chose synchronous virtual learning. Teachers implemented creative solutions, including in-person socially distanced office hours in the evenings and on Fridays to help students stay on track. For the 2021-22 school year, 95% of students returned to campus learning, and virtual learning returned to asynchronous and continued to be offered for those families on Covid quarantine protocols or other special circumstances.

### Attachments

#### Section 2: Alabama Continuous Improvement Plan



2.1	<a href="#">2021-22 Reopening Plan</a>	Newell, Jeremiah, 10/1/21 4:32 PM	PDF / 8.94 MB
2.2	<a href="#">2020-21 Reopening Plan</a>	Newell, Jeremiah, 10/1/21 4:29 PM	PDF / 8.987 MB

### 3. ESSER Plans

Please find attached the ALSDE approved plans for ESSER I, ESSER II, and ESSER III.

#### Attachments

##### Section 3: ESSER Plans

3.1	<a href="#">ESSER 3 Plan</a>	Newell, Jeremiah, 10/1/21 5:40 PM	PDF / 325.634 KB
3.2	<a href="#">ESSER 1 Plan</a>	Newell, Jeremiah, 10/1/21 5:34 PM	PDF / 767.075 KB
3.3	<a href="#">ESSER 2 Plan</a>	Newell, Jeremiah, 10/1/21 5:33 PM	PDF / 9.573 MB

### 4. Compliance Monitoring Report

Please find the ALSDE compliance monitoring report attached.

#### Attachments

##### Section 4: Compliance Monitoring Report

4.1	<a href="#">Compliance Monitoring Report</a>	Newell, Jeremiah, 10/1/21 3:19 PM	PDF / 497.373 KB
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# Recommendation

School Name:	<b>Acceleration Day and Evening Academy</b>
Primary Contact:	<b>Jeremiah Newell</b>
Submission Date:	<b>October 1, 2021</b>
Recommendation Date:	<b>December 8, 2021</b>
Recommended By:	<b>Logan Searcy</b>
Charter Status:	<b>Granted</b>

No comments were provided by Logan Searcy