

Application Type

APCSC New School Application for an Opening in Fall 2027 or Fall 2028

Florencer Community School

Submitted To

Alabama Public Charter School Commission

Submitted by

On'draya Morris

Submitted at

03/18/2026 10:22 AM

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Status: Completed

Form Result

Please provide the following information to support the processing of this application. By signing and submitting this application you are giving permission for Commission staff to review the application and contact you for further information and clarification.

School Information

Proposed School Name	Floreecer Community School
School Type	Elementary/Middle
Grade Levels Served at Capacity	K, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th
School District Name	Birmingham City Schools
Neighborhood / Community	Birmingham
Physical Address	Country: USA Street Name: 2015 Park Place North City: Birmingham State: Alabama Zip Code: 35203 Selected Address: isOther
Phone Number	2052314600
Web Site	www.learnatfloreecer.org

Primary Contact Person Information

Provide the name of the person who will serve as the primary contact for this Application. The primary contact should serve as the contact for follow-up, interviews, and notices regarding this Application.

Contact Name	On'Draya Morris
Title / Relation to School	School Founder/Proposed Executive Director
Mailing Address	Country: USA Street Name: 7859 Winslow Crest Circle City: Trussville State: Alabama Zip Code: 35173 Selected Address: isOther
Primary Phone Number	6782439330
Email Address	omorris@learnatfloreecer.org
Preferred Method of Contact	email
Operational Information	
Anticipated Opening Year	Fall 2027

Operator Type	6d27f27a-9dd9-4970-8678-c62c85df6d7b
Is the entity behind the school out of state?	No
Is the school part of a network, such as a CMO, EMO?	No
School Calendar Type	39e019db-d406-40d3-a2b3-202dd379d6c8
Number of instructional days in a school year	181

I certify that I have the authority to submit this application and that all information contained herein is complete and accurate, realizing that any misrepresentation could result in disqualification from the application process or revocation after award. I understand that incomplete applications will not be considered. The person named as the contact person for the application is so authorized to serve as the primary contact for this application on behalf of the applicant.

I Do Not Agree	I Agree
	On'Draya Morris
	School Founder
	02/19/2026

Element Review
Reviews is not provided

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Reviewer Instructions
Rate the Executive Summary below

Status: Completed

Form Result

1) Mission Statement. The mission statement is a brief description of the fundamental purpose of the school and should include any organizing theme or concept if applicable. The statement is the expressed public purpose of the school defining its culture, goals and values.

Mission Statement

FCS Mission Statement

Florecer Community School is a K–8 Spanish–English dual language charter school serving the Ensley/Greater Birmingham community. Our mission is to cultivate academically excellent, bilingual, and biliterate students who demonstrate strong character, critical thinking, and a deep sense of purpose. Through a rigorous dual-language instructional model, culturally responsive teaching, and strong family and community partnerships, Florecer prepares scholars to achieve at high levels, lead with audacious hope, and contribute meaningfully to the economic, civic, and cultural vitality of Birmingham while engaging confidently in an interconnected global society.

2) School Vision. Identify the community being served and provide a brief statement on how the proposed school would operate within that community. Include long-term goals for how the school would enhance and provide a service to the community. Define benchmarks for what a successful endeavor entails. Align with the stated goals of the Alabama School Choice and Student Opportunity Act. Ala. Code § 16-6F-3.

School Vision

FCS's Vision: Ensuring that Students THRIVE

Florecer Community School (FCS) is designed to serve students and families in the Ensley community of Birmingham, Alabama, and surrounding neighborhoods that have historically experienced limited access to high-quality, innovative educational opportunities. Ensley is a culturally rich area rooted in the arts community with deep historical roots and growing linguistic diversity. FCS seeks to partner with families, community organizations, and local stakeholders to create a rigorous and supportive academic environment that reflects and strengthens the assets of the community it serves. Our motto is “Atrévete a ser diferente — Dare to be different,” Florecer Community School fosters a culture of audacious hope, leadership, and responsibility. Through rigorous academics, dual-language immersion, and strong community partnerships, the school prepares students to become thoughtful leaders who contribute meaningfully to both their local community and the broader global society.

Through a Spanish dual-language immersion model, Florecer Community School will provide students in grades K–8 with an academically rigorous program that develops bilingualism, biliteracy, and strong academic proficiency in core subjects. FCS integrates the following design elements:

- Rigorous data-driven instruction in both Spanish & English
- Collaborative leadership structures through Global Teams (house/advisory system)
- Culturally responsive teaching practices (through bilingual education)
- Community-centered partnerships

Our model is rooted in developing the whole-child to ensure that all students develop the academic foundation and leadership skills necessary for success in secondary education and beyond. Florecer Community School will operate as an active community partner by engaging families as essential contributors to the educational process and by collaborating with local organizations to expand opportunities for students. The school will serve as a hub for family engagement, cultural connection, and academic support, reinforcing the belief that strong schools strengthen strong communities. Through this approach, Florecer seeks not only to educate students but also to contribute to the revitalization and long-term prosperity of the Ensley community.

Consistent with the goals of the Alabama School Choice and Student Opportunity Act (Ala. Code §16-6F-3), Florecer Community School seeks to expand innovative high-quality educational options for families while promoting student achievement, innovation in public education, and greater educational equity. The school's dual-language model prepares students with linguistic, cognitive, and cultural competencies that support college and career readiness in an increasingly global economy.

Longstanding Community Impact

Florecer Community School envisions becoming a beacon of excellence in bilingual education within Alabama and a replicable model for innovative dual-language programming in public charter schools. Over time, the school aims to:

- Increase access to high-quality bilingual education for students in Birmingham.
-

Develop students who are bilingual, biliterate, and academically proficient by the completion of eighth grade.

- Strengthen family engagement and community collaboration through partnerships with local organizations and cultural institutions.
- Prepare students for high school success, college readiness, and competitive workforce opportunities.
- Contribute to the long-term economic and social vitality of the Ensley community by cultivating confident, capable, and civically engaged young leaders.

Benchmarks: Measuring Success

Floreceer Community School will measure success through clear academic, linguistic, and community engagement benchmarks. Indicators of a successful program will include:

- **Academic Achievement:** Students meeting or exceeding state academic proficiency standards in core subjects.
- **Bilingualism and Biliteracy:** A majority of students demonstrating measurable progress toward bilingualism and biliteracy throughout the K–8 program, with the goal of full proficiency by the end of eighth grade.
- **Student Growth:** Consistent year-over-year academic growth as measured by state assessments and internal performance metrics.
- **Family and Community Engagement:** Strong participation of families in school programs, leadership opportunities, and community events.
- **High School Readiness:** Graduates of Floreceer Community School entering high school prepared for rigorous academic coursework and continued bilingual development.

3) **Education Plan/School Design.** Provide an overview of the education program of the proposed school, including major instructional methods and assessment strategies and non-negotiables of the school model. Describe the evidence that suggests the school model will be successful in improving academic achievement for the targeted student population. Summarize what the proposed school would do more effectively than the schools that are now serving the targeted population and how the school would measure its progress.

Educational Plan/School Design

FCS Overview of our Educational Plan

Floreceer Community School (FCS) will provide a rigorous, linguistically diverse K–8 educational program designed to address opportunity gaps in bilingual education and academic achievement for students in the Ensley and greater Birmingham metropolitan area. The school's program is grounded in high academic expectations, culturally responsive teaching practices, and a strong commitment to community collaboration. FCS seeks to address several challenges present in the current educational landscape, including limited access to biliteracy programming, persistent achievement gaps in literacy and mathematics for racially and economically marginalized communities, and limited structures for meaningful collaboration between schools, families, and community organizations. Floreceer Community School's educational model directly aligns with the priorities identified in Birmingham City Schools' Innovative Schools Request for Proposals, and the growing need for innovative public charter schools including advancing academic excellence in literacy and numeracy, providing individualized learning opportunities, and supporting the needs of students with disabilities, at-risk learners, and English Language Learners.

The FCS educational program is built upon four non-negotiable pillars that guide instruction, culture, and community engagement.

1. **Dual language immersion.** FCS is committed to ensuring that all students grow in core academic competencies and domains, relative to the learning standards in the state of Alabama, starting in kindergarten. Our dual language model ensures that students grow in the additional critical competency of bilingualism (8). Our two-way immersion model serves as an audacious dual language education because it involves two languages in two ways: Two languages are used for instruction, and two groups of students are involved—native English speakers and

students from another language background (Spanish). Aligning with this model is typically a strength-based mindset to both native English speakers and native Spanish speakers as both can utilize learning autonomy to elevate all students toward becoming bilingual, bi-literate, and bicultural. The classroom becomes an invitation to explore differences in a learning laboratory. This unique approach serves as the first of its kind in the state of Alabama as an entire public charter school model.

2. **Rigorous, Data-Driven Instruction.** Florecer teachers approach all instruction through a data-driven lens, where daily lessons are intellectually prepped in strict alignment to the content, vocabulary, and rigor of Alabama standards and the ultimate goal of biliteracy in both Spanish and English. Furthermore, Florecer teachers use frequent assessment to monitor student progress towards mastery. We are committed to accelerating student learning and aggressively targeting existing gaps, and do so with a high-rigor, high support instructional program steeped in practice based learning. Florecer is adamant in our pursuit to improve the academic and life outcomes of our students. We are committed to excellence which translates to academic achievement in our school. As Florecer staff prepares and presents their best lessons daily, Florecer students meet the challenge by actively engaging all academic tasks assigned to them. In the spirit of hope, responsibility, and excellence, Florecer students commit themselves to incremental improvement daily.
3. **Community Centered Innovation.** As a community school we are steeped in the work of the community school model and framework. As such, our school model is built around trusting relationships, a shared vision, inclusive decision making and actionable data. In an effort to be centered in the community, we have created a community council called the THRIVE Team. The THRIVE team is centered around upholding our educational priorities with the utmost fidelity. Teachers and families will be trained in the Alabama Course of Study (ALCOS) elements that will allow for wrap-around academic support for families. During our weekly staff PD days (which occur on Fridays) we will invite families and community partners in the building to learn alongside our staff around how to best support students in closing the achievement gap. As a community council we are inviting our members to be a part of the real world connection to the curriculum by providing in house learning field trips, real world simulations, case studies and models of how our students can target their learning through math and literacy focused efforts. Our goal is that students and families are always able to make the connection between the real world and their school learning environment. Additionally, we are seeking to partner with local organizations to support wrap-around services for the entire family needs that have been identified by the community. These needs include evening ESL adult classes, GED preparation in Spanish/English and a safe place for newcomer families to identify ways to connect to their new community.
4. **Global Teams (Houses/Advisory System).** The House System provides safe spaces rooted in relationships and education equity so all students can succeed academically when given the academic and holistic support they need to thrive. The multi-grade house system groups students and staff into houses based on shared characteristics. Each house has its own identity, colors, and symbolism, and members compete against one another in various activities and events. The house system aims to build school spirit and camaraderie while encouraging healthy competition and teamwork.

FCS's Instructional Methods & Assessment Strategies

The instructional approach at Florecer Community School integrates several high-impact teaching strategies, including:

- Standards-aligned instruction based on the Alabama Course of Study (ALCOS)
- Language-rich instructional environments supporting bilingual development
- Collaborative learning structures
- Practice-based learning experiences and real-world applications
- Differentiated instruction for students with diverse academic needs
- Integrated literacy and numeracy instruction across content areas

Additionally, teachers will use scaffolding techniques and targeted support strategies to ensure accessibility for students with disabilities, English learners, and students requiring additional academic support. We will continuously measure student outcomes, growth and success by utilizing consistent and frequent Assessment methods that are normed throughout the pedagogical framework utilized by teachers, leaders and staff. FCS will implement a comprehensive assessment system designed to monitor student progress and inform instruction.

Assessment strategies will include:

- Ongoing formative assessments to monitor daily learning
- Interim benchmark assessments to track student progress toward standards mastery
- State-mandated assessments aligned with Alabama accountability requirements
- Language proficiency assessments to monitor bilingual development
- Data analysis cycles used by teachers and school leaders to adjust instructional strategies

Student performance data will be regularly reviewed to identify trends, address learning gaps, and refine instructional practices.

The Florecer Difference (Evidence & Measuring Progress)

Research indicates that high-quality dual language immersion programs are among the most effective educational models for improving academic outcomes, particularly for students from multilingual and economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Studies have shown that students enrolled in dual language programs often outperform peers in monolingual programs on standardized assessments over time.

Additionally, research on community school models demonstrates that strong family engagement and wraparound supports significantly improve student attendance, engagement, and academic achievement. Data-driven instructional models further support student success by allowing educators to identify and address learning gaps quickly and effectively.

By integrating these evidence-based practices, FCS seeks to provide a comprehensive educational program that supports both academic excellence and whole-child development.

Florecer Community School is designed to address several limitations present in traditional educational models serving the targeted student population. Unlike many existing schools, Florecer will provide:

- A full dual language immersion program that promotes bilingualism and biliteracy among all students not just one subset.
- Structured family and community engagement systems that are rooted in closing achievement gaps that begin outside the classroom.
- Data-driven instructional practices focused on improving student and staff excellence with a focus on practice based learning.
- Intentional support structures through the Global Teams advisory system rooted in developing character, purpose and community within the school.

These components create a learning environment where students receive both rigorous academic instruction and the social-emotional support necessary for long-term success. FCS will measure its effectiveness through multiple indicators of success, including:

- Student proficiency and growth on Alabama state academic assessments
- Demonstrated progress toward bilingualism and biliteracy
- Student growth in literacy and mathematics
- Increased family engagement and participation in school initiatives
- Student readiness for rigorous high school coursework

Through ongoing data analysis and continuous improvement processes, Florecer Community School will remain committed to refining its educational program to ensure that all students achieve at high levels.

Citations

(8) <https://tcf.org/content/report/ensuring-equitable-access-to-dual-language-immersion-programs-supporting-english-learners-emerging-bilingualism/>

4) Educational Need and Anticipated Student Population. Describe the anticipated student population, students anticipated educational needs, and non-academic challenges the school is likely to encounter. Describe the rationale for selecting the location and student body. Identify any enrollment priorities on which the program is based consistent with applicable restrictions on enrollment eligibility and selection. As an attachment, provide evidence of the educational need in the community.

Educational Need and Anticipated Student Population.

Educational Need and Anticipated Student Population

As stated by UNESCO, Education is a basic human right that works to raise men and women out of poverty, level inequalities, and ensure sustainable development (1). However, the high poverty rates and associated inequities in Alabama continue to impact this basic right. In Alabama, 40% of Black students and 31% of Hispanic students are living below the poverty threshold making it difficult to exit the cycle of poverty or causing the cycle of poverty to persist. The cycle of poverty presents students and families with a non-academic challenge that is detrimental to their long term success. It is also devastating to the region's economic growth. The USDA finds, "concentrated poverty contributes to poor housing and health conditions, higher crime, school dropout rates, and employment dislocations. As a result, economic conditions in very poor areas can create limited opportunities for poor residents that become self-perpetuating." The cycle of poverty and the inequalities that ensue disproportionately impact our students of color in the nation and particularly in Alabama where nearly 700,000 Black and Hispanic students enrolled in public school are living below the poverty threshold. The outcomes that the cycle of poverty presents can be devastating not only to these students and families but also to the economic growth of our region. From health care access and quality, economic stability, and social and community context just to name a few (3). According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), access to a high quality education is one of the greatest social determinants of health and has proven to impact life expectancy and social-emotional well being. At Floreecer we believe a high quality bilingual education is a direct line to crafting hope, lifetime achievement, and community transformation. Hope fuels our belief in ourselves, others, and the possibilities around us. As such, the guiding purposes and priorities of Floreecer Community School are to increase math, and literacy achievement for K-8 students through access to a global learning experience rooted in bilingual education.

The Need for Bilingual Education in the Alabama Context

Floreecer has made an intentional decision to create a bilingual school that focuses on Spanish immersion based on the expressed community need. Alabama's student population is rapidly changing. Every year it becomes more diverse. Multilingual learners are the fastest growing student population in the United States. Multilingual learners are defined by students whose home environment's native language is not English. In 2022 in Alabama, the Hispanic population grew by 4% in Alabama. With or without immigration, Alabama's Hispanic population is poised to become an increasingly important part of the state's tapestry: 10% of students enrolled in Alabama public schools are of Hispanic descent, as is almost 10% of the population under 25.

According to the Census Bureau's 2021 estimates, 65% of Alabama's Hispanic population were born in the U.S., an increase from the 50% native-born percentage in 2010. As stated in research completed by the Century Foundation, "linguistic diversity has long been growing in U.S. schools. In 2000, roughly 3.8 million (8.1 percent) of U.S. students were classified as English learners (ELs); by 2020, just shy of 5 million (10.3 percent) were. These students represent a remarkable myriad of languages, cultures, and ethnicities, and their success in school and society is essential for the United States' globally competitive future in education and every sector. Research suggests that the best way to advance ELs' linguistic and academic development is by supporting their development through bilingual instruction(4)." Additionally, academic achievement among English speaking students increases when sharing learning space with heritage speakers and learning in an immersive culture. While Artificial Intelligence (AI), STREAM (Science, Technology, Reading, Engineering, Art, and Math) and Entrepreneurship are advancing, we are leaving behind the criticality of language development in our society. As our educational ecosystem attempts to become more responsive to the needs of multilingual learners, there is a growing need to develop our language-based immersion

schools in the PreK-12 pipeline and champion that all students are graduating fluent in at least two languages.

As we holistically address the need for shared vision for the 21st-century, the growing consensus for educational literacy has been to prepare US students for global success. The previous US Department of Education administration championed the “Raise the Bar: Lead the World” campaign to create pathways for Global Engagement by creating pathways for all students toward multilingualism. As such they have identified three key levers; equitable access for English learners, diversified bilingual/multilingual educator workforce, and quality bilingual education for all (5). Florecer is excited to become the first school in Alabama to offer an entire K-8 school public charter school model that creates clear pathways to global engagement through bilingual education. Most importantly, FCS is championing true biliteracy, where students receive foundational literacy in both languages. Bilingualism is the ability to speak in two languages, but biliteracy is the ability to read, write, listen and speak in two languages with fluency.

Multi-billionaire and media mogul Oprah Winfrey once stated, “Books were my first ticket to personal freedom. I learned to read when I was three and soon revealed that there’s a whole world to know beyond the borders of Mississippi.” Literacy as a means of freedom has not been afforded to all students in our state. Alabama’s National NAEP report card reveals that In 2022, students who were eligible for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) had an average score that was 23 points lower than that for students who were not eligible. This performance gap was not significantly different from that in 1998 (24 points). Additionally, In 2022, Hispanic students had an average score that was 17 points lower than for White students and Black students had an average score that was 27 points lower than that for White students. This directly impacts the Ensley community with over 95% of students reporting as Free & Reduced Lunch recipients. A child’s economic status should never be an indicator of the high quality educational options afforded to them. Thus the growing need for educational options that are concentrated and able to serve the diverse and unique needs of growing communities. Our students of multilingual homes, backgrounds, and cultures are often losing their native languages in exchange for an American education. However, in American education it is often challenging to address the growing needs of ELs and the need for a literate, bilingual community base. Florecer addresses the growing need of both language access and the preservation of heritage language for Hispanic students who are the largest demographic group in charter schools. Hispanic students represent more than 1.3 million students enrolled nationwide in charter schools. Hispanic students in charter schools gain the equivalent of 19 days of learning in math and 30 days in reading each year. Low-income Hispanic students gain the equivalent of 30 days learning in math and 36 days in reading each year. Black students

What is Dual Language Bilingual Education (DLBE)?

Dual language is a form of bilingual education in which students are taught literacy and content in two languages. Dual language programs across the country generally focus on Spanish, Mandarin and French. Florecer is a two-way Spanish immersion model where students learn using a 50:50 model with students learning 50% of the day in Spanish and 50% of the day in English. Spanish is the language that is most commonly spoken in Alabama outside of English, and this is a trend around the US. In an effort to support the acquisition of bilingualism that is effective and relevant, FCS has chosen Spanish as our Language Other Than English (LOTE). FCS aligns with the three pillars of Dual Language Bilingual Education (DLBE) which focuses on bilingualism/biliteracy, high academic achievement, and social cultural competence. Further, studies reliably show that bilingual instruction uniquely helps English learners learn English, succeed academically, and develop their emerging bilingual skills. If historically marginalized students gain access to programs that help them become bilingual, it may help remediate academic gaps in subjects like Math and Reading.

Why Birmingham’s District 8 & 9?

Florecer Community school seeks to serve the following neighborhoods; Acipo-Finley, Central Pratt, Dolomite, Druid Hill, East Thomas, Enon Ridge, Ensley, Evergreen, Fountain Heights, Hooper City, North Birmingham, North Pratt, Oak Ridge, Sandusky, Sherman Heights, Smithfield Estates, South Pratt, Wylam, Belview Heights, Bush Hills, Central Park, College Hills, Ensley, Ensley Highlands, Fairview, Graymont, Thomas, Rising West-Princeton, Tuxedo, and Tuxedo Heights. The multi-generational pride that oozes from the faces, words and hearts of West End residents highlights the

magnetic impact that the community has played in their lives; our leaders and community partners are lifelong residents that ring the praises of memories with pride. However, due to the changing times, schools have closed and diverse high-quality educational options are not as readily available. The heart of District 8 & 9 still beats for revival. On our listening tour in the community, we learned that the greatest issues were access to opportunities, educational options, and resources. FCS is deeply committed to honoring and existing in the community alongside its residents and providing opportunity to a globally sound education through language access.

Concentrated poverty has plagued the once bustling neighborhoods of District 8 & 9 that have served as a beacon of hope for music, and industry growth in the steel and iron industry. The opportunities were in abundance drawing in retail and other opportunities. Much like other manufacturing American cities, the closing of the steel mills caused a great deal of flight from the area, alongside the changing demographics. Those who could move outside of Ensley left and the poverty was exacerbated. There are several efforts to revitalize the area, but still the area struggles to overcome the inequities of being engulfed by concentrated poverty including being designated as a federal childcare desert and food desert(6).

According to the 2022 Census data, Ensley, a community in Birmingham, AL(where our proposed location stands), has a population of 10,000 children and adults. In the diverse community where 80% of the population are African American, 13% identify with two or more races, 6% are White, and a little over 2% are Hispanic or Latino. The median household income is \$32,095 compared to the median state income of \$60,660, and national median of \$80,610, challenging a majority of community members with low socioeconomic status. About 81% of Ensley residents live below the federal poverty threshold, and of the 30% of adults holding high school diplomas, only 8% of adults have a bachelor’s degree or higher. These details are important because they are associated with a number of non-academic challenges including food security, housing stability, and access to quality healthcare and health outcomes. At Floreecer we firmly believe that our approach provides access to opportunities that will lead to economic stability as we are teaching students linguistic skills and the interpersonal skills to develop and improve the community for all.

Current Snapshot of Academic Data

According to 2025 data reported via ALSDE Report Cards, in the schools that serve District 8 and District 9 (listed below) of BCS the 2025 ACAP results indicate that 48.5% of students are proficient in ELA (this includes data from Princeton elementary, a magnet school), and 24% are proficient in math. As an entire school system BCS is working to develop the supports to increase academic growth. However, within District 8 & 9 2025 ACAP data (Bush Hills STEAM Academy reporting) students identified as “limited English proficiency” showed lower levels of proficiency with 17% proficiency in ELA and 0% proficiency in Math (7).

Table: District 8 & 9 Schools 2025 ACAP data

School Name	2025 ACAP Math Proficiency (%)	2025 ACAP ELA Proficiency (%)	Percent FRL
Central Park Elementary (K-5)	22	49	86%
Charles Brown Elementary	13	51	90%
Minor Elementary	11	40	92%
Bush Hills STEAM Academy	3	29	90%
Princeton Elementary (magnet)	72	91	62%
Wylam Elementary (K-8)	18	41	91%
Tuggle Elementary	25	37	88%

South Hampton (K-8)	27	50	90%
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Additionally, we anticipate serving students from around the metro area, and their families, thereby exposing the strengths of the Ensley area and contributing to a flourishing and successful neighborhood, restoring the bustling buzz for a neighborhood that deserves the opportunity to prosper even more. FCS functions as a community school and as such we believe we serve as a beacon of hope, a turning point in the community to uplift and galvanize the strengths that lie within its members. As a school our charge is to be a good neighbor, and build great neighbors(students) who will become resilient changemakers. Through dual language immersion, global team (houses/advisories), rigorous data driven instruction, and community-centered approach, Floreecer produces versatile, hope-filled responsible leaders who are prepared to see the world better than they found it and steward the environment around them thereby revitalizing Ensley and the surrounding areas.

By locating in Ensley near downtown Ensley, it is our first priority to be a community school.

Additionally, Floreecer predicts a variation of student demographics as we expect to attract students across Birmingham given the demand in the state for a bilingual program and serving as the only bilingual education system in the state. Additionally, we are uplifting ourselves as a welcoming space for ELL students of all backgrounds.

Anticipated Demographics

Floreecer anticipates a diverse and robust demographic of ELL, Heritage Spanish speaking students, and students from varying backgrounds due to our current recruitment trends. Additionally, our two-way immersion model is best served with a mixture of native English speakers and Heritage Spanish speakers. We have received an overwhelming amount of interest for our school model among Latino/Hispanic families.

Table: Anticipated Demographics of Floreecer Community School

% of Student Demographic	Floreecer Community School	Birmingham City Schools
% Black	70	90.94
% Latino/Hispanic	25	7.30
% Asian, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	1	.8
% American Indian, Native American, Alaska Native	1	3.1
% White	10	4.1
% Economically Disadvantaged	85	68.12
% English Language Learners	10	5
% Students with Special Needs	10	12.8

Citations

- (1) <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/rural-economy-population/rural-poverty-well-being/>
- (2) <https://www.americashealthrankings.org/explore/measures/ChildPoverty/AL>
- (3) <https://parcalabama.org/data-collection-for-hispanic-and-latino-alabamians-with-hica/>
- (4) <https://tcf.org/content/commentary/americas-missing-bilingual-teachers/>
- (5) https://www.ed.gov/sites/ed/files/about/inits/ed/raise-the-bar/RTB_GE_Multilingualism%20FINAL_508.pdf
- (6) <https://childcaredeserts.org/>
- (7) <https://parcalabama.org/alabama-public-school-students-continue-gains-in-english-and-math-in-both-elementary-and-middle-school/>

Evidence of Educational Need

File 1

File name: Evidence of Community Need (Survey Results, Photos, and Email Inquiries).pdf

Uploaded: 03/13/2026 05:37 AM

Uploaded by: On'draya Morris

File 2

File name: Family & Community Engagement (Support Letters).pdf

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Uploaded by: On'draya Morris

5) Community Engagement. Describe the relationships within the community that have been established to generate community support for the proposed school. Briefly describe and provide evidence of these activities and summarize their results. Examples of community engagement evidence are documents such as community meeting sign in sheets, agendas, and survey results.

Community Engagement

Community Engagement

FCS's approach is centered around creating school communities where everyone belongs, works together, and thrives. We utilize this approach in our community engagement and have embedded our approach in our values where we have created a THRIVE network. Aligned with our mission and vision, our model depends on close partnerships that strengthen Floreecer. Our school mascot, the HoneyBees (Abejas) flourishes when we uplift the valuable community members surrounding us: businesses and non-profits within the community, recreational organizations, community organizations, churches, and libraries that have deep roots in the Ensley and surrounding communities and offer support and resources to ensure we experience continued success. We continue to harness the power of community through conversations, community forums, events, and feedback from families, businesses and community leaders and students. We have engaged over 100+ families and individuals to learn about the desire for the school model, grade bands, community partners, location, and community needs. We are continuing our listening tour as we further develop the nuances of our school model.

Evidence of Community Engagement

File name: Family & Community Engagement (Support Letters).pdf

Uploaded: 03/13/2026 05:37 AM

Uploaded by: On'draya Morris

6) Leadership and Governance. In an attachment list the members of the school's proposed leadership team and governing board, including their roles with the school and their current job title and employer.

Leadership and Governance

File name: Leadership & Governance .pdf

Uploaded: 03/13/2026 05:03 AM

Uploaded by: On'draya Morris

7) Leadership Narrative. Provide a brief summary of how the leadership and board's collective experience and expertise is well suited to support the operation of a high-quality charter school.

Leadership Narrative

FCS Leadership Narrative

The collective experience and expertise of the Floreecer Community School leadership and board are exceptionally well-suited to support a high-quality charter school, particularly one with a dual-language mission. Their strengths can be summarized into four key areas of capacity:

Deep Educational & Bilingual Expertise. The team features decades of experience in urban education, curriculum design, and bilingual instruction. On'Draya Morris, the Founder and Executive Director, is a doctoral candidate in Bilingual Education with over 12 years of diverse school leadership and teaching experience. Dr. Samantha Elliott Briggs brings over 30 years of experience, including leading a \$60 million federal grant (GEAR UP Alabama) and serving as a university professor in instructional leadership. Carmen Novoa and Nadra Nash-Montgomery further bolster this with over 25 years of combined experience in family engagement, bilingualism, health promotion, and specialized tutoring. Maria-Elena Murrieta and Adriana Efrach provide deep expertise in ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) and student support, which is critical for Florecer's dual-language mission.

Strong Governance & Leadership Capacity. The board includes individuals with proven track records in executive leadership across the nonprofit and private sectors. Gilberto Herrera, the Board President, is an entrepreneur and Google-certified educator with expertise in finance and business scaling. Deidre Clark provides vital leadership in nonprofit management as a director at The Alabama Association of Nonprofits.

Financial & Operational Oversight. The board possesses the specialized skills necessary for the fiscal management of public funds. Dr. Briggs serves as Treasurer, leveraging her background in managing massive federal grants. Andrew Krist, a doctoral candidate in educational research, brings technical expertise in psychometrics, data analysis, and state/federal compliance monitoring to ensure academic results meet charter goals. The board's expertise is further supplemented by a partnership with New Schools for Alabama (NSFA) for back-office financial and payroll support. Troy Williams provides a long-standing level of operational expertise in K-12 schools.

Community Engagement & Real Estate Knowledge. The team is deeply rooted in the Birmingham and Ensley communities, ensuring the school remains responsive to local needs. Jennifer Saliba, a top-performing realtor and parent representative, provides critical expertise in property management and acquisitions, which has been instrumental in securing the school's proposed facility at St. Joseph's Catholic Church. Jody Trautwein and bring extensive local experience in faith-based leadership and family engagement within the Birmingham metro area.

8) **Revenue Sources.** A brief description of the school's anticipated revenue sources. Distinguish between the pre-opening and after opening periods. This includes, but is not limited to: state funding, federal funding, federal grants, nonfederal grants and other large or small philanthropic funding. Indicate whether the funding has been secured, secured with charter authorization, applied for, or intent to apply.

Revenue Sources

FCS's Revenue Sources

Florecer Community School's (FCS) anticipated revenue is composed of a combination of public funding and philanthropic support. FCS distinguishes its revenue sources into two distinct phases: the pre-opening (planning) period and the operational period following its opening.

Pre-Opening (Planning) Period

The pre-opening phase is primarily funded through philanthropy and startup grants.

- **Secured Funding:** FCS has already received \$525,000 in committed funds from New Schools for Alabama (NSFA)/22Beacon to support initial planning activities including facilities due diligence upon approval.
- **Applied for / Intent to Apply:** The school has been invited to apply for over \$2 million in additional startup philanthropy. The anticipated sources include:
 - Charter School Program (CSP) startup funds: \$1,000,000.
 - Charter School Growth Fund (CSGF): \$750,000.
 - NewSchools Venture Fund (NSVF): \$215,000.
- **Lending Institutions:** FCS expects to secure a predevelopment loan from NSFA and is in discussions with nonprofit lenders like Blue Hub Capital, Civic Builders, or 22Beacon for approximately \$1 million in 60-month financing for facility renovations in a Turn Key Development program

After Opening (Operational) Period

Once operational, the school's primary revenue source shifts to public per-pupil funding, supplemented by ongoing philanthropic efforts.

- State Funding (Secured with Charter Authorization):
 - State Foundation Funding: Budgeted at \$8,800 to \$9,500 per Average Daily Membership (ADM).
 - Approximate Total State Funding: When including line-item sources (e.g., nursing, transportation, ARI, and math coaches), total annual state funding is expected to be between \$10,800 and \$13,000 per student.
- Federal Funding (Secured with Charter Authorization):
 - Formula Funds: Budgeted conservatively at \$1,200 per ADM, covering Title I, Title II, and IDEA.
 - Federal Foodservice Funds: Estimated at \$2.37 for breakfast and \$4.54 for lunch. FCS anticipates qualifying as a community eligibility school due to a high poverty rate (90%), allowing all students to receive federally subsidized meals.
- Philanthropic Funding (Applied for / Intent to Apply):
 - FCS expects to raise approximately \$2.25 million in total startup philanthropy over its first three years.
 - After Year 3, annual philanthropic goals are projected to level out at a conservative \$200,000 annually (or approximately \$400 per ADM).

9) Enrollment Summary. Give the grades served and enrollment projections for both the first year of operation and when at full capacity

Enrollment Summary Spreadsheet

File name: Floreecer Community School Enrollment Spreadsheet.xlsx - Sheet1.pdf
Uploaded: 03/13/2026 05:19 AM
Uploaded by: On'draya Morris

3. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM DESIGN AND CAPACITY

The Educational Program Design and Capacity section demonstrates the school's readiness to provide a high-quality educational experience on opening day and throughout the charter contract period. This section emphasizes research-based instructional methods, assessment strategies, curriculum alignment with state standards, and the implementation of effective teaching practices. It aims to establish a strong foundation for academic excellence for all students. Applicants must present a well-rounded educational framework that meets the needs of the anticipated student population while adhering to state requirements.

1. Program Overview

Reviewer Instructions

Please rate the application using the provided rubric.

Status: Completed

Form Result

Summarize the unifying theoretical educational framework of the school model, ensuring it is evidence-based and aligns with best practices.

Overarching Standard/Criteria: Compelling evidence of a unifying educational framework that will directly and consistently address the needs of the anticipated population and that clearly demonstrates the likelihood of all students meeting or exceeding the state standard.

Evidence needed for addressing the overarching standard:

a) Provide compelling evidence of a theoretical educational framework that includes current best practices for high quality primary instructional methods, assessment strategies, and other elements of the school model. There must be evidence that it is research based, so it must be cited.

Education Framework Narrative

Floreecer's Educational Framework (Rooted in Preparing Students to THRIVE)

At FCS we believe our THRIVE community values are bedrock to how we philosophically view the educational experience at Floreecer. Our community values are as follows:

Transform myself & the world around me

Harness Hope and Gratitude

Respond with Integrity

Ignite a Love for Language and Learning

Value Community and Creativity

Excel in everything we do.

Furthermore, Floreecer's educational framework is grounded in research-based best practices in dual language bilingual education, evidence-based instructional strategies, and data-driven assessment practices developed to provide a thriving environment for all students. The design of Floreecer's instructional model is informed by research, professional experience, and our residency in two high-performing dual language schools in Washington, DC. Research shows that effective dual language programs are built around three core pillars: bilingualism and biliteracy, high academic achievement, and sociocultural competence (9). All elements of the Floreecer school model are intentionally designed to support mastery in these three areas with the emphasis on developing the whole child.

Academic Achievement. Students in dual language programs are held to high academic content knowledge and achievement to reach grade-level proficiency and access to grade-level curriculum in both languages of instruction across all content areas for all learners.

Bilingualism and Biliteracy. Bilingualism refers to the ability of students to speak and understand two languages fluently. Students can communicate, comprehend, read, and write in two languages. Biliteracy, on the other hand, expands on bilingualism to include literacy skills across content areas. Biliteracy implies a deeper level of proficiency, encompassing reading and writing proficiently in two languages and the ability to learn science, math, history, or any other content area in two languages. Sociocultural competence. In a dual language program, students will develop the ability to effectively interact, communicate, and navigate various cultural contexts while understanding and respecting different cultural groups' norms, values, beliefs, and practices. It involves language skills and an understanding of social, historical, and cultural factors that shape people's behaviors and perspectives. Whole Child Development. FCS recognizes that academic achievement is closely connected to students' social, emotional, and cognitive development. We have adopted a whole child approach that supports students' intellectual growth while also fostering wellbeing, identity development, and positive relationships. Whole child education frameworks emphasize that students thrive in environments where they feel safe, supported, and engaged (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020). Research on social-emotional learning further demonstrates that integrating SEL practices into instruction improves academic performance, student engagement, and classroom behavior (Durlak et al., 2011). Florecer integrates whole child development through culturally affirming instruction, our four design elements, community values, collaborative learning opportunities, and strong relationships between students, educators, and families.(10)

Armed with the best practices in the field of bilingual education and research based practices, FCS' high quality instructional methods, assessment strategies and school elements are based on evidence-based practices. Ultimately, we are aligning our practices with our mission to build academically prosperous student ambassadors, staff, leaders and community. The governing beliefs about Dual Language instruction are grounded in the the following:

- Dual language immersion works when implemented with high quality instructional & assessment practices.
- A second language can not be taught in isolation, but must be embedded in content.
- Teachers are precious resources and must work collaboratively with intentional efficiency.
- Our dual language community is a culturally-rich environment and all members must exist cooperatively and with respect for each others intrinsic value.

High Quality Instructional Methods

Florecer's primary instructional methods emphasize explicit teaching, structured practice, and active student engagement, practices strongly supported by research. In order to align with best practices, Florecer believes there are several research-based instructional methods that support student learning and growth. However, after careful consideration we have prioritized four high quality/high impact primary instructional methods listed below (See Table below):

- Direct instruction using Gradual Release of Responsibility
- Total Physical Response (TPR)
- Everybody Writes
- 4+1 Language Domains
- Bridging

Table 3: FCS High Quality Instructional Methods

High Quality Instructional Methods	Rationale
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<p>Direction Instruction w/ Gradual Release of Responsibility (11).</p>	<p>Direct instruction refers to structured, sequenced lessons led by teachers that present explicit, guided instruction to students. Direction instruction is essential for ensuring that language, culture and content-specific vocabulary, background knowledge, and content are learned in the two-way language immersion classroom. Teachers employ direct instruction during the whole class using thematic units or small group time, especially to reteach a concept or skill or to provide additional support for students to reach mastery. Additionally, research has proven that direct instruction is a critical part of EL learners academic achievement(12).</p> <p>In biliteracy instruction, a critical direct instruction moment occurs called The Bridge (more about this below). This moment is when the teacher facilitates the transfer of knowledge of content in both languages through a visual representation of both languages. Teachers both model and provide guided instruction in developing the connection between both languages.</p>
<p>Total Physical Response (TPR)</p>	<p>TPR is an instructional strategy recommended for language instruction where vocabulary is integrated with a physical movement. At FCS we will implement TPR to boost academic and social language learning in English and Spanish in all content areas with the goal of biliteracy. TPR pairs language with physical actions. For example, in a Spanish immersion classroom, a teacher might say “toca tu cabeza” (touch your head) while touching their own head. The students copy the gesture and, through repetition, learn that the words mean “touch your head.” This method builds understanding through active participation (13).</p>
<p>Everybody Writes</p>	<p>Everybody Writes is an highly malleable instructional method for biliteracy writing that increases Participation Ratio(PR) and Think Ratio(TR) using both formative and summative writing. Students develop their writing in a variety of ways using the following levers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Writing is frequent and formative 2. Teachers “front the writing” using the “read-write-discuss-revise” cycle to provide real-time feedback 3. Silent solo (students are participating post real-time feedback and discussion and working toward independence).

4+1 Language Domains	In language learning, there are four domains: writing, listening, speaking, and reading. These domains are crucial to growth in the target language. Listening and reading are forms of input; writing and speaking are output forms. The 4+1 language domains are rooted in learning every lesson with a lens of crucial consciousness that is rooted in integration of societal and political awareness. The 4+1 language domains deepen learning to allow students to make strong metalinguistic connections.
Bridging	The Bridge (Beeman & Urow) is a specific strategy that promotes biliteracy and bilingualism for all students. It is a planned learning experience that applies concepts learned in one language to another. The Bridge results in the development of metalanguage, an improved ability to compare languages in terms of words and sentence structures, and an enhanced ability to transfer conceptual knowledge and skills across languages (14). Through the structured comparison of vocabulary, grammar and sentence structure students develop their metalinguistic muscle which enhances students ability to transfer conceptual knowledge across languages and strengthens overall literacy.

Assessment Strategies

At FCS, our data driven instruction strategy includes the use of diagnostic, formative and summative assessments. At FCS, formative assessments are critically used as assessments for learning rather than of learning. Throughout our unit planning, semester planning, and strategic academic planning, we provide students frequent, standards-based formative assessments that align to our content. As a school leadership team, our strategy for extracting data and evaluating assessments are rooted in 3 key steps(15):

1. Identifying the purpose: Identifying the purpose of the assessment, and how we will use the data to support student growth and achievement, is the most important aspect of our assessment strategy. For example, if we want to gauge what students know coming into a school year/unit/etc., then a diagnostic assessment may be best.
2. Differentiate assessments: Dual language students can master the same content-area standards as other students but may need different pathways to show what they know, which require considering student language proficiency levels and offering multiple means of assessments. For example, we will have students demonstrate their understanding of content areas through oral presentations, visual projects, or demonstrations of learning instead of only assigning a traditional multiple-choice test. However, exposure to all methods of assessment are critical to students' educational experience.
3. Use assessment rubrics: Rubrics are a great tool to communicate assessment criteria and expectations. Rubrics provide students with clear guidelines for assignments and make grading more transparent. They also allow students to self-assess their work and reflect on the learning process. As for teachers, rubrics help save time with grading and provide an opportunity to give timely and detailed feedback.

Our primary focus of rigorous data-driven instruction at FCS is to have a clear plan for how we will respond to the results of each student assessment and create high-achieving students through

our rigorous learning experiences. Our schoolwide approach to address diagnostic, formative, summative assessments is represented in the following table.

Table: FCS's Approach to Assessment Strategies

Form of Assessment (Diagnostic, Formative, Summative)	Types of Assessment Strategies (Method of Assessment)/Frequency
<p>Diagnostic: At FCS, we use diagnostic assessments to assess what knowledge students have about a given content area. We believe this is important because we know that all students begin their learning journey at various places., which allows for informed differentiation of instruction.</p>	<p>Pre/Post Tests (examples: NWEA MAP, iReady) WIDA Screener (language proficiency) Frequency: Beginning of the Year, End of the Year or beginning or end of a unit.</p>
<p>Formative: At FCS, we use formative assessments for continuous monitoring of student knowledge, internalization, and mastery in all content areas. We believe this is important because frequent formative assessment aids in informing daily instructional moves brings students closer to mastery.</p>	<p>Anecdotal records for guided reading Active Observation (ActiveObs) Check for Understanding (CFU) Everybody Writes Rubrics Curriculum-supported assessments Daily exit tickets Contrastive Analysis Frequency: Throughout a daily lesson, at the end of a lesson, weekly, quarterly, and at the end of a unit.</p>
<p>Summative: At FCS, we use summative assessments to comprehensively assess student learning and achievement with a high level of rigor. We believe this is important because summative assessments, unlike formative ones, are focused on the results/products produced and the overall demonstration of mastery.</p>	<p>Culminating Demonstrations of Learning Curriculum-supported assessments Statewide assessment (ex: ACAP) Benchmark tests. End-of-course exams. Performance tasks. Language proficiency (ex: ELP: English Language Proficiency tests, ACCESS for ELLs: English Language Proficiency test, STAMP: Standard-based Measurement of Proficiency, IPA: Integrated Performance Assessment) Frequency: At the end of course, or end of term, and end of semester.</p>

In a typical Florecer classroom, assessments are planned, consistent, frequent and formative. As a dual language school we utilize formal/informal observations, anecdotal notes, and rubrics to support frequent assessment of language and content development. FCS leaders and teachers constantly collaborate to utilize varied data points to assess student learning of the language and the content and do so to address any cohort-wide adjustments that are necessary. While we plan strategically, our frequent collaboration of student data and effective weekly coaching support the ability to shift instruction and responsively address learning gaps.

FCS Corrective Assessment Strategies

FCS values the data that frequent assessment provides as it supports our academic road map to prosperity. Because students participate in frequent assessment cycles with data tracked in a dashboard, academic shortfalls can be predicted and identified early. If a classroom or grade levels are off track in meeting academic goals, academic strategies to be implemented might include, but are not limited to:

-

Adjustment of allocated time and enrollment in intervention programming to address students who are not meeting goals, including after-school tutoring, Saturday school, or adjustments to the daily schedule to afford more time or access to intervention programming held during the school day.

- Increased and targeted professional development for instructional staff.
- Adjustment to schedule to provide more time in a target content area.
- Adjustment to unit plan to integrate target standards across content area lesson planning.
- Temporarily placing Leadership Team members directly into classrooms.

Citations

(9) https://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/page_content/attachments/TAL_DualLanguageHandbook_web.pdf

(10) Darling-Hammond, L., et al. (2020). Implications for educational practice of the science of learning and development. *Applied Developmental Science*. and Durlak, J. et al. (2011). The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning. *Child Development*.

(11) Direct instruction - A practical guide to effective teaching. BookWidgets. (2021, February 3). Retrieved November 18, 2025 from <https://www.bookwidgets.com/blog/2019/03/direct-instruction-a-practical-guide-to-effective-teaching>

(12) https://www.baltimorecp.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/DI_ESL_Facts.pdf

(13) Adapted from <https://jumpimmersion.com/total-physical-response-method-in-bilingual-education/>

(14) https://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/page_content/attachments/TAL_DualLanguageHandbook_web.pdf

(15) <https://www.hmhco.com/blog/ell-assessment-strategies?srsId=AfmBOoqdpV3P4wqyK-WwRQryQcbDeMgSfjsefSFP0vIAqa5yfqGyr53-5>

b) Provide evidence for the success of this theoretical framework with the anticipated student population. Comprehensively summarize the essential design elements of the school model and provide at least three (no more than five) specific and measurable goals for the anticipated student population.

Rationale for Four Design Elements

Floreecer Community School seeks to be a vital part of Alabama's and more specifically Birmingham's educational solution to serving multilingual, and monolingual learners by providing a high-quality language immersion education through a comprehensive global learning experience. As such we offer four key design elements to improve the learning experiences and academic outcomes of K-12 students in Birmingham and Alabama;

- dual language Spanish immersion
- rigorous data-driven instruction
- community centered innovation
- Global Teams (Houses/Advisory systems)

Rooted in our mission to provide K-8 grade students with a dual language (Spanish/English) immersion school to prepare students to flourish as bilingual and biliterate high-achieving change-makers that possess audacious hope and firm commitment to enhancing the local and international community, we have designed our model to comprehensively address the realities of our educational landscape. Our academic framework is informed by our six THRIVE community values which serve as our community informed [Passport to the Globe/Portrait of a Graduate](#), bilingual education best practices, and our practice-based learning model. FCS exists to provide high quality instruction and academic excellence through language access.

The goals of ALL two-way immersion schools, are to:

- achieve proficiency in English and Spanish while developing high levels of academic skills
- build strong thinking and reasoning skills for problem solving in math and science
- create a learning community that respects linguistic and cultural diversity

- increase family support and involvement

Florecer has codified these goals into four key measurable outcomes that align with the SMART Goals of our founding priorities.

Florecer's Measurable Impact

Our design elements are intentional efforts to address the global skills, achievement, and authentic collaboration gaps that we have identified. We are beginning the school with our end goals in mind and creating structures, systems and routines that support our continued success. Our measures of success will include:

- In year 1, 80% of students will score a Median Growth Percentile (MGP) of 50 or above in Reading and Math, from fall to spring, as measured by NWEA Growth assessments.
- By the end of year 3, students at Florecer will exceed their local district average in ELA, Math, and Science as measured by ACAP.
- By the end of year 3, 50% of students will show intermediate fluency in both English/Spanish as measured by American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL)'s, Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL).
- By the end of year 1, 90% of students/families will report they "feel welcomed and connected to FCS school community, and what students are learning and doing in school," as measured by annual surveys.
- By the end of year 1, 90% of students report favorably "having a positive relationship with a school adult and feeling connected to the school environment, " as measured by an annual school and climate survey.

At FCS we believe that these measures of impact represent Florecer's mission to be an international learning community where high academic achievement for all students as multilingual and multiliterate changemakers occurs. Florecer's language immersion school model envisions that 80% of students are prepared to receive The Global Seal of Biliteracy in their high school years and 100% of students will become fluent in Spanish and English with high levels of biliteracy in both languages by the end of their 8th grade year. The Global Seal of Biliteracy has certified thousands around the world for their bilingual language skills at one of three levels of certification as evidenced through proficiency-based testing. In April 2022, the ALSDE recognized the Global Seal of Biliteracy statewide and joined the rest of the nation in doing so. As such, FCS will introduce families to the long-term goal of recognition through their child receiving the Global Seal of Biliteracy at the elementary school level, with the understanding that in Alabama The Global Seal of Biliteracy recognition typically occurs in high school. However, we intend to provide families with a clear North Star upon enrollment.

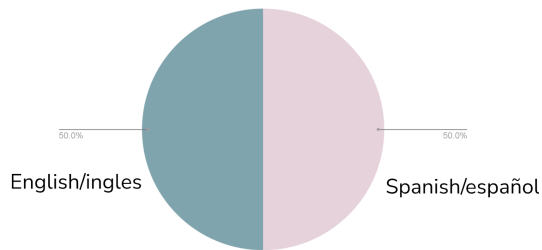
Design Element #1: Dual Language Spanish Immersion.

At FCS two-way immersion is a form of dual language instruction that uses both English and Spanish to bring together students from two native language groups for language, literacy, and academic content instruction through both languages. Quality two-way immersion programs integrate instruction so that all students become bilingual and biliterate through a rigorous academic program. All students are first and second language learners, and all students have the opportunity to be both language learners and language models for their peers. Throughout the school day both English and Spanish are used as communication tools for acquiring an understanding of concepts, skills, and knowledge in the social/emotional, physical, cognitive, and linguistic domains. Students learn content in language arts, math, science, social studies, and specials through instruction and learning experiences in English and/or Spanish (16). Florecer Community School deliberately developed scheduling and curriculum design and delivery to promote students' successful mastery of both content and language.

For example, in K-4 students will receive instruction in both Spanish and English using a two teacher model (1 English speaking/1 Spanish speaking or 2 Bilingual teachers) intentionally planning for the language of instruction in each lesson component. By grade 5, students are transitioning to receiving departmentalized instruction in all subjects and will alternate between morning and

afternoon instruction in English and Spanish based on their section cohort (cohorts are defined as A,B,C,D). This instruction continues in grades 6-8.

50-50 Model



Percentage of the Day in each Language

Research has proven that native English speaking students in DL programs develop greater confidence and more advanced fluency skills than students in conventional world language programs (17). Students in grades K-8 will benefit from our 50/50 content language allocation schoolwide. At the K-4 level students are in the same classroom with two teachers and learning key content in both Spanish/English. At the 5-8 level learning becomes more individualized based on sections and students swap English/Spanish in the afternoon/morning based on assigned section.

For example, section A will receive Spanish instruction in the morning and section B will receive English instruction in the morning. In the afternoon the cohorts will switch. Core instruction in Spanish/English continues annually as student language exposure and proficiency increases and the content becomes more challenging. The long term goal of Florecer's language immersion program is for 80% of graduating students to be prepared to receive The Global Seal of Biliteracy (a universal global standard of fluency that has been awarded after fluency testing in over 100 languages and recognized as achieving fluency) their high school years and 100% of FCS 8th grade graduates will become fluent in Spanish. Research shows that with the stimulus of native-English-speaking peers in two-way bilingual classes, groups of English learners typically reach grade level achievement in second language by 5th or 6th grade, and the same is true for native-English speakers learning the target language of Spanish (18).

As students strengthen their English/Spanish skills, they develop the metacognition (awareness and understanding of one's own thought processes) to tackle multiple critical processes in their core content areas. Our students focus on metalinguistic awareness (ability to navigate languages their meaning, the governing rules and its structures) (19) and they make stronger connections between the two languages. At FCS we plan for constant metalinguistic awareness by teaching foundational literacy in both Spanish and English, planning distinctive Bridging moments in lessons, and demonstrating the linguistic nature of each language in daily lessons. Additionally, instruction is rooted in translinguaging pedagogy which is a theory that explains the dynamic way people use language in real life, thereby deepening the connections between the two languages (20).

Translinguaging pedagogy allows teachers to connect students schema, current language/content knowledge and expand on their learning experiences.

Research supports the benefits of multilingualism, including providing access to complex, grade level content, better working memory, abstract reasoning skills, attention control, problem solving skills, and delay of age related cognitive decline. Bilingual children have greater mental flexibility and use those skills to their advantage in figuring out math concepts as well as solving word problems(21). Florecer's commitment to fostering a learning environment caters to our desire to ensure that every child is given the opportunity to become both locally and globally competitive, globally aware and prepared as an ambassador for change. Additionally, steeped in our community values we hope to ignite a love for learning languages and cultures.

As a dual-language school, our diverse by design student population includes a mixture of native English and Spanish speakers from all backgrounds. Additionally, all native language speakers from all backgrounds are engaged in learning both English and Spanish. These diverse students are

simultaneously developing fluency in both languages across the domains of listening, metalinguistic awareness (ability to make connections to words, concepts across both languages), speaking, reading, and writing. The research based rationale for starting with a significant portion of the day in Spanish in kindergarten is to support English speakers in rapid acquisition of their second language (L2) and to support ELs in mastering academic content in their native language as they acquire English literacy and academic language, a research based approach that has been shown to significantly reduce the achievement gap for ELs without negatively impacting English-speaking students (22). Instruction will continue in 50% English and 50% Spanish throughout middle school (grades 6-8).

FCS follows best practices in Dual Language Bilingual Education (DLBE) research that uplifts the power of dual language education programs where students utilize their heritage or home language while simultaneously learning a new language yielding higher academic achievement outcomes, greater proficiency in their home and second language and a stronger sense of self identity and confidence (23). As such our academic program overview is rooted in the three pillars of bilingual education (bilingualism/biliteracy, high academic achievement, and sociocultural competence). As a result of this approach we are leveraging the ability for students to be critically conscious of their world and engage as such through a bilingual and biliterate lens. Using an asset-based approach allows for students at varying levels to make cross-linguistic connections (language connections) in both languages and highlights the unique capacity of the bilingual brain. FCS believes in setting a clear academic vision in order to maintain high academic achievement as such we provide high rigor data driven lessons, instructional routines/methods and consistency in lesson delivery to achieve biliteracy.

Citations

(16) Adapted from https://www.cal.org/twi/toolkit/PI/Basics_Eng.pdf and DC Bilingual Visit on 10/24/2024

(17) <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC11315431/>

(18) https://www.berkeleyschools.net/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/TWIAstounding_Effectiveness_Dual_Language_Ed.pdf

(19) <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC11315431/>

Design Element #2: Rigorous Data Driven Instruction

At FCS Rigorous Data-Driven Instruction (DDI) encapsulates a robust set of ongoing practices that focuses on assessing student learning, analyzing assessment data and adjusting instruction in response to the assessment data in intentional cycles (daily, weekly, etc). Research has shown that the following components are necessary for an effective data system and data culture. It is important to note that while there is evidence to demonstrate the effectiveness of each component, these components are most effective when implemented together. FCS has decided to implement collaborative structures for teachers and alignment of assessments, represented as Florecker's Academic Roadmap. Our Academic Roadmap includes protocols to guide collaborative time, and a schoolwide structure to optimize student mastery. The following components are embedded in our Academic Roadmap, utilizing data at every stop:

1. Create and implement a standards-based assessment plan.
2. Ensure educators have access to the data.
3. Provide ongoing professional development on data use.
4. Ensure educators collaborate regularly to learn about effective instruction and students' progress.
5. Ensure collaborative meetings and expectations for data use are clearly communicated and implemented.
6. Monitor teachers' use of data by conducting classroom observations.

Florecker's Academic Roadmap as our DDI Strategy

Dual Language Bilingual Education (DLBE) is a data-driven approach to learning that is collaborative and responsive to student output in both language and content. Characteristics of effective dual language teachers: "In highly effective schools serving English learners, effective staff had the following characteristics (Howard & Sugarman, 2007; López, Scanlan, & Gundrum, 2013; Williams et al., 2007): an evaluation of high effective dual language teachers are noted as having a series of skills, but two of the most transferable skills were a demonstrated ability to use assessment data to

raise student achievement and familiarity with state standards, ability to align instruction to curriculum standards, strong content knowledge, and training in curriculum.

At Florecer we do not leave our academic teaching and learning to chance and as such, we have crafted our Academic Roadmap to be a guide to inform instructional practices. FCS teachers approach all instruction through a data-driven lens, where rigorous daily lessons are prepared with the highest standards of academic achievement as the destination, using the evidence-based DDI practices to drive along the [Florecer Academic Roadmap](#). As we utilize these DDI to create the highest academic gains for each grade level and content area, we instill in our teachers to keep data a fluid part of the learning cycle. In a Florecer classroom, teachers will utilize the following principles of instruction alongside content/language instruction, to develop key data points to continuously assess learning. The following principles of instruction are directly aligned with DDI practices in our roadmap: daily/weekly/monthly review, provide models for guided practice, present new materials in small steps with student practice after each step, obtain a high level of success and require/monitor independent practice (26).

Our Academic Roadmap is rooted in best practices as outlined by Design Thinking Principles in education, the pillars of bilingual education, and the best practices in teaching biliteracy. These principles are intentionally part of our academic planning, practices, and DDI practices. Design thinking principles are human centered and geared toward learning outcomes that are based on gathering data, narrative, and research to create effective evidence based approaches to problems. Additionally, at Florecer, we are creating a “design thinking” mindset and approach to learning, collaboration, and problem solving using the elements of Design thinking. In practice, the design process is a structured framework for identifying challenges, gathering information, generating potential solutions (27).

Empathize/Empatizar. For FCS, rigorous data driven instruction begins right away, as we will gather academic and linguistic data on our students’ needs before the school year starts with diagnostic testing via NWEA MAP, and Avant STAMP4SE.

Define/Definir. Based on historical and diagnostic data, we will develop a student-specific plan. Additionally, we will set schoolwide goals to achieve mastery of grade level standards, classes, and individual needs.

Implement/Implementar. In the implementation phase, we are utilizing the practice-based learning principles and creating/adopting high quality instructional materials that are content and language based for our unique two-way immersion model.

Assess/Evaluar. Through weekly data meetings, Common Formative Assessments (CFA), Learning Autonomy Zones (LAZ), student-led conferences, and reading and writing across the curriculum we will work to eliminate both academic and linguistic gaps.

Review/Recycle (Revisar/Reciclar). As a learning ecosystem we are trained to review our data, practices, and assessments often and with a critical lens toward educational equity. As such we understand our roadmap is iterative and focused in the See It, Name It, Do It practice-based culture. Moving Along the Academic Roadmap

At FCS, teachers follow our academic roadmap constantly with the holistic goal of building academically prosperous student ambassadors, communities, and leaders who flourish wherever they are planted. Furthermore, Florecer teachers use frequent assessment (formative exit tickets, frequent checks for understanding, summative standards align assessment as well) to monitor student progress towards mastery. Teachers are trained to collect data using the school-wide assessment strategies and weekly data meetings address student data in real-time. FCS is committed to accelerating student learning and aggressively targeting existing gaps, and does so with a high-rigor, high support instructional program where students are grouped based on their Learning Autonomy Zones (LAZ) levels in small group instruction during Math, Literacy and Science blocks. On Fridays students are placed in an intervention center (Compass) based on diagnostic and weekly data for all grades, and Florecer is adamant in our pursuit to improve the academic and life outcomes of our students. We are committed to academic excellence. As Florecer staff prepares and presents their best lessons daily, Florecer students meet the challenge by actively engaging all academic tasks assigned to them. In the spirit of our THRIVE community values, Florecer students commit themselves to incremental improvement daily, as excellence is always the North Star. As an additional

DDI informed practice. FCS students who are identified in the emerging to developing (below 75% mastery) Learning Autonomy Zones (LAZ) based on diagnostic and weekly data are required to attend our FCS Saturday Academy to receive one-on-one or small group high impact instruction. Ultimately we believe that our comprehensive approach to DDI will allow for the mission of FCS to be achieved and for our school community to thrive as a high quality learning community.

Citations

(20) https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/rel/infographics/pdf/REL_PA_Translanguaging_to_Support_Students.pdf

(21) <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/world-languages/benefitsofsecondlanguage.pdf>

(22) Lindholm-Leary, K. (2016). Bilingualism and academic achievement in children in dual language programs. In E. Nicoladis & S. Montanari (Eds.), *Bilingualism across the lifespan: Factors moderating language proficiency* (pp. 203–223). American Psychological Association. <https://doi.org/10.1037/14939-012>

(23) Howard, E. R., Lindholm-Leary, K. J., Rogers, D., Olague, N., Medina, J., Kennedy, D., Sugarman, J., & Christian, D. (2018). *Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education* (3rd ed.). Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics

Design Element #2

(24) <https://www.cde.state.co.us/uip/ddi-strategy-guide>

(25) https://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/page_content/attachments/TAL_DualLanguageHandbook_web.pdf

(26) Merrill, M. D. (2002). First Principles of Instruction. *Educational Technology Research and Development*, 50(3), 43–59. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02505024>

(27) [Design Thinking in Pedagogy](#) — Luka, Ineta (2014). *Design Thinking in Pedagogy*. *Journal of Education Culture and Society*, No. 2, 63-74.

Design Element #3: Community Centered Collaboration

Florecer is deeply committed to global transformation, but first we must transform ourselves, our local environment and our areas of influence. At Florecer, we believe our families and community to be an asset to our development and to each other. As an institution it is essential for us to uphold this endeavor by centering our existence around the growing needs of our community. Our name Florecer means to bloom, prosper, or thrive in Spanish. As such we have presented our unique model as a community school where we utilize the following key pillars(28);

- Shared Vision of Success
- Trusting Relationships
- Actionable data systems
- Inclusive decision making

In an effort to remain strengths-based we invite parents to join our school board or advisory council. During select PD days (which occur on Fridays) we will invite families and community partners in the building to learn alongside our staff about how to best support their ambassadors in closing the achievement gap. These are listed in our calendar as THRIVE Culture Days. During THRIVE Culture Days planned by the school leadership team and with families. These days are an opportunity for parents to develop a greater understanding of the curriculum and the goals of bilingual education. Our goal is that students and families are always engaged with the school and the academic learning environment.

As a dual language immersion school we prioritize the ability to provide our families with a welcoming and safe environment both linguistically and intellectually. As such we plan to integrate the hiring of bilingual staff members, family engagement activities, student and family counseling support, and school/community culture building activities. Our leadership team is both collaborative and willing to support all efforts to connect with the larger community (29).

Florecer Community Council (FCC)

Families need to be seen, heard and valued and have high levels of trust in the organizational pathway of our school model. As such we have created our Florecer Community Council (FCC). The Florecer Community Council (FCC) is the parent-teacher organization at Florecer Community School. FCC will function as a group of elected volunteer parents partnered with school staff and

teachers working together on behalf of the school community. The FCC supports Floreecer by hosting events that foster community and build school spirit; keeping families up to date on school news and events; and raising funds for critical resources that help make our unique bilingual model successful. FCC is our community effort to uplift family voices and needs. This is our in school family council that will support school wide decisions and leadership vision. FCC will report to the Executive Director/Head of School. FCC will include a makeup of the school principal, 4 FCS teachers, and 10 FCS parents/community members.

Family and Community Partners Commitment

In the spirit of students being able to excel in everything they do, we are asking that our families and community partners are making commitments to move the achievement needle to close identified learning gaps. There are several indicators known to boost student achievement, including the involvement of families and communities in the student learning environment. "Close cooperation between schools, parents, and the community is one of the keys to closing achievement gaps. Parent involvement has a strong, direct impact on student achievement." Armed with the research and a clear sense of community advocacy we have outlined several commitments we are asking of our families and community partners.

The following commitments are required of our families and community partners:

- Families will sign the outlined Floreecer Family Commitment contract outlining expectations for homework, attendance, conferences, extracurricular participation and behavior at the beginning of the school year.
- Families will attend student-led/teacher conferences whether student or teacher led.
- Families will make a commitment to volunteering at least two times per year at a Floreecer School event.
- Families will voice concerns through the necessary platforms and advocate for their child through the parent-led Floreecer Community Council, family communication portal and communication with admin.
- Families will express needs for wrap-around services and communicate with the key personnel.
- Community partners will open their doors to our families and students for training, resources and general education needs.
- Community partners partner on a quarterly basis to support our learning environment and develop a space for students to connect their classroom learning to the real world.
- Community partners will support our efforts in name and participation with our Floreecer Community Council (FCC).
- As a school team we will host ESOL, GED, and College Readiness Training programs for families to uplift not only students but their families
- Our school team will host Winter Holiday Celebration prior to the Winter Holiday Break
- We will host weekly virtual check-ins as a whole school with families led by the leadership team.

Citations

(28)Community Schools Forward. (2023). Framework: Essentials for community school transformation. <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/project/community-schools-forward>

(29)Howard, E. R., Lindholm-Leary, K. J., Rogers, D., Olague, N., Medina, J., Kennedy, D., Sugarman, J., & Christian, D. (2018). Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education (3rd ed.). Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Design Element #4 Global Teams (Houses/Advisories)

At Floreecer we create systems called Global teams (similar to Advisories/House system) that provide safe spaces rooted in relationships and belonging so all students can succeed academically when given the academic and holistic support they need to thrive. The advisory system is a structure where 15-17 students are assigned to a specific advisor who provides guidance, support, and mentorship throughout their academic journey. Students remain with the same advisor for three years (K-3, 3-5, 6-8) and then the same Advisor for their middle school years. Advisory occurs every day following

breakfast. Different advisories are grouped into a House. In Year 1, there will be 2 Houses made up of 3 Advisories each (randomized). At capacity, there will be 5 Houses made up of approximately 7-8 advisories. At full capacity, the multi-grade house system groups students and staff into houses based on shared characteristics. Each house has its own identity, colors, and symbolism, and members compete against one another in various activities and events. The house system aims to build school spirit and camaraderie while encouraging healthy competition and rooted in our desire to build a learning ecosystem of belonging and support.

Research has shown that BIPOC students who perceive a caring climate in their schools tend to have higher levels of achievement and better grades (30). They are more willing to participate in class discussions, ask questions, and seek help when needed. One of the key outcomes of a caring culture in highly successful K-8 schools is creating a strong sense of belonging among students (31). When BIPOC students feel cared for and supported, they are more likely to develop a positive attachment to their school and peers. This sense of belonging contributes to higher attendance rates, reduced dropout rates, and increased student engagement (32). Students who feel connected to their school community are more likely to participate in extracurricular activities, clubs, and sports, enhancing their overall school experience (33).

Our comprehensive implementation of our design elements are proven to yield success with our anticipated student population as proven by the provided research and informed residency experiences.

Citations

(30) Journal of Educational Psychology (apa.org/pubs/journals/edu/)

(31) Journal of Educational Psychology (apa.org/pubs/journals/edu/)

(32) American Psychological Association (apa.org)

(33) <https://www.nationalequityproject.org/culturally-responsive-teaching#:~:text=Zaretta%20Hammond%2C%20in%20her%20book,knowledge%20as%20a%20scaffold%20to>

Element Review

Reviews is not provided

2. Curriculum and Instructional Design

Reviewer Instructions

Please rate this section using the provided rubric.

Status: Completed

Form Result

Propose an implementation of the educational framework as a curriculum that both reflects the needs of the anticipated population and ensures that all students will meet or exceed the state standard.

Overarching Standard/Criteria: Compelling evidence of a curriculum implementation of the unifying educational framework that will directly and consistently address the needs of the anticipated population and that clearly demonstrates the likelihood of all students meeting or exceeding the state standard.

Evidence needed for addressing the overarching standard:

a) Describe the proven methods employed to transform the unifying educational framework into a school curriculum. Describe how the mission, vision and framework inform the planning of the curriculum.

Curriculum Implementation Narrative

Unifying Curriculum with Educational Framework = Intentional Planning, Lesson Structures, Lesson Preparation and Evaluation

Florecer Community School (FCS) is a founding school built on the belief that effective bilingual education requires intentional systems, structures, and instructional practices that align with the ultimate goal of students becoming bilingual, biliterate, and globally competent learners. Research on dual language education demonstrates that successful bilingual programs require intentional language allocation, explicit literacy instruction in both languages, and structured opportunities for cross-linguistic transfer (Beeman & Urow, 2013).

To achieve these outcomes, Florecer implements instructional practices aligned with research-based biliteracy best practices, including:

- Clear designation of language use and allocation across the school day (50% Spanish / 50% English).
- A consistent planning structure for the strategic use of both languages during instruction. Instruction should not be a surprise or a feeling.
- Pre-planned learning activities that reflect the distinct linguistic and cultural features of Spanish and English, thus requiring instructional leaders/teachers to crosswalk instructional practice with chosen standards aligned curriculum.
- Instructional strategies that intentionally promote cross-linguistic transfer of skills and knowledge that is rooted in the core subject areas and is consistent and predictable.
- Integration of literacy instruction with globally responsive content and real-world problem solving.

These practices ensure that language development occurs alongside rigorous academic learning, enabling students to develop biliteracy while mastering grade-level academic standards, in an innovative and predictable manner.

Our Academic Roadmap offers a step by step process

Our Instructional Framework

Florecer Community School's Instructional Framework ensures that every learner becomes a biliterate, globally competent, and empowered ambassador. The framework integrates:

- Biliteracy Unit Framework (BUF)
- Global Competency Framework
- Gradual Release of Responsibility (GRR)

The goal is that our students walk away from every single lesson with the following look fors:

- Authentic literacy and content integration
- Cross-linguistic connections
- Critical investigative skills preparing to take action toward solutions.
- Strategic use of Spanish & English
- Explicit vocabulary instruction
- Daily biliteracy practice
- Iterative learning cycles that allow for practice and collaboration toward mastery

Biliteracy Unit Framework

Florecer utilizes the research based [Biliteracy Unit Framework \(BUF\)](#)⁴⁵ which is steeped in continuous use of our primary instructional methods (direct instruction with gradual release of responsibility, TPR, 4+1 Language Domains, and Bridging). Additionally, instructional leaders, and teachers collaboratively utilize data and the carefully selected curriculum to map, prepare lessons, and create cross-linguistic transfer of languages to optimize biliteracy and oracy. Our instructional framework is a guided driver of instructional best practices to drive data-driven decisions along our Academic Roadmap. Our frequent use of formal and informal assessment strategies (formative, diagnostic,

and summative) are used at varied checkpoints to ensure our framework, instructional methods, and collaborative teaching models maintain the necessary fuel to drive students toward mastery. Floreecer is student centered, and as such, we prioritize high quality curriculum and instruction in ALL content areas. Using practice based learning, instructional routines and mission aligned core values we believe every child can succeed every day. Teaching students to achieve biliteracy in both English and Spanish requires a consistent and measurable use of literacy instruction focused in listening, speaking, reading and writing skills in both languages in all subject areas.

FCS believes our framework for instructional design is geared toward the unique needs of our student population as dual language immersion learners at varied levels. At the center of our framework we are postured to produce academically prosperous ambassadors, communities, and leaders that will flourish in a globally competitive world.

Floreecer Community School's goal is to create high achieving leaders of global change by creating a global incubator of rich academic, language and culture through academic excellence. Students will be immersed in language learning and foundational literacy in all content areas. Learning culturally responsive content and working to solve real world problems while also learning to develop their skills in math and literacy. Our commitment to the Birmingham community and the broader Alabama region is one of academic achievement and alignment with the ALSDE educational priorities.

[Global Competency Framework](#) (46)

Our instructional framework integrates the Global Competence Framework where FCS will be a whole-hearted learning environment where the emphasis on students' physical health, social and emotional wellbeing, connectedness with their community, and commitment to steward the globe are in balance with rigorous academic inquiry. FCS students will participate in ALCOS academic standards with the lens of a the Global Competencies from many content areas as they engage and develop key competencies from the four domains of the Global Competence Framework developed by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) for their Program for International Student Assessment (PISA). The competencies are as follows and are directly aligned to our Passport to the Globe or Portrait of a Learner:

• Examine issues of local, global, and cultural significance

• Understand and appreciate the perspectives and world views of others

• Engage in open, appropriate, and effective interactions across cultures

• Take action for collective well-being and sustainable development

Our innovative school community will leverage our varied experiences and perspectives in our pursuit of transforming ourselves and the world around us. The bilingual model connects with this approach and ensures that our students will be prepared to learn from diverse perspectives throughout their lives and offer more complex, empathetic ideas to solve problems in the world and their local community.

Gradual Release of Responsibility (47)

Our frameworks are by design rooted in a level of high expectations and high academic achievement. At FCS we believe that all students can Excel in their academic endeavors. As such we have intrgrated the Gradual Release of Responsibility to highlight our intentional daily and deliberate instruction to build independent learners. Through the following learning cycles:

- I Do (Focused Instruction)
- - We Do (Guided Instruction)
- - You Do Together (Collaborative Practice)
- - You Do Alone (Independent Application)

Citations

(44) Beeman, K., & Urow, C. (2013). Teaching for biliteracy : strengthening bridges between languages. Caslon Publishing.

(45) Beeman, K., & Urow, C. (2013). Teaching for biliteracy : strengthening bridges between languages. Caslon Publishing.

(46) drive.google.com/file/d/1yGfxhGOc2mH5eWULKRAr9nRF0azaIUTH/view?usp=sharing

(47)

<https://www.odu.edu/facultydevelopment/teaching-toolkit/gradual-release-responsibility-frame->

In the K-8 Special Populations (Gifted, ELL, SPED) students are in a learning lab (classroom) or small group setting tailored to the unique needs of their IEP or ILP. The specific learning spaces will address the unique needs of collaboratively developed ILP and IEP with both academic and social and emotional needs at the forefront. The highest expectations are outlined for students to achieve success as outlined by their individual goals. Although all staff are trained on best practices for diverse learners, ESL certified and SPED certified teachers are the lead experts in the classrooms supporting collaborative learning based on holistic DDI practices. Twice-exceptional students are able to have their language needs addressed and specific learning needs as well. Co-teaching, small group learning labs, and one-on-one support will take place in the learning environment to support the specific needs of all learners. Learning is truly a global concept where students are preparing to transform the world. Quotes that encourage learning beyond the walls are scattered throughout the hallways and classrooms. The linguistic diversity and cultural expression permeates the hallways, lunchroom and classrooms of every inch of the building. We encourage unique demonstrations of creativity and learning.

c) Provide an overview of the planned curriculum. Attach a sample course scope and sequence for one subject for each division (elementary, middle, high school) the school would serve. In addition, identify course outcomes and demonstrate alignment with applicable state standards.

FCS Curricula Selection Process

The school's curriculum is designed to provide a rigorous, Alabama standards-aligned academic program that prepares students for academic prosperity. Instruction will be grounded in the ALCOS for all core subjects (English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies). These ALCOS establish the minimum required knowledge and skills students must master at each grade level while allowing schools to expand instruction through innovative school models such as FCS's dual language immersion model, interdisciplinary units, and enrichment opportunities.

The curriculum will emphasize:

- Standards mastery in core academic subjects
- Critical thinking and problem-solving
- Literacy and numeracy across disciplines
- STEM integration and inquiry-based learning
- Preparation for college and workforce readiness

Instructional design will follow a backward-design model:

1. Identify standards and learning outcomes
2. Design assessments aligned to standards
3. Develop instruction and learning experiences

At FCS we believe High-quality curricula ensures grade-appropriate student assignments by aligning with the specific grade level standard and learning objectives, providing students with appropriate, challenging tasks that promote academic growth and development. It is the road map for what will be taught, when it will be taught, and the materials used. Curricula such as textbooks, unit plans, lesson plans, books, readings, projects, and other related materials are of high quality, which, has greater impact on student achievement than other interventions. Our founding team has chosen to utilize Amplify Caminos, Amplify ELA, Eureka Math, Amplify Science, Guidance from Thematic Units for K-8 in NYC Social Studies curriculum/Scholastic News as well as Savvas MyWorld Interactive SS Curriculum, and informational texts for our high-quality curriculum.

The selected curricula align with ALCOS, by ensuring alignment with these standards, the curriculum ensures that assignments are designed to meet the specific expectations set forth by educational authorities. According to ALSDE, newly adopted ELA standards have set higher expectations for student learning in all grades by requiring more attention to foundational reading, explicitly teaching comprehension skills for all text genres, and encouraging advanced reading development through increasing complexity levels in literary and informational texts. Additionally, to improve reading outcomes for students across Alabama, the Alabama Legislature passed the Alabama Literacy Act, which became law on June 10, 2019. Requirements outlined in the Alabama Literacy Act are based

Literacy: Reading	Amplify: Amplify CKLA Skills Amplify ELA(55)	K-5 Amplify CKLA /Amplify ELA (54) provides passages and texts for all reading levels in English and Spanish via thematic units. Each text includes standards-aligned suggested lessons related to vocabulary, phonics, and comprehension skills. These resources are in alignment with best practices for the Science of Reading.
Math	Eureka Math: Engage NY Modules	K-8 Eureka Math Engage NY Modules are an open-source curriculum resource aligned with ALCOS Mathematics standards. Students will develop both academic content standards and mathematical procedural practices through a variety of engaging mathematical activities at each grade level while providing materials in Spanish as well.
Science	Amplify Science/EL Science Modules	Many Science standards are incorporated in Amplify Science. Science topics not addressed in Amplify will be addressed in EL Science Modules and will be supplemented with investigations
Literacy: Spanish Literacy	Amplify Caminos(56)	Amplify Caminos provides research based support for our bilingual education model and will be about our Spanish literacy instruction. Additionally it directly aligns with the foundational literacy and Biliteracy Unit Framework.

Social Studies	Savvas MyWorld Interactive Social Studies Curriculum (K-8) Global Competency Framework Scholastic News (Junior Scholastic) Engage NY SS Modules for 6-8	Social Studies standards are incorporated in Scholastic News magazine articles. We will consistently draw from the Global Competence Framework as we continue to highlight the global perspective. In Grades K-5 students will use Savvas MiMundo Interactive Social Studies Curriculum. In Grades 6-8 students will use the Savvas MyWorld Interactive Social Studies Curriculum.
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Literacy Specific Support (SLA/ELA)

We follow the model that literacy exists across the curriculum. In alignment with the statewide Alabama Literacy Act, we are dedicated to ensuring that all K-3 students are reading at or above grade level. As such for literacy achievement we focus on students mastering the following skills across all content areas: phonics reading, annotating, writing and defending their ideas with research. Floreecer students experience two literacy blocks at the elementary level to simultaneously build foundational literacy in Spanish and English to achieve balanced literacy. Monday through Thursday, students experience a 105 minute literacy block in English and a 90 minute literacy block in Spanish with embedded interventions in the classroom model. On Fridays students are receiving a shorter literacy block in Spanish/English and a dedicated Compass Intervention block. At the elementary level this focus is foundational literacy instruction through Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Fluency, Vocabulary, Word Study and Comprehension. Reading is truly fundamental in our academic program as every student will receive effective reading instruction and practice on a daily basis in our reading centers. As students progress through the literacy pipeline, we continue to challenge the expansive nature of literacy instruction by ensuring to build upon students oracy skills. Literacy instruction should ensure that students acquire listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in Spanish and English across content areas (57).

As our elementary ambassadors (students) transition into middle school ambassadors and ultimately to high school we know these skills are foundational for their success. We prepare students for global success by exposing students to immersive World literature that is broad and unique, alongside classic British and American literature. Our writing is centered in evidence based writing that is foundational in developing classical rhetorical skills through argumentative writing and research. Preparation in this environment fosters the greatest achievement gains in areas that allow students to develop critical analysis, metacognition, and critical problem solving skills that will prepare them to be solution based independent learning ambassadors. As Dual Language learners we are providing the tools for students to be successful in both languages by creating consistent structures that draw deeper connections to the real world through literacy across the curriculum and languages.

In Spanish, teachers use Amplify Camino curricula for their literacy instruction. Lessons are formatted in a workshop structure which includes a mini-lesson with modeling, guided practice, application and transfer; and independent work time which includes independent reading, writing, and phonics work, as well as small-group instruction and conferencing. Read Alouds are primarily teacher-planned to align to ALCOS and/or the current classroom themes based on thematic unit planning. For example, a Kindergarten class of students will learn about their families, and the reading material will align as well. Read A louds are a time for students to build vocabulary and content knowledge, interpret an on-or above grade-level text, and build oral language skills.

In English, teachers primarily use Amplify curricula to support their Science of Reading aligned literacy instruction. At the elementary level students use Amplify Phonics and Writing. In 2nd and 3rd grade, teachers use Amplify, Phonics, and Writing. In 4th and 5th grades, reading and writing instruction align with term themes and we are incorporating Amplify Phonics to support Science of Reading aligned decoding instruction. Like in the Spanish classroom, lessons are formatted in

a workshop structure and Interactive Read Aloud lessons are primarily teacher-planned to align to ALCOS/Reading Initiative and/or the current classroom thematic unit.

The English and Spanish language literacy curricula are aligned to the ALCOS in Spanish and English. At the end of each unit of term, students take school-created interim assessments to measure their progress on ALCOS.

In Spanish students' reading levels are continually assessed using the Amplify MClass Assessment system, which measures students' ability to decode, comprehend and read increasingly complex text fluently. Student progress is reported according to the grade level expectations for text complexity, which have been benchmarked by term. In 3-5th grade Spanish, students are assessed using Amplify's Oral Reading Fluency Assessment, as F&P does not provide assessments beyond 2nd grade in Spanish. Additionally, English and Spanish teachers use a common Amplify MClass assessment from Kinder to 5th grade to guide differentiation.

As part of our Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), students may engage in one or more literacy interventions to support their growth and development in reading, writing, phonics, or oral language, including Boost Reading, Boost Lectura, Soluciones, Amplify Phonics Intervention, Foundations, Wilson, Failure Free Reading, Handwriting without Tears, and AIM.

Each year students will develop their demonstrations of learning through a project centered around the school-wide provided essential question that will serve as a portion of their portfolio. In their last two years students will narrowly focus on their capstone learning project. This presentation of learning will encapsulate their future academic plans in a presentation model. Students will receive feedback based on a gradual release from teacher guidance. As our mission alignment states we are cultivating changemakers to develop an international community and transform the world. As students work to develop their later years of learning they are prepared to tackle the complexities of Advanced Placement offerings or more specialized courses designed to prepare for entry level post-secondary skills. A Florecer ambassador will be the caliber of student that can ultimately dive into any collegial discussion/environment with key advanced learning skills in both Spanish and English.

Mathematics

Aligned with our mission and vision to provide instruction that prepares students for a global future, we commit to a mathematics curriculum that challenges students to master standards through real-world application and supports them in learning math by doing. We intentionally selected Eureka Math as a curriculum that supports students in seeing math in the real world and developing a productive disposition about math, ultimately realizing our goal to exceed local district student proficiency averages in math. FCS selected the Eureka math (58) curriculum for grades K-8 because it uses a knowledge-based instructional framework that supports teachers in structuring lessons so students do the problem-solving to learn math. The activities and routines allow teachers to determine what students already know and what they need to master new concepts. Student understanding is supported through the three aspects of rigor - conceptual understanding, procedural fluency, and applying these concepts to math problems with and without real-world contexts. Aligned with the Alabama Course of Study, this curriculum meets expectations for focus and coherence, rigor and mathematical practices, and usability sections of EdReports.org in 2020 and was awarded perfect scores in all three areas.

In alignment with the ALSDE, and the 2022 Numeracy Act, Florecer has made it a top priority and has taken the approach to couple both conceptual learning of math skills with procedural skills to aid in the lifelong success of our students. Students partake in a Math support and a Compass Intervention on Fridays to constantly assess their ongoing math fluency. Additionally, we utilize Eureka Math to establish our practice-based learning labs to provide the real world math application that students need to practice the foundational skills as they build their mathematical toolkit. By creating math investigations, students are able to apply their knowledge to real world scenarios and solidify their learning with hands-on examples.

Florecer's math formula is critical to success, students begin with a computational diagnostic assessment provided by NWEA MAP testing, and each unit begins with the grade-level concepts of mathematical fluency to further bolster foundational math skills. Our students are assessed daily,

weekly and with interim growth/achievement measures. Students and teachers alike are tracking student mastery of key mathematical concepts to effectively highlight the skills that are needed to close individual learning gaps. Students are tracking their math growth during their lessons, small group instruction and one-on-one learning. Our Math rotations embedded into the daily math block provide small group/one-on-one support from our teachers who are trained in the specific needs of our students' learning gaps. Trackers of student skills will be provided and a report sent to their math teacher for the upcoming week. Our teachers are constantly actively monitoring student work, and assessment data to provide quick and clear corrective feedback.

As students transition their elementary procedural and conceptual learning to the practice/application of complex middle school mathematics, we continue our pedagogical practices of uplifting the consistent use of data. We hold our students to the high standard in math using algebraic concepts and standard mathematical operations as well as procedural concepts. Our team of math teachers also are challenged to craft lessons using the BUF and provided curriculum that are steeped in the rigors of academic content language and real world problem solving. Through careful planning/ repetitive and high quality instructional methods/and practice-based learning, teachers will hone in the skills of students knowing the "language of math." As a school of diverse language learners, FCS will ensure that mathematical signs, key terms and concepts are clearly defined and used consistently and contextually to build student schema and knowledge to tackle complex mathematical word problems. Essential math questions that instructors will ask are:

"How did you arrive at that conclusion?"

"Walk me through the procedural moves that you made to solve the problem?"

"What other formats might your answer appear in?"

"What are potential blind spots to solving this equation? Where in your computation did you make an error?"

"Recreate the equation using an algebraic expression/written expression"

"What are potential distractors in the answer choices that could have been chosen?"

Science

FCS selects Amplify Science as the K-8 science curriculum. Amplify Science is organized around units where students are introduced to compelling phenomena and real-world problems, develop and strengthen claims by collecting evidence and testing assumptions, and apply their learning in new contexts. Aligned with the Alabama Course of Study in Science, it brings science to life through exploratory hands-on modules that promote inquiry and excitement through real-world scientific connections. Amplify Science leverages a blended learning platform making learning flexible and personal, aligning with our fundamental design principle of rigorous data driven instruction. Aligned with our mission to ensure academic success for all students, this program offers resources to differentiate, adapt, and equitably engage all students. Amplify has proven to be itself in driving student results and is based on the latest research on best practices for teaching and learning science (55).

Social Studies

Florece teachers use a holistic approach to Social studies in grades K-5 to plan instruction to support students in mastering social studies/real-world content while developing vocabulary, responding to text, and increasing their writing, speaking, and listening skills, teaching content through high-quality literature, writing, and project work. Aligned to the Alabama Course of Study and an "expanding environments" approach, students begin with content close to home—studying their communities and families—and build to World History by the time they leave 5th grade. We have selected Savvas MiMundo Social Studies curriculum for grades K-5. MiMundo is an active-inquiry, student-centered social studies curricula for grades K-5. This program spans civics, economics, geography, and history, and features ELA instruction to support social studies inquiry and new literacy and Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies standards (60). In grades 6-8, FCS selects Savvas' myWorld Interactive Social Studies 6-8 curriculum, myWorld Interactive inspires students to become skilled citizens through active inquiry and strong literacy connections that promote critical thinking, problem-solving, evidence-based reasoning, and communication skills.

The student-centered approach ensures the implementation of Alabama standards and the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies (61).

Citations

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(55) https://amplify.com/pdf/uploads/2019/12/CKLA_Curriculum.pdf

(56) https://amplify.com/pdf/uploads/2019/12/CKLA_Curriculum.pdf

(57) Beeman, K., & Urow, C. (2013). *Teaching for biliteracy : strengthening bridges between languages*. Caslon Publishing.

(58) <https://www.edreports.org/reports/overview/eureka-math2-2021>

(59) https://amplify.com/pdf/uploads/2019/12/AS_The-research-behind-the-program.pdf

(60) <https://www.savvas.com/solutions/social-studies/core-programs/myworld-interactive-social-studies-k-5>

(61) <https://www.savvas.com/solutions/social-studies/myworld-interactive>

e) If the curriculum is not already developed, describe a timeline for how the curriculum will be developed between approval of the application and the opening of the school, including who will be responsible and when key stages will be completed.

FCS has chosen to go with curriculum that aligns with best practices and alignment with the ALCOS. Therefore we will not work at this time to develop any further curriculum.

f) Describe the primary teaching methods and instructional strategies that the school will expect teachers to use and why they are well-suited for the anticipated student population. Describe the methods and systems teachers will have for providing differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all students.

Rationale for Primary Teaching Methods

Floreceer's instructional approach is intentionally designed to promote bilingualism, biliteracy, and high academic achievement for all students. By combining research-based dual language immersion strategies, collaborative inquiry, and data-driven differentiation, teachers ensure that every learner is challenged, supported, and celebrated as a multilingual ambassador.

At Floreceer we believe in the principle that "Great lessons are the product of careful engineering by the educators who lead them." Our urgency in lesson prep, and lesson planning is to STAMP student learning of content standards and improve learning outcomes in Birmingham/Ensley. Floreceer leverages our mission, THRIVE community values, and adherence to the three pillars of bilingual education and unique design model to develop academic excellence as we prepare for lessons and learning experiences. Floreceer Community School's unique model allows for all students to engage with learning content, and language as a language learner. As such we have aligned our primary teaching methods and instructional strategies to implement research-based methods that yield consistent gains for language learners. Whether students are emergent bilinguals, monolingual, simultaneous bilinguals, or a word language learner, FCS has crafted a concrete approach to teaching and learning that is student-centered, and allows students optional time to immerse in the target language with consistency and fluency.

Primary Teaching Methods

Floreceer's school community is committed to ensuring that every lesson applies the agreed upon primary teaching methods (student centered learning, direct instruction with gradual release of responsibility and collaborative learning) for best practices in a dual language program. These primary teaching methods are well-suited to ensure literacy across both languages and the consistency across content areas will build learner fluency and remove the cognitive load that can pose a challenge when students are not learning with consistent teaching methods. While we utilize these three primary teaching methods, Floreceer is committed to responding effectively to student data

and minding educational gaps to develop a cohesive and comprehensive learning experience. At the beginning of a unit there may be more direct instruction (in bite sized formats according to students developmental needs), whereas during the collaborative learning portion students may work cooperatively or independently.

The teacher moves from modeling to guiding instruction to providing students with opportunities to collaborate before they engage in an independent learning experience. The teaching methods provide a structured approach to scaffolding through steps that the instructor has engineered in lesson preparation as well as through the activities and guided resources provided. As an academic non-negotiable we have required our staff to include the primary teaching methods in lesson preparation, and lesson delivery in order to create a safe and predictive scope of learning. Particularly around the 4+1 language domains (reading, writing, speaking, listening and metalinguistic awareness) through effective lesson preparation students are able to know which language domains they are leveraging in the learning moment. This is transformative for students as a student-centered school because we recognize that students need support in making clear connections across both languages. As such we have developed our lesson delivery models, rooted in the pillars of dual language education. Teachers are viewing lesson preparation and the academic standards with a thorough lens that develops the versatility that our students need to become academically prosperous. Additionally, our instructional best practices and student MOP's are based on the research that supports high academic achievement in bilingual education.

Instructional Strategies

Our instructional strategies are rooted in consistency, literacy across both languages and academic excellence in every subject. The THRIVE community values are listed in every classroom, alongside daily/weekly and quarterly mastery goals. Students are given space to explore their “linguistic diversity in Spanish/English” with curiosity and enthusiasm for academic tasks. Direct instruction and teacher modeling of proper vocabulary use, in either English or Spanish includes the TPR methods, Read Alouds, Vocabulary in Context, El Dicatado and Phonemic Awareness that builds upon the metacognitive learning or cross-linguistic transfer of knowledge. In all grade bands all content is designed to reach The Bridge moment in dual language where students transfer academic language learned in one language to the other language and engage in contrastive analysis by focusing on how Spanish and English are different. Teachers are strategic about student engagement (with high quality visual aids, opportunities for meaningful discourse, and literacy instruction in one language occurs at the beginning of the unit). After the direct instruction teachers facilitate the Bridge moment where students are visually reviewing content knowledge in both languages side by side, as they analyze how the languages are similar and different in phonology, morphology, syntax and grammar as well as pragmatics. The unit ends with demonstrations of learning in the language in which the student bridged (either Spanish or English based on where the literacy was initially developed).

Differentiated Instruction for All Learners

Florecer is deeply committed to serving the unique and diverse learning needs of all students. As such we have created systems that follow best practices for high quality schools. Thus allowing all students at any entry point to THRIVE. Most importantly, we uphold the belief that all students are able to achieve success. Informed by the [Universal Design for Learning principles](#), students are given opportunities to be challenged and achieve success. Each instructional method/strategy has been selected to develop the necessary supports to differentiate instruction for all learners in a systematic and predictable way that maximizes learning and yields the highest outcomes.

Florecer's Systems for Academic Support for Differentiation

Learning Autonomy Zones (LAZ) aka Flexible Grouping :

- Teachers use ongoing formative assessment data to form small, dynamic groups for targeted language, literacy, or content instruction. Groups change as students progress and needs evolve.

Tiered Assignments and Scaffolded Supports:

- Lessons include tiered tasks that allow students to demonstrate understanding at varying levels of complexity while receiving the support they need—such as graphic organizers, sentence stems, or language frames. Additionally, we will have students get goals to express their oracy using the 4+1 Language domains with varying levels of complexity.

Language and Literacy Portfolios:

- Students maintain bilingual portfolios showcasing growth in both languages. These provide data for reflection, goal setting, and differentiated language instruction.

Use of Technology and Multimodal Tools:

- Teachers integrate digital platforms, adaptive software, and multimedia resources in both languages to personalize learning and give students multiple means of expression and means of participation.

Consistent Daily/Weekly/Quarterly Formative Assessment:

- Teachers use ongoing formative assessments—including observations, student conferences, and quick checks—to monitor progress and adjust instruction responsively.

Collaborative Data Chats

- Using student data teachers will frame student one-on-ones, collaborative unit planning and teacher-led conferences with parents.

ActiveObs (62)

- A system for teachers to “differentiate instruction” by creating specific look-fors, providing aligned feedback to each student. Doug Lemov highlights the importance of preparing to focus on a particular concept or finding. It is an awareness of what you should see from student independent practice and looking for that. Teachers are asked to “name the lap” for students
Ex: Students as I walk around the room, I am looking for a sentence using one of the three sentence frames and vocab words we described.” Teachers are not looking for grammar at this moment but rather conceptual understanding of the content through evidence-based writing.

Small Group Instruction

- Research, such as that provided by classroom teachers, suggests that small group instruction is one of the most powerful levers supporting student needs. We leverage small group instruction to teach, reteach and accelerate learning. It allows us to differentiate by readiness levels, learning setting, learning style, ELL language proficiency, interest, and product and process.

Citations

(62) Lemov, D. Teach Like a Champion 3.0: 63 Techniques That Put Students on the Path to College. Hoboken, Jossey-Bass, 2021.

Element Review

Reviews is not provided

3. Student Performance Standards

Reviewer Instructions

Please rate this section using the provided rubric.

Status: Completed

Form Result

Provide the anticipated student performance standards and demonstrate how those standards align or exceed the Alabama State standards.

Overarching Standard/Criteria: Compelling evidence of how the proposed school's student performance standards will directly and consistently meet or exceed Alabama standards.

Evidence needed for addressing the overarching standard:

- a) Describe the school-wide student performance standards. In addition, attach a proposed academic performance framework for evaluating the school's academic progress. The Commission approved performance framework template is attached for reference.

School-wide Performance Standards Narrative

FCS's Proposed Performance Framework Rationale

Mission: To cultivate bilingual, biliterate, and cross-culturally competent "changemakers" through a rigorous K-8 dual-language immersion curriculum rooted in community-centered, project-based learning.

Educational Model: A 50:50 Dual Language Immersion (DLI) model where core subjects (Math, Science, Social Studies, and Language Arts) are delivered in both English and Spanish to ensure cognitive flexibility and academic excellence.

Florecer Community School's performance standards are a "Value-Add" model. We accept the Alabama Course of Study as our floor but set a "Multilingual Ambassador" standard as our ceiling.

Standard Area	Goal Statement	Mastery Benchmark
Academic Core	Students demonstrate mastery of Alabama Course of Study standards in all subjects.	Proficiency on ACAP (State Assessment) and NWEA MAP (Growth).
Biliteracy	Students read, write, and speak at or above grade level in both English and Spanish.	Reaching "Intermediate-Mid" or higher on the STAMP 4S by Grade 8.
Civic Agency	Students apply academic knowledge to solve real-world community problems.	Successful annual defense of a "Changemaker" Portfolio.
Metacognition	Students demonstrate high-level critical thinking and linguistic transfer skills.	Ability to translate and adapt complex concepts across cultures.

Expanding the Standards

Standard 1: Biliterate Academic Proficiency

Unlike traditional schools where Spanish is an elective, FCS students must demonstrate mastery of core subjects (Math, Science, Social Studies) in both languages. Performance is not marked by simple translation, but by the ability to perform high-level cognitive tasks—such as debating a scientific theory or solving a multi-step word problem—fluidly in the target language.

Standard 2: Cognitive & Metalinguistic Growth

Research shows that dual-language students often follow a different growth trajectory, sometimes trailing slightly in English in early grades but significantly outperforming peers by Grade 5. Our standards account for this "DLI Dip" by using Trajectory-Based Growth Goals, ensuring students are making the necessary linguistic leaps to reach long-term excellence.

Standard 3: Civic & Community Agency (The "Changemaker" Standard)

Mastery is also defined by a student's ability to apply their bilingualism. Every student must meet the Changemaker Performance Standard, verified by a bilingual Capstone project that addresses a local community need, demonstrating that their education has a tangible social ROI (Return on Investment).

Academic Performance Framework **File name:** FCS Proposed Performance Framework.pdf

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Proposed Learning Standards **File name:** FCS Proposed Learning Standards.pdf

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Uploaded by: On'draya Morris

FCS Does not Intend to adopt additional academic standards beyond the Alabama State standards.

Element Review

Reviews is not provided

4. Unique/Innovative Program Offering & Mission Specific Academic Outcomes

Reviewer Instructions

Please rate this section using the provided rubric.

Status: Completed

Form Result

Describe unique or innovative academic programming and/or initiatives that are central to the mission and vision of the school which may not be supported at the same level in the local school system.

Preference: The Commission prefers applications that employ unique programs or characteristics that may not be found in the traditional school model.

Overarching Standard/Criteria: Compelling evidence of how the school will offer unique or innovative programs or characteristics that are otherwise not offered by the local school system or not offered to the same extent.

Evidence needed for addressing the overarching standard:

a) Describe the unique/innovative academic program(s) or characteristic(s) offered and explain how they differ from what is offered by the local school system. If applicable, connect to the mission or vision statements. Include identified funding sources.

FCS The First Spanish-English Dual Language Immersion Charter School in AL
Floreecer Community School (FCS) offers an innovative academic model centered on dual language immersion (in Spanish/English), Community-Centered Innovation, Global Teams/House System and Rigorous Data Driven Instruction which differs significantly from the traditional programs offered by the local school system. Our approach is designed to fulfill the school's mission to provide a rigorous and academically excellent learning experience that prepares students to flourish as multilingual, multiliterate, high-achieving changemakers while sustaining audacious joy and building an international community.

A cornerstone of the Floreecer model is its K–8 dual language immersion model, in which students learn academic content in both English and Spanish. Through this approach, students develop bilingualism, biliteracy, and cross-cultural competency while mastering core academic standards. Language learning is embedded across all subject areas rather than taught as a standalone class. While some schools in the local district may offer limited world language instruction or

small dual language programs, these opportunities are typically not available across all grade levels and are not fully integrated into core academic instruction. Florecer's immersion model ensures consistent language development and deeper cultural understanding. In addition to dual language instruction, Florecer integrates global learning and community responsive curriculum across subjects. Students explore global perspectives, diverse histories, and real-world issues that encourage critical thinking, empathy, and collaboration. This approach prepares students to thrive in an increasingly interconnected world and reflects our commitment to cultivating globally minded leaders. FCS also emphasizes community-centered innovation, recognizing families and community partners as essential contributors to student success. Therefore we foster strong relationships with families and local organizations to create a collaborative learning environment that supports both academic growth and student well-being. This model differs from many traditional schools by intentionally integrating community engagement into the academic experience and school culture. FCS also provides students with opportunities to express audacious joy in alignment with our Global Teams/Advisory model which directly supports the mission by creating a learning environment where students develop strong academic skills, multilingual communication abilities, and a deep sense of belonging and purpose.

Our innovative dual language model provides a valuable option for families, particularly as a strengths-based method for educating ELs in a true global learning environment. As such we would serve as the first bilingual school at its inception across the state of Alabama.

The innovation in our model is rooted in immersive learning and serves as a welcomed innovative option for students, families, and educators who are weary of the traditional school models. We maintain dual language bilingual education (DLBE) enhances academic achievement and in fact benefits from, a balanced and purposeful curriculum. At FCS the development of rigorous academic standards, 21st century skills, and social emotional competencies will occur through purposeful, meaningful demonstrations of learning that empower students to learn deeply about themselves, their communities, and their global society. Multifaceted assessments will demonstrate the success of this innovative model.

The following unique/innovative characteristics are what set Florecer Community School apart from the current options:

1. An immersive bilingual learning environment with the intention of growing global leaders/change-makers with cognitive, social, and cultural benefits.
2. Immersive Learning approach incorporating rigorous academics, 21st century skills, and SEL.
3. A curricular focus grounded in the [Global Competence Framework](#).
4. A connected and engaged learning community, that is whole child focused.

FCS is both unique and innovative in our operational aspects as well, in our content and language allocation plan as a two-way Dual language immersion school. Florecer has chosen to develop a 50/50 language allocation model. In a 50/50 language allocation model Instructional time is divided equally between the two languages from kindergarten to 8th grade. It is recommended that students in kindergarten through grade 5 acquire simultaneous biliteracy. Students receive explicit teaching of listening, speaking, reading and writing skills in both languages. It takes place within thematic language arts instructional blocks. Best practices/research recommends that students enroll in a 50/50 dual language program for at least five school years to receive all the benefits of bilingualism and biliteracy. Our content and language allocation plan impacts our daily scheduling, teacher planning, student schedules, interventions and overall school culture. To date there is not a bilingual education whole-school model in the state of Alabama. Additionally, our two-way dual language immersion model thrives on having a mixture of students whose dominant Language Other Than English (LOTE), and dominant English speakers to function as a two-way immersion model however all students (regardless of their home language) are welcome and able to learn effectively through our 50/50 model.

Our Innovative Vision for Florecer

Our call to action is *Atrévete a ser diferente/Dare to be different*. As Florecer's vision is to serve as a beacon of excellence in bilingual education and community building in the state of Alabama, our school will serve as a replicable ecosystem focused on biliteracy and bilingualism that supports the connection of language, family, culture, and education in the larger society. At FCS our community

values fuel our school model, academic vision, school culture, and day-to-day operations. Together with our mission and vision, our community values help to form a cohesive, innovative model for Florecer Community School. FCS believes that all children and families deserve access to a quality education so that students may benefit from long-term benefits such as increased earning potential, increased access to the global job market, increased global awareness and increased effective communication and soft skills. The FCS model integrates best practices with evidence based research that shows the combination of dual language programming and community centered innovation are predictive indicators of high academic achievement. Florecer is designed to prepare students to access and attain linguistic diversity in preparation for a prosperous life in college, business, or the career they envision. FCS commits to ensuring learning is immersive, rooted in our THRIVE community values, and intentional about uplifting change and care for the community. As a dual language immersion school FCS crafts an environment that aims to ensure 100% of students achieve the goal of bilingualism/biliteracy. FCS intends to provide our students with the foundation that makes them versatile, responsible and integral changemakers of the future. Florecer Community School believes all children must have access to linguistic diversity and intentional academically prosperous classrooms where structure and creativity thrive to yield high academic achievement, a strong sense of hope in one's ability and a commitment to transform the world.

b) Explain how the unique/innovative program(s) and characteristic(s) are integral to the educational and student-development plans, the instructional design and/or the planning of curriculum.

Curriculum Planning/Preparing for Bilingual Education

At FCS our unique aspects of biliteracy instruction are integral to the educational and student-development plans, as well as the instructional design of our school model and curriculum planning. Because students are learning two languages simultaneously, teachers, leaders and families must be intentional in collaborative planning and instruction. Teachers must have a clear understanding how to plan for student errors, and how to facilitate cross-linguistic transfer of knowledge between languages. Teacher fluency in language and content are critical elements to every student's personalized learning plan. FCS follows best practices in Dual Language Bilingual Education (DLBE) research that uplifts the power of dual language education programs where students utilize their heritage or home language while simultaneously learning a new language yielding higher academic achievement outcomes, greater proficiency in their home and second language and a stronger sense of self identity and confidence⁸¹.

FCS students are learning to read, write, and speak in two languages everyday. Through collaboration, problem solving, immersive learning and demonstrations of learning. This approach requires careful and consistent planning and review of data. Students are consistently asked to build upon their metacognitive and metalinguistic transfer of language and its usage. As such we have extracted key considerations of our instructional design and planning of curriculum. These key considerations include:

- Reading instruction in two languages
- Building Oracy Skills
- Writing instruction in two languages

Reading Instruction in Two Languages

Learning to read in two languages differs from learning to read in English/Spanish as a first language separately. As a starting point, Spanish and English are alphabetic languages and share similar alphabetic principles, but the languages have very different "ways of being." For this reason, it is important that educators work in collaboration with their teaching teams to ensure that foundational reading skills are not adding confusion to a young bilingual brain. For example, use the same picture (a mouse/un ratón) for the initial sounds of "m" in English and "r" in Spanish. Additionally, dual language educators should note the importance of recognizing emergent readers' use of translanguaging to decode. This is why students' development of metalinguistic awareness is more important than merely correcting the bilingual approximation. An example of this in action is

when dual language learners confuse the vowel sounds of “i” and “e” within the Spanish/English language82.

Building Oracy Skills

FCS planning for instructional moments include building background and oracy. Oracy development activities provide scaffolds for language development that ensure students are able to use the language, while background building activities provide students with knowledge they need to be able to access new content. While dedicating instructional time to do both benefits all students, they are essential for increasing the participation and engagement of language learners.

- Highly effective biliteracy instruction fosters the development of expressive language through structured and planned dialogue, the rehearsal of selected language structures, and the refinement of vocabulary.
- Oracy is one of the four essential language domains needed to develop biliteracy effectively.
- Oracy can be understood as the language needed to interact with people and texts that includes explicitly teaching listening and speaking skills.
- Oral language is important for emergent bilinguals because it helps develop second-language learners’ literacy skills.
- Adding specific types of oracy activities to the literacy curriculum established an extensive oral language based and contributed to the development of literacy skills such as word recognition, grammar, and comprehension (Cooper, Collins & Saxby, 1992).
- These oracy activities included vocabulary development via learning archaic expressions, puns, phrases, rhymes, chants, tongue twisters, metaphors, figures of speech, and revoiced dialogue.

Writing instruction in Two languages

In the FCS classroom our whole-child focused teachers are trained to take a traditional writing assignment and incorporate the Global Competency Framework in order to cause reflection, inquiry and connection. Before writing students are asking questions, and immersing themselves in the lived environment that surrounds them in order to articulate in thought, expression and eventually writing the learning experience.

Research-based practices demonstrate that bilingual students’ writing develops in ways different from those of their monolingual English-speaking peers. Code-switching and inter-literacy are patterns of writing unique to bilingual individuals, as they use or “borrow” markers of syntax from their linguistic repertoire that may only be appropriate for use in one language. Because we know that bilingual students’ writing abilities in each language develop at different rates, these writing behaviors of emergent bilingual students should be seen as normal because they are inherent to the process of learning to write in two languages. Students are not necessarily making errors. Instead, they are making bilingual approximations by borrowing learned writing structures from one language and applying them to another. Well prepared teachers plan for student error, and engineer a learning environment that minds the gap of understanding.

Considerations for our Unique & Innovative Program

At Florecer our content and language allocation plan functions as the most important fundamental aspect of our dual language school and should be clear to all stakeholders. Our unique content and language allocation plan strategically assigns language of instruction and percentages to content areas within each grade level. Research suggests that content and language allocation plans are effective as long as there are three conditions present:

- 1) the entire school community adheres to the percentages assigned,
- 2) there are materials to support the content in the language assigned, and
- 3) teachers are assigned based on their language proficiency.

The allocation of instructional resources, including materials, is efficient because each subject is taught in one language at a time.

Operationally, we have several aspects that make our school unique and innovative operationally they include, but are not limited to the following:

- Staffing: When creating FCS’s language allocation plan, we considered the programming the school will implement and planned for staffing accordingly. Our content language allocation plan provides a balance of teachers with fluency in Spanish, English and both languages. This

is a unique feature to our school model because as a bilingual school students need to hear, speak and understand the language throughout their learning day. One important and specific skill set we consider in staffing FCS personnel include bilingual staff, and supporting staff.

- **Class Size and Structure:** Our class size and structure will incorporate a co-teaching approach with ideally two teachers (including a teacher assistant) in each classroom at the elementary level. With approximately 20-22 students. Students are experiencing their literacy blocks based on their language of instruction. Through collaborative planning, teachers will share responsibility for leading whole group instruction, targeted small-group or individual instruction. Additionally, this allows for various iterations of use of teacher personnel.
- **Weekly Early Release:** FCS will release students at 1:15 on Fridays to support teacher planning, teacher coaching, collaboration and intellectual prep for the interdisciplinary thematic units of learning. Currently, our local school district does not have weekly early release days that support unique support for language learners.
- **Community School Approach:** As a community school focused on the whole child, Floreer will operate using evidence-based strategy to advance equity and reduce barriers to learning by providing the services needed to support student and family well-being. As such we desire to make Floreer a beacon for success for both children and adults with the following key indicators: (1) integrated systems of support, (2) powerful student and family engagement, (3) collaborative leadership with shared power and voice, (4) expanded and enriched learning opportunities, (5) rigorous, community-connected classroom instruction, and (6) a culture of belonging, safety, and care. Our operational systems will follow suit by building a community-centered approach that serves the families we serve.
- **Global Teams (House System):** Floreer's advisory program, where small groups of students meet daily for several years, fosters lasting relationships and a sense of community. This differs from the local school system, where advisory schedules may exist but may not prioritize long-term, close-knit connections among students. Students will have a country that will align with their unique connection to the community values.
- **Scheduling:** At FCS our core classes and electives are included in the language allocation plan as they are an important part of the student's academic day. While we recognize that all specials, electives, and grade levels should have a clear language plan, it can be harder to accomplish in schools where the dual language strands share staff with the rest of the school. In those instances, a bilingual candidate is one option to meet the needs of all the school strands. Additionally, our scheduling throughout the year requires significant planning for our teachers to effectively collaborate.

At FCS our unique and innovative operational aspects are in direct alignment with the unique needs of our school model, and adheres to our academic goals for high academic growth/achievement, bilingualism/biliteracy, and sociocultural competence.

Citations

81 Howard, E. R., Lindholm-Leary, K. J., Rogers, D., Olague, N., Medina, J., Kennedy, D., Sugarman, J., & Christian, D. (2018). *Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education* (3rd ed.). Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.

82 https://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/page_content/attachments/TAL_DualLanguageHandbook_web.pdf

<https://www.teachingforbiliteracy.com/building-background-knowledge-and-oralcy-why-when-and-how-part-2-of-2>

<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC10547117/>

https://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/page_content/attachments/TAL_DualLanguageHandbook_web.pdf

c) Identify student learning outcomes tied to these initiatives and how these outcomes will be measured by the school. Indicate if these outcomes will be included as Mission Specific outcomes in the performance framework included in the charter school contract.

Florecer Community School will establish student learning outcomes that align with its unique academic model as well as ALSDE academic standards. These outcomes support the school's mission to prepare students to flourish as multilingual, multiliterate, high-achieving changemakers. Student progress toward these outcomes will be monitored through state assessments, benchmark assessments, language proficiency assessments, and performance-based measures. In addition to meeting all required academic accountability measures established by the ALSDE, Florecer will include several Mission-Specific Outcomes in its charter performance framework to ensure accountability for the distinctive elements of its educational model.

Based on the mission specific student learning outcomes of Florecer Community School (FCS), the following table outlines the student learning outcomes, their measurement tools, and their status as Mission-Specific outcomes proposed in our performance framework:

Initiative	Student Learning Outcome	Measurement Tool	Mission-Specific?	Benchmark Goal
Dual Language Immersion	Students will reach high levels of bilingualism and biliteracy in both Spanish and English.	STAMP / AAPPL	Yes	80% of "Long-term" FCS students will reach Intermediate-Mid proficiency by Grade 8.
Community-Centered Innovation	Students will demonstrate "Changemaker" readiness through community-connected projects.	Capstone Rubric	Yes	90% of students earn a "Proficient" or higher on annual Changemaker Projects.
High-Achieving Academics	Students will meet or exceed rigorous academic standards in core subjects.	ACAP / MAP Growth	No (Standard)	80% of FCS students will meet or exceed state/district averages in ELA and Math.
Global Teams / House System	Students will demonstrate a strong sense of belonging, identity, and social-emotional growth.	Annual School Climate & Student Well-Being Survey	Yes	85% of students will "Strongly Agree" that they feel a sense of belonging and "Audacious Joy" within their Global Team.

d) Explain how the unique/innovative program(s) and characteristic(s) integrate with and/or support state initiatives. (ARI, AMSTI, etc.)

Florecer Community School's innovative academic model is intentionally designed to integrate with and support key Alabama state initiatives, including the Alabama Reading Initiative (ARI) and the Alabama Math, Science, and Technology Initiative (AMSTI). These initiatives emphasize high-quality instruction, strong literacy and STEM foundations, and continuous improvement through professional learning and data use. All of which are directly aligned to Florecer's mission and strategic priorities. In the ALSDE's Strategic Plan the motto is "Every Child, Every Chance, Every Day". Our unique model uplifts this motto by embracing multilingualism as a point of strength for all learners. Our school model aligns with two of the five priorities our State Superintendent has given the ALSDE and stakeholders. Both priorities are directly correlated to the continuous improvement of our educational ecosystem and state development. Those two priorities are Academic Growth & Achievement and College, Career, and Workforce Readiness. Within those larger priorities we are aligning with the need to develop our population of learners who are linguistically rich and enrich those that are curious and unable to access the unique post-secondary options due to the preceived limitations of our current educational ecosystems not holding space for bilingualism. Research supports that bilingualism is directly correlated to greater cognitive skills, problem solving, social awareness, and empathy. These are direct links to academic growth and achievement. Additionally, these skills are linked to being domestically and globally competitive in the workforce.

Alignment with the Alabama Reading Initiative (ARI). Florecer's dual language immersion program supports the goals of ARI by prioritizing strong foundational literacy instruction, evidence-based reading strategies, and continuous monitoring of student progress. Students receive explicit literacy instruction in both Spanish and English in extended literacy blocks, strengthening phonological awareness, vocabulary development, comprehension, and writing skills. Teachers will utilize ARI-aligned literacy frameworks and assessments to monitor student reading growth and identify targeted interventions. Data-driven instructional practices—such as regular progress monitoring and collaborative data meetings—ensure that reading instruction is responsive and aligned with the state's expectations for early literacy proficiency.

Alignment with AMSTI (Alabama Math, Science, and Technology Initiative). Florecer Community School's instructional design also supports the goals of AMSTI by emphasizing hands-on, inquiry-based learning in mathematics and science. Through practice-based learning and collaborative Global Teams, students engage in problem-solving, experimentation, and real-world applications of STEM concepts. These instructional approaches align with AMSTI's focus on active learning strategies that deepen conceptual understanding and promote student engagement in mathematics and science. Teachers will incorporate AMSTI-aligned resources and participate in professional learning opportunities that strengthen instructional practices in STEM education.

Data-Driven Instruction and Continuous Improvement. Florecer's commitment to rigorous data-driven instruction further supports statewide efforts to improve student outcomes. Teachers regularly analyze formative and summative assessment data to guide instruction, provide interventions, and measure student progress toward academic standards. This systematic use of data aligns with state initiatives that emphasize accountability, instructional improvement, and closing achievement gaps. Community Engagement and Whole-Child Development. Florecer's community-centered innovation model complements Alabama's broader educational priorities related to family engagement and student support. By partnering with families, community organizations, and local leaders, FCS creates a supportive environment that reinforces academic learning and student well-being through our touchpoints and embedded school culture.

Through the integration of bilingual education, rigorous instruction, collaborative learning structures, and strong community partnerships, Florecer Community School not only meets Alabama's academic standards but actively advances the goals of ARI, AMSTI, and other statewide initiatives designed to improve literacy, STEM achievement, and overall student success.

Element Review

Reviews is not provided

5. Grade-Level Promotion

Status: Completed

Form Result

All schools need criteria for grade level promotion which is clear and communicated to students and parents. Criteria may include academic, social, emotional or maturity readiness. This may include special cases of accelerated grade level promotion.

Overarching Standard/Criteria: Evidence of how the proposed school will promote students to the next grade level which may include meeting academic or social standards. If applicable, criteria for accelerated or double promotion (skipping a grade level). Include instances where parental involvement is required.

Evidence needed for addressing the overarching standard:

Grade-Level Promotion Narrative

FCS Promotion Criteria & Rationale

Floreecer Community School is committed to ensuring that each student demonstrates readiness for the academic and developmental expectations of the next grade level. Promotion decisions are designed to support continuous academic growth while considering each student’s intellectual, social, emotional, and physical development. Students will be promoted to the next grade level when they demonstrate sufficient mastery of grade-level learning standards and the readiness required to succeed in the next grade.

FCS believes a solid academic foundation is necessary to succeed in high school and beyond. Our school’s design, with tracking student performance and tiers of student support and frequent communication, ensures students matriculate successfully. In addition, FCS uses a standards based grading scale. See below (FCS Grading Scale).

FCS Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percentage	Mastery Level	Student Achievement
A	90% – 100%	Exemplary	Exceeds Standards: Demonstrates deep understanding and applies concepts to new, complex situations independently.
B	80% – 89%	Proficient	Meets Standards: Consistently demonstrates accuracy and independence in all grade-level expectations.
C	70% – 79%	Approaching	Minimum Passing: Grasps the foundational concepts but requires occasional support or lacks full consistency.
D	60% – 69%	Beginning	Not Passing: Shows emerging skills but has significant gaps. Requires intensive intervention to reach proficiency.
F	Below 60%	Incomplete	No Credit: Insufficient evidence of learning or a total lack of engagement with the standard.

Our students’ backgrounds do not limit our expectations of their outcomes; however, we believe that the promotion of a student who has not successfully mastered the content in all core content classes contributes to the continued struggle of that student in future grades. Additionally, we understand that language acquisition is something that takes time and effort. As such students are promoted or retained based on the ALSDE current guidance for multilingual learners as to remain compliant with all local and state entities. Therefore, students earning at least 70% in all academic classes are promoted to the next grade level which is considered mastery of the content. Final course averages will be calculated by averaging the grade of each of the four 9-week grading periods.

Promotion Evaluation Criteria

Promotion to the next grade level at FCS will be evaluated based on mastery of grade level appropriate Alabama State Standards in ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies. Based on a student’s prior achievement, we will consider whether they have mastered or are on track to master academic standards for each grade level. In addition, FCS will consider the following in promotion decisions:

- Proficiency on AL Writing rubrics
- Progress in reading level (Fountas & Pinnell or similar)
- Proficiency and growth on ACAP exams
- Mastery of AL World Language standards and growth on ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines
- Global Competence scores across domains of the PISA Questionnaire
- Completion of SEL work
- Attendance
- Where applicable: Achievement of IEP goals

- Where applicable: Progress toward EL goals

Additionally, under the Alabama Literacy Act, students in Kindergarten through Grade 3 are screened for reading proficiency at least three times per year to identify reading deficiencies early.

A student may be identified as at risk of retention if they:

- Demonstrate a reading deficiency as defined by the Alabama Literacy Act
- Fail to meet grade-level literacy benchmarks
- Earn failing or near-failing grades in core academic subjects
- Show limited academic growth despite instruction and support.

When classroom assessments and/or universal screeners indicate that students are not achieving or demonstrating adequate progress toward grade level standards they will receive more intensive Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions as described previously. In case students fail to meet grade level Alabama standards or additional promotion metrics indicate the possibility that students will not be promoted to the following grade, parents will be notified with the THRIVE Report/quarterly report card and The HIVE (MTSS Team) will develop further interventions.

Note: If a student in kindergarten has met the proficiency requirements in the core subject areas but is not deemed ready for promotion to kindergarten or 1st grade by a teacher or a parent due to functional skill level in the areas of physical, social, or emotional development, an option to repeat kindergarten may be considered without being designated as a retention.

At FCS a student cannot be retained more than once during the student's enrollment in FCS unless there is a comprehensive review by multiple school personnel and approval from the Head of School/Instructional Leadership Team. If a student does not meet all requirements for promotion but moves on to middle or high school because the student has been previously retained, the principal must submit a report to the receiving school detailing all unmet requirements. This report must be received by May 30th and updated at the close of summer school. For students who move prior to the end of the school year, the report must be provided to the school that will receive the student within 30 calendar days of the student's enrollment in the school. Students in this situation will be enrolled recommended for support services at their new school.

Timeline for Promotion

Understanding the Exceptions

As such we have outlined our promotion criteria. To be promoted, students must pass all core subject areas. FCS students with more than 30 unexcused absences in a school year will not be promoted unless the principal submits a written explanation justifying the decision to the School Board/Head of School explaining extenuating circumstances that were not properly addressed by the school leadership before the promotion is made. Decisions regarding the promotion and retention of FCS students enrolled in Kindergarten through 8th grade are made by the student's principal based upon the recommendation of the student's teacher and in accordance with the promotion requirements set forth by the ALSDE and Florecer Community School Family/Student Handbook. A principal may retain any student who does not meet the promotion requirements. However, a principal may promote a student who otherwise failed to meet such promotion requirements provided that the principal submits a written explanation for the promotion to the Board/Head of School before the promotion is made.

Appeals Process

At FCS, if a student or parent disagrees with a retention decision, they have the right to appeal the decision by submitting a written explanation to the Head of School/School Board.

Appeals due to grades must follow the appeals process and timelines set forth in the Florecer Grading Policy.

Appeals due to unexcused absences must follow the process and timelines set forth in the FCS Student Handbook; however, the Head of School/School Board will convene the review the appeal.

Documentation of Promotion Decisions

Promotion of Students Who Fail to Meet FCS's Promotion Criteria When a principal makes the decision to promote a student and/or a parent wins an appeal of a retention decision, a written justification that includes the underlying rationale must be submitted to the school's Head of

School/School Board. Before the promotion is made, a copy of the justification must be provided and included in the student's cumulative file.

Required Summer School Attendance

FCS students who are retained for failure to meet the promotion criteria specified in FCS End of Year Reporting internally and via Powerschool. The promotion criteria should include pertinent factors that would have qualified the student for retention, including academic standing related to proficiency and/or credit attainment in required content areas and compliance with attendance requirements, where applicable. FCS requires that retained students attend the summer school session immediately following the school year in which they were retained, unless specifically excused by the principal or the Head of School. A student who attends summer school due to retention shall be reevaluated for promotion if the student meets the following criteria:

- Does not have more than three unexcused absences from summer school;
- Receives a passing grade in each subject or content area for which the student did not achieve a passing grade during the school year.

A student who meets the promotion criteria set forth by FCS after the completion of summer school shall be promoted. In addition to those students identified to attend summer school pursuant to the above guidance, the principal shall provide to the Head of School, before the summer school registration deadline, a list of the names of students who the principal believes could benefit from summer school.

Special Considerations

Students with disabilities, identified through the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA) 2004, are eligible for promotion as determined in accordance with the goals, objectives, accommodations and modifications as they relate to the content standards developed and agreed upon by the IEP Team. For English Learners, any decision on retention must be made in conjunction with the bilingual/English Second Learner (ESL) teacher.

FCS Parent Notification and Involvement

Floreceer Community School prioritizes strong partnerships with families in supporting student success. FCS will serve students in the K-3 grade bands under the Literacy Act. Under the AL Literacy Act promotion or retention decisions should not be completed without the completion of the following steps. In accordance with the Alabama Literacy Act, parents of students identified with a reading deficiency will receive written notification that includes:

- A statement that the student has been identified as having a reading deficiency
- A description of the reading deficiency and current reading level
- A description of the reading interventions and instructional supports that will be provided
- Strategies for parents to support reading development at home
- Information regarding supplemental instructional services and available resources

Notification will be provided as soon as the reading deficiency is identified through the following methods

- Powerschool
- Conferences/Parent Meetings
- Weekly THRIVE Reports
- School to Parent Communication

FCS leadership and instructional team are required to comply with the requirements set forth in this policy. In order to support its implementation, the instructional leadership team, is expected to make all staff aware of required activities and timelines on an annual basis. Implementation of this policy will be reinforced through a process which includes regular data reviews, record sampling, reviews of underlying documentation, and, as needed, record reconciliation. This framework will ensure that together we build a system of continuous improvement and prevent noncompliance.

Promotion Policy

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Uploaded by: On'draya Morris

b) Describe the system used to identify students at risk of being retained in grade level, the time of year that student will be identified, and the support in place to help that student succeed and remain on track. Include the timing of parental notification and involvement.

At-Risk Narrative

FCS Promotion in Doubt and Retention Policy

Floreecer Community Schools approaches academic mastery rooted in the belief that Academic Excellence is something we practice daily and with excellence. All policies are included in the Proposed Family/Student Handbook and orientation to the school during the summer/mid-year enrollment. Additionally, families are asked to come in for Family conferences. Parents are required to sign report cards, and invited to meet and with teachers during each grading period. Additionally, there are several key systems/interventions that are incorporated to eliminate the surprise element of students whom are considered promotion in doubt including but not limited to:

- Weekly Grade Reports from Global Teams (for all subject areas)
- Parent Access to Powerschool and Intervention Schedules which occur daily and on Fridays.
- MTSS Team meetings that weekly monitor chronic absenteeism, grades, diagnostic/formative assessment data, specific learning plans, and SEL data.
- Internal School system that requires students scoring below mastery to attend Global Saturday Academy each month.
- Small Group learning/iterative learning cycles that allow students multiple chances to engage in deeper learning based on neurodivergence, learning autonomy zones (LAZ) levels and instructional gaps
- Student data chats that occur daily, weekly and monthly.

Retention and Acceleration Considerations

Numerous criteria must be considered in case of either possible retention or possible acceleration of K-8 students:

- Grades and other indicators of academic achievement that may include but shall not be limited to state and district assessments
- Physical, social and emotional factors
- Teacher, principal and/or parent recommendations. Such identification at all grade levels shall be based primarily on the level of the student's proficiency in reading, language arts and mathematics.
- Progress on Individual Education Program (IEP) related goals and objectives
- Alabama Literacy Act screening results

Retention of Students with Special Needs: Special Education students who meet the goals of their IEP and English Learners who are making adequate progress in their individual program should not be considered for retention but should be considered for appropriate interventions.

Retention Process: Primary caregivers of students at risk of retention shall be notified in writing on a quarterly basis when report cards are issued. Retention recommendations should be considered in a meeting with a support team including parents, teachers, and school leadership that will develop appropriate interventions. Interventions may include:

- Tier 2 or Tier 3 in-class interventions
- Extracurricular tutoring
- FCS Global Learning Institute (Summer school)
- FCS Saturday Academy

In case students are not able to meet promotion criteria after focused, individualized interventions they will be retained in that grade level at the following year. FCS will work to ensure that students see this as another opportunity to master grade level content and will work to establish strong relationships with teachers and the new student cohort to avoid the potential negative social impact of retention. It is our goal to avoid retention of students whenever possible, while at the same time we do not believe in promoting students who are not prepared to succeed in meeting the challenges of the next grade level. In the case that the Executive Director or teachers recommend a child for acceleration, a support team will convene including parents, teachers, and school leadership to consider the student's social and emotional growth along with academic factors. If the decision

is made to accelerate the student, they may be accelerated no more than one grade level. The Executive Director reserves the right to make the final decision about grade placement. In cases where the co-director or teachers decide to recommend a child for retention, the following guideline must be considered:

Timing of Retentions. The established benchmark grade level for retention is 3rd grade and students may be retained no more than two times during their K-8 school years. Retention should always be taken very seriously and only implemented if it is in the best interest of students. Below FCS has created a proposed timeline for retention conversations. In case students are not able to meet promotion criteria after focused, individualized interventions they will be retained in that grade level at the following year. FCS will work to ensure that students see this as another opportunity to master grade level content and will work to establish strong relationships with teachers and the new student cohort to avoid the potential negative social impact of retention. It is our goal to avoid retention of students whenever possible, while at the same time we do not believe in promoting students who are not prepared to succeed in meeting the challenges of the next grade level.

[Timeline of Retention/Promotion Discussions](#) *edit*

Accelerations. In cases where the ED or teachers recommend a child for acceleration, a support team will convene including parents, teachers, and school leadership to consider the student's social and emotional growth along with academic factors. If the decision is made to accelerate the student, they may be accelerated no more than one grade level. The ED reserves the right to make the final decision about grade placement.

Appeals Process. At FCS, if a student or parent disagrees with a retention decision, they have the right to appeal the decision by submitting a written explanation to the Head of School/School Board.

- Appeals due to grades must follow the appeals process and timelines set forth in the Florecer Grading Policy.
- Appeals due to unexcused absences must follow the process and timelines set forth in the FCS Student Handbook; however, the Head of School/School Board will convene the review the appeal.

Documentation of Retention and Promotion Decisions. Retention of Students Who Fail to Meet FCS's Promotion Criteria When a principal makes the decision to retain a student, this decision should be documented in the student's electronic record in Powerschool. The underlying rationale for the decision, including a clear explanation of the promotion requirements the student failed to meet, should be maintained in the student's cumulative file.

Required Summer School Attendance

FCS students who are retained for failure to meet the promotion criteria specified in FCS End of Year Reporting internally and via Powerschool. The promotion criteria should include pertinent factors that would have qualified the student for retention, including academic standing related to proficiency and/or credit attainment in required content areas and compliance with attendance requirements, where applicable. FCS requires that retained students attend the summer school session immediately following the school year in which they were retained, unless specifically excused by the principal or the Head of School. A student who attends summer school due to retention shall be reevaluated for promotion if the student meets the following criteria:

- Does not have more than three unexcused absences from summer school;
- Receives a passing grade in each subject or content area for which the student did not achieve a passing grade during the school year.

A student who meets the promotion criteria set forth by FCS after the completion of summer school shall be promoted. In addition to those students identified to attend summer school pursuant to the above guidance, the principal shall provide to the Head of School, before the summer school registration deadline, a list of the names of students who the principal believes could benefit from summer school.

Element Review

Reviews is not provided

6. High School Graduation Requirements (if applicable)

Reviewer Instructions

Please rate the application using the provided rubric.

Status: Completed

Form Result

High schools will be expected to meet the state graduation standards as established by the Alabama State Board of Education (ALSDE).

Overarching Standard/Criteria: Compelling evidence of how the proposed high school's standards will directly and consistently meet or exceed Alabama State standards.

Evidence needed for addressing the overarching standard:

Course Offerings Narrative

N/A

b) Explain how the graduation requirements for the school will meet or exceed Alabama State Standards. If graduation requirements for the school exceed Alabama State Standards, explain the additional requirements.

Graduation Requirements Narrative

N/A

At-Risk Narrative

N/A

Transcript Narrative

N/A

Element Review

Reviews is not provided

7. School Calendar and Schedule

Reviewer Instructions

Please rate the application using the provided rubric.

Status: Completed

Form Result

Provide information on the typical school day schedule and the academic calendar.

Overarching Standard/Criteria: Compelling evidence of how the school day schedule and academic calendar will directly and consistently meet the needs of the educational program and how it will optimize student learning.

Evidence needed for addressing the overarching standard:

a) Discuss the annual academic calendar for the school. Explain how the calendar reflects the needs of the educational program. Attach the school's proposed calendar for the first year of operation, including total number of days/hours of instruction, holidays, make-up days and state assessment days.

Academic Calendar Narrative

FCS's Calendar (A Reflection of a Thriving School Culture)

FCS Yearly Calendar is reflective of careful planning for our 50/50 dual language immersion model, and our content language allocation plan that informs our unique scheduling and content. Additionally, Florecer's school calendar is reflective of the academic, social and emotional needs of our students and families. We recognize that students' needs are critical to their learning and achievement outcomes. As such we have included Community Wellness Days (if inclement weather days in excess, these days will be utilized as Makeup days), THRIVE Culture Days for landmark cultural events, FCS Global Learning Institute for closing achievement gaps in the summer, select Saturdays for our FCS Saturday Academy, Community Wellness days, and Early Release days for students/PD for Staff every Friday. We also have embedded Asynchronous days to support student engagement on days that are typically recognized as holidays and also allowing for immersive learning exploration, in order to support students gathering community data for their demonstrations of learning.

THRIVE Student Camp will be embedded in the last four days of our teacher professional development to include student engagement for our students/teachers. During this camp students will receive the enculturation of our unique school culture, build confidence, build unity, and teachers will engage with students to receive real-time feedback. While FCS will hold formal family conferences during both the fall and spring semester, we have provided early release days for conferences, and plan to provide a conference window with a range of times available to meet the needs of working parents. Conferences will generally be held in October, February and in May. As always, conferences can be requested on an as-needed basis. Additionally, our family conference days allow for students of all grades to show their demonstrations of learning and grades to their families.

Our THRIVE Culture days are embedded in the calendar to support student growth and development by building in days that celebrate our diverse and unique culture through incentive landmark events (Field Days, Book-O-Ween/Book Parade, and Community Culture Expo). We have crafted a school calendar/day that addresses our 50/50 dual language immersion model, student learning gaps, and student overall enrichment in a linguistically rich learning experience. On designated Saturdays we provide small group/one-on-one support for students whose NWEA MAP scores and achievement scores are below 80% mastery in subgroups based on need. For students with mastery at 80% and above we provide enrichment/extension projects that augment their normal school day coursework. Our academic calendar includes approximately 181 instructional days. Based on our weekly/daily schedule students receive 25.75 hours (1,545 minutes) of planned instruction in the core subjects (Math, ELA/Spanish Language Arts, Science and SS) weekly. Our instructional approach allows students more time to receive balanced literacy (Spanish literacy & English Literacy M-Th including thematic units in social studies) at the lower/upper school level.

Calendar Rationale with Embedded Professional Development

Florecer's proposed calendar reflects and supports the needs of our academic program by providing generous/structured time for teacher professional development. Most Fridays, where holidays are not on the calendar, are early release days. On these days, students are dismissed at 1:15pm, and for 2 hours, teachers are provided structured professional development based on our Teaching Bilit-eracy/Bilingualism and the Get Better Faster priorities to include targeted training and development in best practices aligned to our instructional framework and primary instructional methods, state compliance and ethics surrounding high quality educational institutions. Additionally, by providing teacher in-service days for Data Driven Instruction (DDI) proceeding the start of the semester, we are able to plan effectively for student errors and or common areas of development. Prior to the first day of school for students, FCS founding staff will engage in three weeks of intensive professional learning to ensure they are prepared to carry out the ambitious mission and vision and unique academic program of FCS from day one. FCS hosts a THRIVE Summer Teacher Institute runs for 15 days (3

weeks) in the summer from 10:00am-4:00pm prior to the first official day of school on 8/23/2027. We believe in solid teacher preparation and have divided our 15 days for all staff. As a founding staff we know that alignment is critical to the success of our school culture.

For teachers new to the field of education, we provide individualized learning tracks to support their growth and development. This time period will allow for an intensive model for developing a baseline for the school culture, norms and pedagogical practices that are necessary for those who are new to the field of education and particularly bilingual education. The THRIVE Institute days are steeped in building professional practices that are aligned to the needs of our specific dual language school model and the expectations for staff, families and students. We believe this span of time is critical to our school navigating the unique offerings of an immersive school culture.

Floreceer's calendar and schedule optimize instructional time for students and provide teachers with adequate time to prepare for student learning. Studies suggest that the more time teachers spend on professional development, the more significantly they change their practices. Fifteen days before school opens, teacher development focuses on grounding in our mission, vision, and community values while engaging in learning around the academic and cultural vision. Because our model is unique, we protect two hours weekly for teacher development on teaching and learning. Meeting-free planning averages 60 minutes daily, in addition to 25 minutes of duty-free lunch.

Inclement Weather Makeup Days. In the event of inclement weather closings, we intend to convert community wellness days into full instructional days or may shift up early dismissal days into full instructional days. Additionally, we can leverage A-sync learning days into full instructional days.

State Assessment Windows. The calendar also identifies designated state assessment windows in accordance with state testing requirements. Instructional pacing guides and curriculum planning will ensure students are prepared for these assessments while maintaining a balanced and engaging instructional program. FCS utilizes the historical assessment windows to estimate the assessment window or periods for state testing.

Proposed School Calendar	File name:	Updated Fall 2027 FCS Yearly School Calendar - Calendar (1).pdf
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b) Describe the structure of a typical school day and week. Include the number of instructional hours/minutes in a day for core subjects such as language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Note the length of the school day, including start and dismissal times. Explain why the school's daily and weekly schedule will be optimal for student learning. Provide the minimum number of hours/minutes per day and week that the school will devote to academic instruction in each grade. Attach a sample daily and weekly schedule for each division of the school.

Floreceer's Unique Approach to Whole Child Development and Scheduling

Floreceer Community School (FCS) will implement a structured daily and weekly schedule designed to maximize instructional time, support bilingual language development, and promote whole-child development. The proposed schedule reflects the school's dual-language immersion model, collaborative learning approach, and commitment to developing globally minded students who embody the THRIVE values. The school day is intentionally designed to support students academically, socially, emotionally, and embed a positive sense of belonging ensuring that students develop the skills, habits, and mindsets needed to thrive both inside and outside of the classroom

As such daily and weekly scheduling at FCS is intentionally designed to maximize student learning in several key ways. First, the schedule prioritizes extended literacy and mathematics blocks, allowing teachers to provide deeper instruction, guided practice, and differentiated support. Research demonstrates that longer instructional blocks support deeper learning and allow students to engage in collaborative discussion, writing, and problem-solving. Second, the schedule integrates dual-language immersion throughout the day, enabling students to develop biliteracy and cross-cultural competence while learning academic content. Third, daily social-emotional learning structures, such as morning meetings, gratitude circles, and Global Teams periods, help students

develop self-awareness, empathy, and resilience—skills that support both academic success and positive school culture. Finally, the schedule incorporates collaborative learning experiences, which help students apply knowledge to real-world problems and strengthen critical thinking skills. Our schedules are carefully planned with our mission, and our content language allocation plan at the forefront of our unique model. Our Daily schedules outline the subject, language of instruction and a list of proposed best practices for instruction. Our proposed first day of school for students is August 23, 2027 and the projected last day of school is May 31, 2028.

Florecer's schedule ([FCS Weekly Schedule](#)) and ([Daily Scheduling](#)) provides adequate time for students to engage in student-centered learning to support their diverse needs. FCS's extended learning blocks allow for embedded interventions and DDI to close the identified gaps of learning in both elementary and middle school. FCS's 8 hour school day begins at 8:15 am and ends at 4:15 pm Monday through Thursday. On Fridays students are in school from 8:15am-1:15pm (5 hours).

Length of instruction in Core Content Areas

Weekly: 25.75 Hours (1,545 instructional minutes per week)

Daily: 5.15 Hours (approximately 310 minutes each day)

This schedule ensures that students receive sufficient instructional time in core academic subjects while also engaging in bilingual learning, advisory, and enrichment activities. Our extended math and literacy blocks allow for whole group instruction, small group intervention and hands-on practice with manipulatives and math learning cycles. While aligning with the focus on numeracy and literacy.

Friday Schedules

Fridays are a shortened schedule that emphasize Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and Compass Interventions (with targeted skills based on students Learning Autonomy Zones) that are not embedded into the literacy and math blocks Monday-Thursday. Our Friday schedules also allow for more time for students to reflect on their week of learning and connect around their collaborative demonstrations of learning. Fridays also offer enrichment opportunities and collaborative learning experiences to support the development of creativity, curiosity, and student ownership of learning, which are essential components of whole-child development.

FCS believes in balancing academic rigor with social-emotional learning, a sense of community/belonging, and collaborative experiences. In doing so, FCS ensures that students grow not only as ambassadors of learning but also as confident, compassionate, audaciously joyous members of their communities.

Sample Daily & Weekly Schedules

File 1

File name: Florecer Sample Daily M-TH Schedule (1st & 6th Grade) (1).pdf
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File 2

File name: Updated SY27-28 Florecer Weekly Schedule Overview (1st & 6th Grade) - 1st Grade Sample Schedule (1).pdf
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Uploaded by: On'draya Morris

Element Review

Reviews is not provided

8. School Culture

Reviewer Instructions

Please rate this section using the provided rubric.

Status: Completed

Form Result

Provide details on the overall school culture planned for the school, how this culture aligns with the mission and vision statements, and how the culture will promote academic growth and achievement.

Overarching Standard/Criteria: Compelling evidence of how the school culture or ethos will directly and consistently promote a positive academic environment and abundantly reinforce student intellectual and social development.

Evidence needed for addressing the overarching standard:

a) Give a brief description of the planned culture, how it aligns with the mission statement and vision of the school, and how it will support students and staff.

Overview of Planned School Culture

At Florecer Community School (FCS), the planned school culture is centered around whole child development with an emphasis on belonging, high expectations, community engagement, and global learning. The word Florecer in Spanish means to bloom, thrive, or prosper, which reflects FCS's mission to cultivate an environment where students, educators, and families grow academically, socially, and culturally.

Florecer's culture aligns directly with FCS's mission and vision by creating a community-centered, dual-language learning environment with embedded social-emotional learning (SEL) that prepares students to thrive in a global society. Through intentional systems, routines, and community partnerships, FCS promotes academic excellence while developing strong character, global awareness, and leadership among students.

THRIVE Community Values & The Portrait of a Graduate

The foundation of Florecer's culture is represented by THRIVE, an acronym that is both our community values and the catalyst for our [Portrait of a Graduate](#), as day one we begin with the end in mind. We uplift our community values as non-negotiables to achieve our strategic learning priorities. It is our fundamental belief that as we evolve in an immersive global learning community these values will remain as our north star. Additionally, our team has crafted a culture that uplifts our community values daily, weekly, monthly, and strategically in an effort to always maximize academic achievement. Upon enrollment families will be asked to review our commitment to THRIVE in individual family meetings. After reviewing these commitments families will be asked to sign an agreement stating that they will commit to uplifting our community values. We will outline expectations of families, staff, and students in an effort to start strong and create a cohesive learning ecosystem where all parties can THRIVE. Research has proven with a sense of community, and the active engagement of students in their learning, disciplinary problems and disruption are minimized(63).

These values were informed by collaboration with parents, students, educators, and community partners.

FCS ambassadors (students) will be expected to embody the following values:

- T – Transform myself and the world around me
- H – Harness hope and gratitude
- R – Respond with integrity
- I – Ignite a love for languages and learning
- V – Value community and creativity
- E – Excel in everything we do

Students are referred to as Ambassadors (Embajadores/Embajadoras) to emphasize their role as leaders who model positive behavior, academic commitment, and community responsibility. Begin-

ning on the first day of school, all members of the school community—students, staff, administrators, and families—will learn how to demonstrate THRIVE values in daily interactions. Our school day is designed for students to THRIVE to ensure students have access to a community in which they can experience belonging through consistent and predictable experiences grounded in our THRIVE values. FCS school culture is carefully curated to uplift the power of students having a strong sense of belonging and productivity while never losing sight of the goal of academic excellence. Through our academic systems and school-wide routines we develop healthy mindsets that work to build a strong sense of community within our school (64). Effective schools develop and systematically use all available opportunities to bond young people to the central values of the school community(65)”. Cultural Walkthroughs. School culture is something that must be measured often and with a variety of stakeholders. As such we have quarterly cultural walkthroughs with our community advisory THRIVE Team and Board of Directors. During the quarterly walkthroughs we share our [School Culture Rubric](#) and ask our coalition of leaders, families and community partners to support us. The THRIVE Team will engage with the leadership team to observe the following three categories of engagement: student interactions, teacher/leader interactions, and the systems that support student and staff interactions and then measure these observations using the school culture rubric.

Culture Walkthrough Engagement Categories	Look Fors/Indicators Showing School Culture has been Effectively implemented
Student Interactions	Students are responding in classes and shared spaces with the THRIVE values in mind. Using the tools provided in THRIVE Camp and Global Teams.
Teacher/Leader Interactions	Teachers are using and connecting interactions to the THRIVE community values and Con- scious discipline core. Lesson preparation is ev- ident and classrooms have a consistent use of school-wide systems and resources.
School-wide systems	Every touchpoint in the school day has clear expectations and students and families are en- gaged in systems with warmth and care. THRIVE community values are translated to clear ex- pectations in classrooms, common spaces and school wide routines are implemented to show cohesion in the school day.

Based on design feedback from parents, our school residencies and experience we have planned our school culture elements with touchpoints to foster a global learning experience rooted in community centered innovation and bilingual education that uplifts and propels students to achieve academically. Florecer's community values are deeply rooted in our school culture and our belief that setting the highest expectations will evoke the highest potential of all stakeholders connected to our learning environment. We believe that high academic achievement is directly correlated to the high behavioral/character priorities of our ever evolving student ambassadors. Through Culture walkthroughs, THRIVE Camp, Family Interviews, Global Teams, Home visits, and daily encounters with our schoolwide systems, rituals and routines we are providing students with the enculturation to truly be a Florecer Ambassador (student). While simultaneously engineering an environment for teachers and staff to model our community values with daily interactions with both students and all stakeholders. When executed with the highest fidelity Florecer's culture will continue to augment our charge to "Dare to be Different" by illustrating an organic environment of the highest expectations in academic excellence, character and community.

Citations

(63) Klevan, S. (2021). Building a positive school climate through restorative practices. Learning Policy Institute. <https://doi.org/10.54300/178.861..>

Mid-Year Transfers. Understanding the value of culture is at the core of our school lens. Entering a school mid-way through the year can be intimidating and student buy-in can feel impossible. As Paul Bambrick states "...if the culture makes students feel whole, supported, and important, they will embrace it(67)." We know that students come to us with the lens of their last experience. As such new mid-year students will spend two days getting acclimated to learning/culture systems and routines in one half day and one full day with a student ambassador guiding them through the day. Teachers model school-wide procedures and allow students opportunities to practice with feedback as students in the summer experienced. We ensure students understand the safety and care each system and structure provides them, which strengthens their investment. We make school culture one of excellence and care, thereby creating belonging for a student to enter our community at any point in the school year. New families engage in intentional community building through Parent Orientation with our leadership team to ensure we accelerate the understanding of student needs to ensure academic and social success.

Living Out School Culture the Florecer Way As we continue to develop our school culture we have crafted a number of responsive elements that create a strong sense of community, uplift our community values and build our SEL and sociocultural competence in our school community. As a community school it is our mission to create a school climate that is rich and engaging the moment students, families and teachers walk through the door. Each person in the school community is valued for their rich diversity of experiences and is encouraged to share their views, knowledge, and culture with respect for others. The school becomes a place grounded in healthy relationships, in which members feel safe and comfortable navigating conflicts and taking risks (68).

Florecer World Language Expo. Semi-annually we will create a space for families to learn more about our school commitment to success in a multilingual community. Families and community members are invited to create exposure to their culture through language, food and other cultural expressions. Research shows, providing families with opportunities to engage with their child's school "regardless of family income or background, students whose parents are involved in their schooling are more likely to have higher grades and test scores, attend school regularly, have better social skills, show improved behavior, and adapt well to school" (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). The more well-planned and comprehensive the partnership between families and schools, the higher the student achievement. When parents are intentionally engaged, the performance of all children at the school tends to improve (Henderson & Mapp, 2002) (Epstein J. L., 2011) (68).

Project Learning Task-force. Academic learning teams are a part of our high academic achievement based culture. We believe that our immersive model of students learning best from each other while having tangible end goals is a great team-builder. In the grades 5-8, students will have a culminating task or demonstration of learning that addresses a global access issue affecting a country related to their language learning. For example, students may be assigned to a Latin American country having issues related to educational access. Students will develop the Problem, Issue, and proposed solutions. The global task force teams will be assembled based on student performance, teacher recommendation, and interest. For 7th-8th grade students, each team will compete to create a resolution that will be presented at the end of the year Model UN General Assembly Conference, where students are allowed to represent the culture of their selected country and work to develop their Exit Portfolio.

Weekly Celebrations con Mi Pueblo (with my village). FCS believes in celebrations of excellence, progress and upholding community values. Each week (in the place of recess on Fridays) we will host a celebration of the Student of the Week, and students that are nominated by peers/teachers as upholding our community values. Teachers, Leaders, and Students will recite the Florecer community creed, and lead the celebration. The Leadership coordinates the nomination and the process.

Global Teams (House/Advisory Systems based on diverse Spanish-speaking countries). Our global teams as previously outlined are rooted in a foundational SEL practice that will serve as a touchpoint for students and staff to connect and where students are seen, heard, and valued. Each day will have a theme Ex: Motivational Mondays, Team-Building Tuesdays, Work on Me Wednesdays, Throwback Thursdays, and Fast Forward Fridays. Each day has a theme provided with writing prompts, activities

that will cause inter/intrapersonal reflection and interaction. The goal of Global teams is to create a sense of community or la Comunidad. The belief is that all of us are far greater than one of us or Si Se Puede (Yes We Can!)

Team-building practices:

- Abrazos (embraces/hug in English) occur in the morning whether they are in physical or a fist bump or smile we will greet each other and students with these methods
- La Comunidad (is a space for students to share their feelings, hopes and dreams for the day it happens each day on grade level and then once per week as a whole school)

Power of Spoken/Expressive Gratitude. Each day student ambassadors are greeted with a sense of gratitude by the FCS leadership team and teachers; the expectation is that they will continue the flow in their morning greetings and their Global Teams (Advisory). During Global Teams students are reciting the daily call and response affirmation as adopted from the CDF Freedom Schools Cheers and Chants in English and Spanish and everyday ends in a gratitude circle.

For example: Teachers/Leaders: Shouting with Joy and Exhilaration “Florecer (insert name of Global Team/Class) How are y’all feeling today”

Students: “Fantastic (Fantastico), GREAT, ALL-DAY-LONG (with physical whoooa and hands in the air twisting)”

Academic Honor Code. At the end of each assessment for 3-8 there will be an academic honor code that highlights the importance of academic honesty and sign and date this code as affirmation that they will indeed abide by the outlined code of conduct.

Floreceer Community Council. We believe integrity is cultivated with transparency and accountability. As such we will work to develop our Floreceer Community Council (similar to a Local Area School Council) of parents, partners, teachers, and students. This is aside from the governing board and will serve as an in school team of support and advice to the school leadership team.

Restorative Practices/Restorative Circles. We believe by establishing the sense of belonging and intrinsic value we are uplifting areas for students to practice their own self-integrity and their integrity toward each other (70). We believe that students are responsible for their actions whether they make an informed decision or an impulsive decision. We believe our use of restorative practices creates a safe training ground to learn how to be accountable to self, others and our global community. When students see the impact of their actions and are cognizant to learn from prior mistakes we can move forward in a positive and productive manner.

Student Led Conferences. Fall/Spring conferences are student-led where students (grades K-8) are trained on how to present their progress, data and goals to teachers and parents. This is an opportunity to show responsibility and ownership in the process of learning. Teachers are training students on how to develop student-led conferences in the beginning of the school year, and have multiple touch points each quarter (71).

Passport to Success (Student Curated Portfolios). Beginning in Kindergarten students are responsible for crafting their portfolios showcasing demonstrations of learning from data, writing pieces, creative projects and a brag sheet of accomplishments/awards. These portfolios will culminate in their Biliteracy exit portfolio upon leaving Floreceer. All work from culminating tasks will live in the digital THRIVE plan.

Citations

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(68) https://www.nccs.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/CSF_Visual_Framework_Essentials_Community_School.pdf

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https://www.communitiesinschools.org/media/filer_public/40/3b/403b797e-ae67-4329-b8f0-f8f3521c7aa5/parentengagement.pdf

(70) <https://ascd.org/el/articles/community-circles-build-restorative-school-cultures>

(71) <https://www.edutopia.org/blog/student-led-conferences-resources-ashley-cronin>

c) Explain how the school culture will take account of and serve students with special needs, including students receiving special education services, English Language Learners, gifted, and any students at risk of academic failure.

Floreceer A Place for ALL Students to THRIVE

Floreceer's curation of a positive school culture that celebrates diverse and unique experiences will significantly impact student and teacher performance for all students. FCS is prepared to serve students with special needs, English Language Learners, students that receive special services and those at risk for academic failure through our robust school culture model. Our strong culture improves students' ability to learn and build relationships, and teachers are motivated and engaged when working with students. Our intentionally safe, nurturing, and predictable culture is created through student and staff celebration, intensive professional development, and systematic data analysis that addresses the unique needs of all learners. FCS is deliberate about creating a psychological state of "flow" for our staff and students alike. We define flow as the state of the sweet spot where learning and actualization cross-pollinate to create the most authentic and exhilarating state a person can experience (72).

By nature, every child at FCS has a THRIVE plan, and is a language learner. By adopting the WIDA language proficiency standards we have created an inclusive culture. Our systems and routines harness predictability for students that thrive with consistency. Our Conscious Discipline/Restorative practices serve the unique needs of students that need to be surrounded by both school and familial support. Most importantly, our school approach creates an environment where all students are learning foundational skills at every content and grade level. Our instructional methods are created as best practices for differentiated instruction, frequent celebration and positive collaboration. As a school community FCS has adopted the following approach "Equitable practices among educators demonstrate that rather than students receiving the exact same resources and tools, students receive what they need as individuals to be successful in a classroom environment. Equity means developing environments and systems in ways that provide multiple students with what they need on the basis of careful and systematic attention to the particulars of their situation (73)."

Continuing with a deep belief in school culture being rooted in a strong sense of belonging, FCS has a productive school culture that focuses on the versatility that all learners bring to the academic environment. "Belonging feels like it happens from the inside out, but in fact it happens from the outside in. Our social brains light up when they receive a steady accumulation of almost-invisible cues: We are close, we are safe, we share a future (74)."

All students are invited to experience the FCS Way and we focus on developing independent learners. even prior to becoming students in the physical school environment. All students deserve to both experience and contribute to a productive school culture at FCS, and here we highlight specific ways in which our culture systems provide equitable engagement for special populations:

Students with disabilities: All students are included in our FCS culture systems, and all have the opportunity to participate in mentor groups and community circles allowing them to form close relationships with both adults and peers. Our dual focus on academic systems and individual care ensure that students with disabilities are met with appropriate challenges within a nurturing school environment.

English Language Learners: Our FCS culture creates a learning environment where vulnerability and risk-taking are encouraged. In a bilingual community where language learning is prioritized, ELs will be particularly embraced, supported, and challenged as they master English. Daily structures like Morning meetings and gratitude practices, turn and talks, and Show and Tell provide low-risk, motivating opportunities to engage in both social and academic language learning and affirming exchanges with peers and teachers. Our model is based on iterative practice that makes learning immersive and affirming. Additionally, we embrace students languaging in either English or Spanish. For students who have a heritage language aside from either, we ask them to express their language and culture with us.

Students at Risk of Academic Failure: The norms of our student culture are particularly conducive to creating communities of engagement for students, which disproportionately benefits students

most at risk of disengagement or academic failure. Each student benefits from daily Learning Autonomy Zones (LAZ) intervention blocks built into their literacy and math block or small group instruction. Additionally, our MTSS team meets weekly after reviewing academic data to create RTI support for students that are at risk of failure. As always we communicate with families through our weekly newsletter, weekly office hours, Remind messages and websites about the realities of our school experience. All students at FCS are known well by their teachers, as their progress is closely monitored, and they are mentored and advocated for as they work to close opportunity and achievement gaps. Being both small and diverse by design students are always engaged in learning more about whatever the concept or topic at the time.

While FCS knows that we can not eliminate inequity in its entirety, we have aligned ourselves with evidence-based practices to develop clarity that students need in developing a safe and predictable learning environment that holds true to their unique needs for self-actualization. We know that students are ready for rigor when our school-wide systems, and culture are in place. "When we improve the basic mental operations for processing information, we increase our capacity to take on more rigorous learning (75)." At FCS every child truly means every child and we have created systems that support the continued success of every child in our unique and innovative approach.

Citations

(72) <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/flow-state>

(73) From These Kids Are Out of Control, Milner IV, Cunningham, Delale-O'Connor, & Kestenberg (2019)

(74) Coyle, D. (2018). The culture code: the secrets of highly successful groups. First edition. New York, Bantam Books.

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d) Describe a typical school day from the perspective of a student in a grade that will be served in the first year of operations.

A Day in the Life of an FCS Student

Paulina is a 1st Grade Ambassador at FCS

8:15-8:30 – Arrival/Breakfast/ Abeja Community Meetings

Paulina is an excited and ambitious 1st grade student, she arrives at school with a smile and open arms everyday. Upon approaching the door she is greeted in Spanish by FCS leadership "Buenas Dias Paulina!" Paulina and Mrs. Morris both say after eye contact "Ready to THRIVE!" in unison and buzz in the building in true Honeybee fashion. Paulina proceeds into the building and is ready to THRIVE with her uniform and supplies in tow. Once down the hallway she arrives into the gymnasium and is seated at the table for her grade level by FCS teachers and staff with warm, inviting smiles and authentic greetings.

As she travels the hallway, Paulina is surrounded by bilingual artwork, quotes from leaders around the world in Spanish and English, university pennants from universities around the world and locally, and student work displays. She grabs her pre-packaged breakfast from the breakfast cart and finds her silent seat before beginning her morning THRIVE work (curated practice drills created for students to develop fluency in phonemic, syntax, or other numerical fluency skills). Although she is silent now, Paulina is jumping inside for the morning greeting. Her favorite part of Abeja Community Meeting is the morning greeting led by her teachers, school leaders and one student everyday. This morning, she is working on reading a passage including vocabulary words with fluency with the correct Spanish corresponding letter sounds.

At 8:15 Mrs. Morris and Mr. Perez walk to the front of the gym with Josue and shout "Florecer, How y'all feeling/Como Estas Florecer?" The once silent room erupts in Level 4 volume in both Spanish and English with the universal greeting "Fantastic/Fantastico!, Terrific/Terifico, Great/Bueno TODO EL DIA/ALL DAY LONG and students mimic the body motion of WHOAAAAA."

Immediately students are led back to THRIVE position with the term "Ready toTHRIVE!" and Students say "Vamos!" which they learned the first few weeks of school which means they are to remain silent. Mrs. Morris reminds students to practice their numbers in both English and Spanish

and sight words. She cold calls two students per table to demonstrate a sentence using a sight word and number in Spanish and then English. For example: "Today I have cinco mariposas/ or 5 butterflies." The meeting wraps up at 8:28 and Paulina and her classmates are given time to cool down in THRIVE position before dismissal with their classroom teacher.

At exactly 8:28am, Mrs. Morris begins dismissing students to class. Paulina joins her peers in a single, filed line at the door and proceeds to her classroom. As she moves to the classroom, Paulina begins to practice sight words. She knows that the more sight words she knows, the sooner she will begin reading with fluency in Spanish, and she cannot wait to be able to read books to her little brother Maddox in Spanish and English. Finally, she makes it to her classroom, and the door is decorated with the colors of Argentina's flag. She is excited that her Gratitude Abeja from yesterday made it to her teacher's Shout out wall!

At the door, Paulina is greeted by her teacher, Ms. Green, by selecting her favorite greeting from the wall in Spanish. She always chooses a hug, so she leans in for a big one. "Good morning, Paulina! How are you this morning?" says Ms. Green. Paulina looks at the emotion tracker at the door and points to the emoji with a bright smile. "Good morning, Ms. Green! I am excited and happy!" she exclaims. "So glad to hear that, Paulina! Let's make it a great day!" replies Ms. Green. Paulina proceeds to her cubby, puts her backpack away, and finds her assigned seat on the carpet with her "bottom flat, backs straight, legs crossed, and hands in lap."

8:30-8:45 am Morning Meeting

Ms. Green leads Paulina and her classmates through the rituals of Morning Meeting. First, Paulina stands and recites the Pledge of Allegiance in her square on the carpet. This week, she is responsible for leading her class in reciting the THRIVE community values. Loud and proud, Paulina begins: "I am an FCS Abeja!" Her class joins in, "I Transform the world, Harness Hope and Gratitude, Respond with Integrity, Ignite a Love for Learning languages and cultures, Value community and creativity, and Excel in Everything I do!" I am a future changemaker! I will succeed and I will embrace joy and curiosity!" This chant always pumps her up to her best throughout the day. Next, she returns to her place on the carpet to participate in Community Building. Today, the community builder is Freeze Dance.

Ms. Green plays a song, and Paulina and her peers dance like crazy. When the music stops, Ms. Green holds up a picture, and she and her classmates freeze like the picture. Paulina loves to be the first one to freeze in the correct pose. Next, Paulina and Wesley engage in Purposeful Partnering, a ritual that fosters peer-to-peer connection. They take turns giving each other two crazy choices and listen for what they would rather do. "Would you rather have arms or three legs?" asks Paulina. "I think I want three legs so I can run super fast!" exclaims Wesley. They both laugh! Wesley asks Avery, "Would you rather have x-ray vision or be able to fly?" Paulina responds, "I want to fly so I can go to my grandma's house every day!" Wesley nods in agreement. They thank each other with a high-five and return to their place on the carpet. Paulina then engages in STAR breathing. She loves watching the balloon on the screen expand as she inhales and shrink as she exhales. It calms and relaxes her. She feels ready for the day. Paulina is ready to set her daily goal. Today, Paulina decided her goal was to show respect by actively listening and tracking the speaker. Paulina then listens as her teacher reminds the class of picture day and to always use their silent signals during transitions in the hallway and reviews their daily schedule.

8:45-10:15 am – SLA Literacy Block w/ Interactive Read Aloud

Paulina loves to hear Ms. Green read stories with animated expressions. She cannot wait to become an expressive reader. Paulina hears many of her sight words and words she does not know yet. To help grow her vocabulary, Ms. Green often pauses to share the word and its meaning in Spanish. (Teacher reads in Spanish and students responds in Spanish) This week, Ms. Green is reading a story called Wangari's Trees of Peace. "Wangari sees barren land where no corps grow. Being barren means not being able to produce much or any vegetation. Say the word with me: barren." Loud and proud, Paulina says, "barren". "The land might be barren because all the trees are gone, bad weather has come and destroyed the land, or someone might not know how to grow vegetables. Readers as I read, I want you to snap loud and proud every time you hear the word barren. Paulina hears the world barren, she raises her silent hand and waits to be acknowledged. "I might be reluctant to

ride a motorcycle because it goes too fast!" Other students share, and Paulina snaps in agreement. Read aloud ends, and Paulina transitions to her area for her first literacy block.

Paulina's Literacy Block continues, with Ms. Green leading the class in a Phonics lesson. The lesson starts with students orally blending sounds to produce words using the short /i/ sound. The lesson moves quickly, beginning with 5 minutes of phonemic awareness and then 15 minutes to move through blending sounds, beginning with words with minimal contrast, reviewing words to build fluency, challenging words to build skill, and then to context sentences. The last 10 minutes are spent in the Read-Spell-Write routine. Paulina and her class read words with the short I sound – big and little - after Ms. Green reads them in a sentence. Ms. Green then spells the words, and Paulina repeats the spelling after her. "What is the middle letter in the word big? What sound does it make?" Paulina and her class reply in unison. Paulina then writes big and little in her workbook.

10:15-11:00 am – Science in Spanish

After Ms. Green signals, Paulina moves to the table with her other teacher, Mr. Thomas, the Teacher Associate (bilingual support). Mr. Thomas is supporting students in comparing and contrasting plant objects, which is a foundational lesson aligned to ALCOS/NGSS Science standards with prompting and support, that students will compare and contrast two texts. First, Mr. Thomas builds Paulina's prerequisite skills on comparing and contrasting by defining words, like similarity and difference, and discussing the characteristics of various objects. Next, Mr. Thomas asks Paulina and her group to compare and contrast living things that can fly with living things that can swim by writing a sentence to describe the main difference after classifying them into sections. Mr. Thomas concludes the lesson with a mastery check and tells Paulina that tomorrow they will compare and contrast two other living and non living objects. Paulina loves Science in Spanish, she is recognizing that English and Spanish cognates are easier to find in science. Something she noticed since last week's bridging moment.

11:00 –11:45 Lunch & Recess As Paulina walks down the hall to the cafeteria, she practices her sight words. As she enters the cafeteria, Paulina grabs her lunch and takes her seat. She enjoys eating her lunch and laughing with her friends. During lunch, Mrs. Morris stops by to check-in. "Mrs. Morris, I got all my questions right on i-Ready today!" boasts Paulina. "Outstanding, Paulina! I love the way you work so hard to grow your brain!" says Mrs. Morris as she gives her a fist bump. After lunch, Paulina ensures that her area is neat and lines up at the door when prompted. This time, Paulina decided to practice her Spanish skills on the playground. She names all the objects in Spanish that she encounters, she talks to her friend Mercedes in Spanish. She is proud of how she can switch between Spanish and English.

11:45-1:15 Math Block (English)

After Ms. Green's signal, Paulina moves to her table for Math Block, where she learns in English. Math is Paulina's favorite part of the day. She enjoys using different manipulatives to work through math topics. Today's lesson is counting to one hundred and beginning addition activities. Ms. Green models addition problems, explicitly naming every step. During guided practice, Paulina pairs with Joshua to work on five addition problems. She and Joshua share their understanding and use tools to solve the problems correctly. After Ms. Green checks her work, Paulina is released to complete independent practice. While working, Paulina notices a small group of her peers move to the side table with Mr. Thomas. Paulina knows that at FCS, students always get the extra help they need. Paulina continues working, and when she is almost at the end, Mr. Thomas places an additional sheet on her desk. Paulina beams with pride because that sheet is "Challenge Work" given to students mastering the day's lesson with 90% or more proficiency. Paulina works through the challenging work, growing her brain to add problems with two-digit numbers. Paulina uses the same methods of learning she was taught to access the content. During the math block, Paulina moves to her LAZ work. Since Paulina is on grade level in math, her time on i-Ready Math is spent working through 1st-grade content. As she celebrates each correct answer, she is so excited to have met her goal today! Paulina shares her progress as Mr. Thomas circulates while Ms. Green works with a small group. He gives Paulina a gold star to add to the classroom tracker. She loves seeing her progress on display.

1:15-3:00 – ELA Literacy Block (English) with SS

For the next 15 minutes, Paulina works in cycles to independently practice essential literacy skills based on her level of proficiency through her HQIM. At the beginning of the year, Paulina was given a personalized learning pathway to strengthen her English Literacy skills, and she enjoys tracking

her progress daily. Her lessons are tailored to meet students at their appropriate reading level, and Paulina always feels challenged and engaged. Today, she is practicing identifying sounds in isolation, a core skill developing strong phonemic awareness. She loves to hear the sounds roll off her tongue. She works with her peers to make strong metalinguistic connections. In the next portion of class Paulina begins her writing lesson. Ms. Green provides the topic of the day. Today's topic seems so fun. Paulina cannot wait to get started. Paulina and her peers help brainstorm an illustration while Ms. Green draws on a chart paper. Next, Ms. Green asks the class to help her craft a sentence to describe the picture. Mr. Thomas pulls out two of Paulina's friends to work with them during the lesson. Paulina knows that when she needs extra help, there is always time and space to support her. Ms. Green asks students to return to their tables, draw their illustrations, and craft their sentences. As Paulina works, Ms. Green and Mr. Thomas Actively Observe the room and engage students in discussions about what they are drawing and writing. Paulina takes her time to ensure she shapes her letters correctly and uses the lines on her paper to make the upper- and lower-case letters right. She uses her index finger, just as she was taught, to make sure the words are spaced appropriately. At FCS, teachers use social studies units every month with ELA content. Today, Paulina is working on a Social Studies unit. Paulina and her class have learned geography and map concepts, including details about the city of Birmingham and the state of Alabama. Paulina can locate where she lives on a variety of maps and can identify and name rivers, mountains, and oceans by pictures. Today's lesson is connected to her writing lesson. Paulina learns how to identify differences between people. Ms. Green helps Paulina connect her current lesson and the one during her writing focus. This gives Paulina an extra opportunity to apply their knowledge of comparing and contrasting things as she discusses the differences between cultures and diversity within the classroom. This lesson aligns with standard 6 in the Alabama Course of Study for Kindergarten Social Studies.

3:00–4:00pm THRIVE Class Rotations (PE & Art)

Paulina and her peers head to the gym for physical education for 30 minutes. Paulina uses her transition time to practice her sight words silently while walking to the gym. She is on a mission to master her sight word assessment this week. When they arrive at the gym, Coach Parker, FCS's physical education teacher, leads them through various activities to get them moving. Today, Paulina gets to practice her basketball skills of passing and dribbling to support her development of strong hand-eye coordination. Her THRIVE rotation today is 30 minutes of Art. Paulina enjoys using pastel oil crayons to shade in a drawing of a flower all while practicing her spanish skills with Alicia.

4:00-4:10 pm – Closing Gratitude Circle

Paulina and her peers sit on the carpet to engage in a Closing Gratitude Circle. Ms. Green highlights concepts learned that day and how the learning connects to their THRIVEwork assignments. Paulina cannot wait to shout out to her friend, Ansley, for the THRIVE value of responding with integrity, for how she supported her in spelling high-frequency words today. After a round of shout-outs, Paulina and her peers share who they are grateful for and celebrate with each other with cheers and snaps. Finally, they indicate their final spot on the behavior charts and ensure THRIVEwork is in their folder. Ms. Green and Mr. Thomas thanked the class for a wonderful, and prosperous day.

4:10-:15 pm – Dismissal

Before dismissal, Ms. Green reminds Paulina to grab her THRIVEwork folder. At FCS, THRIVEwork folders go home daily with nightly homework, a daily behavior report, and Hasta manana!" and Paulina gives a wave and a smile. It has been a great day of learning as Paulina is one step further on her path to literacy in Spanish and English.

[Sample Daily Schedules](#)

School Day Narrative - Teacher Perspective

A Day in the Life of A Florecer Community School Teacher

Ms. Green is a 1st Grade teacher at Florecer Community school serving the Argentina cohort.

7:45 am – Arrival and Prep for the Day Ms. Green arrives at her classroom to prepare for her day.

First, she ensures she has prepared all materials for her lessons. Next, she checks her email for important updates or messages from parents. Then, grabbing her clipboard that houses her daily schedule with a space for notes, ActiveObservation charts, behavior charts, and teacher examples

for the day, Ms. Green heads to the teacher lounge to grab her coffee just before the Staff Huddle at 8:00.

8:00 am – Staff Huddle Every morning, FCS staff gather in the hallway to build community and accountability in Spanish/English. Staff Huddle is a 15-minute ritual where teachers share daily priorities and learn from quick feedback from FCS's leadership team. During the huddle, Ms. Green shares that her priority today is to tighten her transitions during class activities. She plans to use a timer and provide positive narration to ensure her students move with urgency to maximize learning time. After all staff members share their priorities, Mrs. Morris delivers critical updates to support her in navigating her day and then a round of quick feedback based on yesterday's culture walkthrough using the school culture rubric. The community and transparency shared between her team helped her feel connected and engaged in her work daily. Ms. Green notes that she needs to ensure her classes use their silent signals during transitions. She makes notes of that to share during the morning meetings. Ms. Green appreciates the culture of feedback at FCS. She believes FCS leadership values her and shows it by supporting her in improving her craft in dual language education.

8:15-8:30 am – Arrival Post/Touch Points At 8:10 promptly, Ms. Green arrives at her arrival post at the end of her grade level table. As she arrives, she greets students with smiles, fist bumps, and bright hellos as they move to the cafeteria for breakfast. As she greets them, she monitors dress code and student energy. She provides reminders and makes a note to update Mr. Givens, Gabriel's teacher because he seems down this morning. She knows it takes a village to support FCS students, so she ensures she checks in with Mr. Givens to provide an update on what she notices with Gabriel this morning.

8:30 am – Student Greetings After checking in with Mr. Givens, Ms. Green heads to her room. She stands on her threshold, ready to greet her students for the day. This week she does not have to pick up her students from the cafeteria. Mr. Thomas, her co-teacher, has gathered the students after a Community meeting. As they arrive from breakfast with Mr. Thomas, each student indicates their preferred greeting and how they feel this morning. She makes notes of students to check in with later based on their emotions. Everyone is happy and excited today!

8:30-8:45 am – Morning Meeting It is time for the morning meeting. She joins her class on the carpet and introduces the day and date in Spanish. She leads them in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance and allows Paulina to lead them through the daily Gratitude Affirmation and THRIVE Community Values. Ms. Green displays her Morning Meeting PowerPoint to guide her class through the daily ritual. Ms. Green recognizes the value of the time to begin each day predictably and its impact on student learning throughout the day. She is invested in FCS's mission to provide an academically and socially prosperous and predictable environment, so she ensures that she creates an inclusive culture in her classroom. After she coaches students in goal setting, she is sure to remind students of THRIVE Culture Day and to use their silent signals during hallway transitions. she ensures that she creates an inclusive culture in her classroom. After she coaches students in goal setting, she is sure to remind students of THRIVE Culture Day and to use their silent signals during hallway transitions.

8:45 am – SLA Literacy Block (in Spanish) While her class is still on the carpet, Ms. Green spends the next 20 minutes reading a grade-level text in Spanish. She intentionally supports her students in growing their vocabulary with her vocabulary flip chart, so she frequently stops to define words and asks students to use the words in a sentence. Sometimes, she models this or gives them sentence stems to get them started. In preparation for transition and because of her daily priority to tighten her transitions, Ms. Green sets the timer for 1 minute. She narrates the expectations for students, starts the timer, and then plays the chime. As students move to their desks for the first literacy block, Ms. Green positively narrates to provide urgency. "Gracias, Paulina is moving swiftly but safely to her seat. Great job, Josue and Joshua. I see there are already ocho amigos at their desks. We have 30 more seconds to get to our seats!" Ms. Green noted that three students did not reach their seats before the timer. She noticed that while traveling, the three students met a traffic jam. She notes the need to revisit the travel route during her planning today. Today Ms. Green is focusing on building background knowledge in SLA to support reading comprehension and Spanish oracy. Ms. Green posts Spanish Literacy groups and monitors her students' transition. She begins assessing her support of the Spanish Literacy standards using BUF framework. Because FCS fuses our Social

Studies unit with literacy. Ms. Green has intentionally planned for the social studies lesson to connect directly to the reading comprehension lesson. Today, her class identifies differences in people, a lesson aligned with the ALCOS Social Studies. With her exemplar in hand, Ms. Green connects the current lesson and the one in reading comprehension. This gives her students another chance to compare and contrast things as they discuss cultural differences in the classroom.

10:15-11:00 Science (Spanish) After Ms. Green signals, students move to the table with Mr. Thomas, the co-teacher. Mr. Thomas is supporting students in comparing and contrasting plant objects, which is a foundational lesson aligned to ALCOS/NGSS Science standards with prompting and support, that students will compare and contrast two texts. Ms. Green is engaging with students who are struggling to utilize their Spanish science terms and has created a small group based on the daily exit tickets from yesterday. Mr. Thomas builds on the prerequisite skills of comparing and contrasting by defining words, like similarity and difference, and discussing the characteristics of various objects. Next, Ms. Green asks and her group what do they notice about the two objects that are the same and different about (she will utilize compare and contrast as well but is building student schema with familiar terms) living things that can fly with living things that can swim by writing a sentence to describe the main difference after classifying them into sections. Ms. Green has provided this group of students with several guided notes. Mr. Green concludes the lesson with a practice of students developing oracy in the key words, phrases used for the day. Tomorrow students will continue to dive into the compare/contrast practice.

11:00-11:45 – Duty Free Lunch Ms. Green has taken the time to review data before her coaching meeting tomorrow with Mrs. Morris and extract three key takeaways for student SLA mastery of the standards. She is excited to receive coaching to address the learning gaps from the last week. Additionally, she is finalizing her lesson materials for next week's lesson prep.

11:45-1:15 Math Block (English) Today's lesson is on counting to 100 and beginning addition strategies. With her teacher exemplar in hand, Ms. Green models addition strategies on the whiteboard. As students engage in guided practice, Ms. Green circulates to note those who might need some additional support during independent practice. While Mr. Thomas supports those ready to move on, Ms. Green pulls a group of students to the side table and uses manipulatives to model additional strategies. Once students show understanding, she releases them to work independently. One of her students continues to use the tools she shared with him during the small group, so she makes a note to shout him out during Closing Circle. While the class is working, Ms. Green circulates to provide feedback and monitor progress. Ms. Green posts Math LAZ groups and monitors her students' transition. Based on i-Ready Diagnostic data/NWEA MAP data, every student has a personalized learning pathway for math. Ms. Green supports a small group while Mr. Thomas circulates to monitor student engagement on i-Ready. During the last few minutes, Ms. Green updates her classroom tracker to show student progress on math goals. She notes to share shout-outs during Closing Circle for Paulina for meeting her goal today.

1:15-3:00 ELA Literacy Block (English) With her teacher exemplar in hand, Ms. Green leads a Phonics lesson on the short /i/ sound. As the lesson proceeds, Ms. Green uses her aggressive monitoring tool to determine which students meet the lesson goal. She notes those that need additional support and provides her co-teacher, Mr. Thomas, with a list to pull during the Reading small group for some extra practice. At FCS, Ms. Green works with a co-teacher to meet her student's daily needs. That is the benefit of having a co-teacher during her literacy blocks. In their planning block yesterday, Ms. Green and Mr. Thomas decided that Mr. Thomas would lead the reading comprehension lesson while Ms. Green worked with five students that did not meet the comprehension lesson goal yesterday. After monitoring the transition, Ms. Green pulls the five students to the side table and revisits yesterday's lesson. As students master concepts, she releases them to Mr. Thomas to engage in today's lesson. After her small group, she supports Mr. Thomas by circulating to monitor students engaged in practice around the daily lesson. As she circulates, she indicates student mastery on her Active Observation tool to review in preparation for tomorrow's lesson. Ms. Green transitions the lesson to writing by reading the topic for the day. Next, she guides students in drawing a picture and writing a sentence to describe the topic. Next, she models how to shape letters correctly, uses lines for lower- and upper-case letters appropriately, and uses her

finger to model how to space words correctly. She then releases students to independent practice. Ms. Green uses her ActiveObs tool to monitor who meets the lesson standard. As she circulates, she provides support to push students further along. During planning yesterday, Ms. Green and Mr. Thomas decided that Mr. Thomas would pull a couple of students during the independent practice of the writing block to provide additional support since those students have consistently scored below 70% on the writing mastery checks. Her collaboration with Mr. Thomas has shown a significant impact in supporting students with unfinished learning and pushing them to their goals.

Because FCS fuses our Social Studies unit with literacy. Ms. Green has intentionally planned for the social studies lesson to connect directly to the reading comprehension lesson. Today, her class identifies differences in people, a lesson aligned with the ALCOSSocial Studies. With her exemplar in hand, Ms. Green connects the current lesson and the one in reading comprehension. This gives her students another chance to compare and contrast things as they discuss cultural differences in the classroom. Based on Mrs. Morris' feedback this morning during Staff Huddle, she reminds her class to have their Eagle Wings and actively use them as they walk to the gym.

3:00 pm – Planning At FCS, teachers receive 60 minutes of meeting-free planning daily. Ms. Green takes a moment to review her circulation tracker to determine who needs additional support during tomorrow's lessons. She and Mr. Thomas revisit their weekly plan and adjust based on this data. To continue to build positive relationships with parents, Ms. Green sends a few positive texts to parents celebrating her students' academic and behavioral achievements. She updates Schoolrunner with THRIVE points for her class and individual students for living the THRIVE values and meeting their goals.

4:00 pm – Closing Circle After PE and Specials, Ms. Green's class returns to the classroom for Gratitude Circles. Sitting on the carpet with her class, Ms. Green highlights concepts learned that day and how the learning connects to their THRIVEwork assignments. Next, she shares her shoutouts from the day for students living THRIVE values and meeting academic goals. After a round of shout-outs for her students, Ms. Green completes their behavior charts and ensures their THRIVEwork is in its folder. Finally, she thanked the class for a productive day and students share their gratitude for the day.

4:15 pm – Dismissal It has been a great day! Ms. Green walks her class to the buses and waves goodbye as they roll away.

4:20 pm – Mastery Check Huddle FCS is laser-focused on improving the outcomes for students. Our unique approach to data-driven instruction (DDI) differs significantly from what Ms. Green experienced in previous settings. She is excited to dig through her students' mastery checks with her peers and coach. She heads to the Mastery Check Huddle. Ms. Green reviews mastery checks from her reading comprehension and math lessons today during this time. She categorizes students based on their scores on the mastery checks - students scoring 85% or higher, 70% - 84%, and below 70%. She reviews students' work in each category to determine the highest leverage gap in student learning. Based on this gap, she then decides her highest leverage action to close those gaps during instruction tomorrow. Ms. Green brainstorms with her peers and coach until she has a firm plan for the next day. Since joining FCS, she feels a great sense of accomplishment for all the ways she is supporting her students in learning aligned with their personal needs, goals, passions, and dreams.

Element Review

Reviews is not provided

9. Supplemental Programming

Reviewer Instructions

Please rate this section using the provided rubric.

Status: Completed

Form Result

Provide details on planned supplemental programming that will augment the academic program for students and support intellectual growth and academic achievement. These include clubs and sports teams supported by the school, as well as non-academic support for students..

Overarching Standard/Criteria: Compelling evidence of how supplemental programming will directly and consistently enrich a positive, high-quality academic program and overall school program.

Evidence needed for addressing the overarching standard:

Blooming Beyond the Classroom FCS Co-curricular, Extracurricular and Supplemental Programming

Through careful planning, Floreer Community School (FCS) seeks to provide a comprehensive program of co-curricular, extracurricular, and after-school opportunities designed to extend learning beyond the immersive school day and support the academic, social, cultural, and physical development of all students. These programs are intentionally aligned with the school's mission to develop bilingual, biliterate, culturally competent, and academically prepared students.

Extracurricular programming will complement the core academic program and dual-language immersion model by providing students with opportunities to engage in hands-on learning, creative expression, leadership development, and physical wellness. Programming will occur before school, after school, and during intersession and summer periods, ensuring that students have consistent access to enrichment opportunities throughout the year. All programming will be designed to support equitable participation, with particular attention to the needs of students from historically underserved populations. FCS is actively developing partnerships to enhance the expressed/actualized needs of enrolled families, as such the following list is not an exhaustive list of potential offerings.

Extra- and Co-Curricular Programming

FCS offers a range of activities designed to mirror its dual-language (Spanish/English) and global-citizen curriculum. These programs are typically categorized as follows:

- Cultural & Language Enrichment: Spanish and English language clubs, international "ambassador" workshops, and cultural arts (e.g., dance, music, and folkloric traditions from Spanish-speaking countries).
- STEM & Innovation: Hands-on science and technology clubs, coding, and environmental "changemaker" projects that focus on community sustainability.
- Leadership & Arts: Student government, debate (multilingual), choir, and visual arts programs that emphasize global perspectives.
- Athletics: Foundational sports and physical education clubs that encourage teamwork and physical wellness.

THRIVE Rotations. FCS's enrichment happens through THRIVE rotations, which are integrated into the school day to ensure all students receive a well-rounded global education. These rotations occur every nine weeks for all students in grades K-8.

- Offerings:
 - Physical Education: Exposure to a wide variety of sports including football, hockey, and soccer.
 - Creative Arts: Music, traditional Art, and Multimedia Arts.
 - Electives: STEM, Food/Gardening, and an optional Chinese/Mandarin track.
- Experiential Learning: Students participate in quarterly field trips and "Global Service Projects" that connect classroom curriculum to the local Birmingham community.

Identified Community Partners. The Flourish AL is an Ensley-based arts organization. This collaboration serves as the heartbeat of the school's arts-integrative learning model, transforming our learning labs into dynamic spaces for spoken word, performance, and visual advocacy. The ideal

partnership with The Flourish Alabama provides the framework for students to develop agency and advocacy. In our dual-language environment, the arts act as a "third language"—a bridge where students can express complex ideas of identity and justice while mastering English and Spanish.

- Creative Arts Integration. Guided by The Flourish Alabama's teaching artists, students engage in performance and multimedia arts that challenge them to document their community's history and envision its future.
- The "Changemaker" Lens. Whether through a spoken-word piece on environmental sustainability or a digital media campaign for a local initiative, every project has a social objective rooted in the Ensley community.

The Flourish Alabama's curriculum is operationalized through the nine-week THRIVE rotations, ensuring that high-level arts integration is a consistent academic requirement.

After-School Club Offerings. The after-school program is designed to be a diverse "menu" of activities that meet the specific needs of families. These are fee-based and generally aim to operate Monday through Thursday afternoons.

Proposed Offerings:

- Academic & Tech: Math Mania (support and enrichment), Web Wizards (coding), Debate Club, Chess Club, and Girls Who Code.
- Active & Outdoors: Running Club, Girls on the Run, and the Community Garden/Food Lab.
- Creative & Social: Art Club (artist-inspired), Lego Club (STEM building), and scouting programs (Girl Scouts/Cub Scouts).
- Community Partnership: Direct collaboration with the AG Gaston Boys and Girls Club, YMCA, and Ensley/McAlpine Rec Center, and the Alabama Virtual Institute (through CAMP/DHS partnership)

Financing & Funding Sources.

Extracurricular and after-school programming will be supported through a combination of public funding, grants, partnerships, and family contributions. Primary funding sources may include:

- Federal Title I funding to support academic intervention and tutoring
- Federal Title III funding to support English learner programming
- 21st Century Community Learning Centers grants (when available)
- Charter school operational funds
- Education foundation grants
- Community philanthropic support
- Corporate sponsorships
- Local and national nonprofit funding opportunities

Alternative funding sources include the following for sustainability:

- Sliding Scale Fees: Families pay fees for after-school clubs, which cover the costs of snacks, materials, and administrative fees.
- Scholarships: When made possible FCS will work with local partners, donors to provide need-based scholarships on a case-by-case basis to ensure economic status is not a barrier to participation.
- Teacher Stipends: To maintain high-quality instruction, FCS provides stipends to teachers who lead clubs.
- Community Partners: External organizations may lead and fund specific club offerings.

Policies for Special Populations

FCS's programming is rooted in being inclusive. FCS provides experiences "outside of the individual student's world of experience" to ensure students from all backgrounds develop the advocacy skills needed to be globally competitive. FCS will work to ensure that students who may have transportation or financial barriers to after-school care still have access to leadership and enrichment opportunities.

The following special populations are also accounted for;

-

Students experiencing homelessness or in foster care will receive priority access to programming in accordance with McKinney-Vento and federal child welfare provisions. Financial barriers to participation will be eliminated for these students.

- English learners will be fully integrated into extracurricular programming. Programs will incorporate bilingual supports, and opportunities for students to develop both languages in authentic contexts.
- All extracurricular programming will comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Students with disabilities will have access to programs with appropriate supports, which may include
 - Reasonable accommodations and modifications
 - Accessible facilities and materials
 - Collaboration between enrichment staff and special education personnel

b) Describe the programs or strategies to address students' mental, emotional, and social development and health. Please include funding sources for these programs if known.

FCS's Embedded Mental Health/SEL Supports

FCS understands the critical elements that impact students' mental health & wellness. As such we have created a multi-tier system of support (MTSS) for all students that ensures learning is safe, surrounded by caring adults with positive reinforcements, connected to the larger community and mental health services, and daily mindfulness and gratitude. We believe that families send the best version of themselves to school each day. As such we provide holistic support (safety, sense of belonging, structure, positive learning environment, and resilience) to provide students the space and opportunity to build their mental capacity. Floreecer provides counseling services/mental health services coordinator and referrals to family counseling. Additionally, all staff will be trained on mental health first aid training during professional development in the school year. It is critical that all staff are aware of what a mental health crisis entails.

FCS's Mental Health & Wellness Framework

FCS views mental health as a foundational requirement for academic competition. Our approach focuses on building mental capacity through five core elements: Safety, Belonging, Structure, Positive Environment, and Resilience.

- Professional Oversight: FCS will employ a Mental Health Services Coordinator to manage counseling services and facilitate referrals for family counseling.
- Staff Readiness: All staff undergo Mental Health First Aid training during annual professional development to ensure they can identify and respond to mental health crises effectively.
- Daily Practice: Every school day begins with Morning Meetings (classroom-level) and Community Circles (school-wide) to foster connection and gratitude. As well as creating a sense of community with Global Teams.

SEL & Wellness at Floreecer

Floreecer's adherence to the pillars of bilingual education, create a consistent throughline to sociocultural competency as the third pillar. Embedding this competency in every lesson addresses the mental, emotional, health and social development needs of our students. The research in this area is consistent with the body of child development research, which demonstrates that programs that promote socioemotional learning have a significant impact on student success at all grade levels (Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011) (76). However, we do not leave students holistic well-being to chance. As such Floreecer's supplemental programming is intentional in developing students as ambassadors of audacious hope and excellence ultimately becoming transformational changemakers. Sociocultural competence is deeply rooted in the whole child and their identity development in conjunction to the world around them. Through our co-curricular planning and using Conscious Discipline (CD) principles, we uplift the social, emotional and mental wellness of our students in the classroom everyday. In our K-5 classrooms we intertwine the Conscious Discipline skills and supports to further develop the whole child. The Conscious Discipline Brain State Model

(77) reminds us of the brain's three hierarchical needs: Safety, connection and problem solving and FCS has created school-wide systems and routines that address each need.

For our 6-8 students we utilize nXu curriculum which offers a Comprehensive SEL and College & Career Readiness Solution that helps young people connect with who they are, explore who they want to become, and invest in pathways for personal and professional success. nXu is research-based middle and high school curriculum places purpose at the nexus of career exploration, social-emotional practices, positive identity development, and community building.

FCS has a school culture created to actualize the community designed Passport to the Globe (Portrait of a Graduate) embedded in several touchpoints for student development aside from rigorous academic biliteracy and bilingualism. Additionally, we will work to continuously develop responsive support by using Global Teams, Morning Meetings, Community Meetings, SEL curriculum, surrounding our students' sense of purpose, belonging, community and overall connection to the larger society. Teachers use these lessons to lead community values alignment and give space for students to connect to their peers and learn how to express themselves.

Conscious Discipline as SEL for K-5

FCS believes raising critical consciousness in students and staff serves as a preventive measure to discipline and creates a positive learning environment that promotes student achievement. Evidence-based Conscious Discipline (available in Spanish & English) practices have proven to align with five competencies of Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), as a evidence based SEL program (78). As such the research has proven that students from backgrounds that share the demographics of FCS reported having higher growth in observable social skills, classroom behaviors and teacher readiness (79). FCS implements daily/weekly SEL in our lessons using our THRIVE core values Conscious Discipline content in Morning meeting, and in Community Circles (held at the beginning of the school day whole-school). During Morning Meetings (held in classrooms) students are able to learn about their ability to self-regulate their emotions as they develop a deeper connection using our THRIVE core values. All content is age appropriate and collaborative with communities and families.

[nXu Purpose and SEL in 6-8 \(80\)](#)

FCS believes that the middle years present an even greater challenge as students formulate questions of personal identity and belonging based on their place in the world. By utilizing the CASEL approved SEL program nXu, focused on purpose, students are asked to explore themselves and the world around them. We believe students will be able to learn how to navigate a greater sense of self and provide a clearer connection to our community values model with daily time in their Global Teams everyday. Additionally, nXu provides SEL assessments (surveys) that serve as pulse checks for students around their sense of belonging, support and connection to the community.

Potential Funding Sources

Funding Source	Program/Position Funded	Details
Alabama Education Trust Fund (ETF)	Mental Health Services Coordinator	Specific state appropriations (e.g., Act 2025-270) provide approximately \$40,000 annually per charter school to employ a dedicated MHSC.
Title IV, Part A (ESSA)	SEL & School Safety	Federal "Student Support and Academic Enrichment" funds are used to purchase the Conscious Discipline (K-5) and nXu (6-8) curricula, as well as mindfulness materials.
Title II, Part A	Staff Professional Development	Funds the mandatory Mental Health First Aid training and on-going SEL coaching for all instructional staff.

ALSDE SBMH Collaboration	Tier 3 Clinical Support	A partnership with the Alabama Department of Mental Health (ADMH) allows FCS to link with community mental health centers for on-site therapy services that are billed to Medicaid or private insurance.
Private Philanthropy	Equity Scholarships	Grants from organizations like the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama "Be Healthy" program or the Kellogg Foundation help cover the cost of SEL assessments and "calm down" kits for classrooms.

Citations

(76)<https://dlenm.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Guiding-Principles-for-Dual-Language-Education-3rd-edition.pdf>

(77) <https://consciousdiscipline.com/the-basics-of-the-conscious-discipline-brain-state-model/#:~:text=The%20Conscious%20Discipline%20Brain%20State%20Model%20reminds%20us%20of%20the,Safety%2C%20connection%20and%20problem%20solving.>

(78)<https://consciousdiscipline.com/conscious-discipline-receives-casel-select-program-designation/>

(79)<https://pg.casel.org/conscious-discipline/>

(80)https://drive.google.com/file/d/11s1Yk28X1YwfMEMDh3-QZ5EMJczdQ3dj/view?usp=drive_link

Why FCS's Global Teams/House System = Supplemental Programming?

Florecer implements several student-centered programs designed to promote academic success, leadership development, and social-emotional growth. A cornerstone of the school's culture and whole-child development model is Florecer's Global Teams/House System, which creates smaller learning communities that strengthen relationships, promote positive behavior, and foster a strong sense of belonging among students. The Global Teams/House System organizes all students and staff into diverse houses that function as supportive communities within the school. Each house includes students from multiple grade levels along with faculty mentors who guide and support them throughout the academic year. This multi-grade structure encourages peer mentorship, collaboration, and leadership, allowing older students to model positive behaviors and support younger students academically and socially. Each house represents a global theme or THRIVE community value aligned with Florecer's mission of developing globally aware leaders. Houses may reflect regions of the world, global virtues such as leadership, innovation, or service, or cultural values that promote unity and respect. Students remain in the same house throughout their time at the school, helping to build lasting relationships and a strong sense of identity and pride within their house community. Students participate in regular house meetings, team-building activities, leadership workshops, and collaborative projects that reinforce academic success, character development, and civic responsibility. Houses also engage in friendly competitions that may include academic challenges, attendance initiatives, service-learning projects, cultural celebrations, and school spirit events. Students earn points for their houses through achievements such as academic growth, positive behavior, attendance, leadership, and community involvement. The point system and recognition structure motivate students while reinforcing Florecer's core values. Houses may earn rewards such as recognition ceremonies, leadership opportunities, celebration events, and special activities, which further promote engagement and school pride.

In addition to strengthening school culture, the Global Teams system provides an important support structure for monitoring student success. Faculty mentors within each house help track academic progress, attendance, and social-emotional well-being, allowing the school to provide timely support or interventions when needed. This approach ensures that every student is known, supported, and encouraged by both peers and adults within the school community.

Beyond the house system, Florecer provides additional student-focused opportunities that support holistic development. These may include academic enrichment programs, tutoring and intervention

services, leadership clubs, college and career readiness initiatives, and social-emotional learning programs. These activities complement classroom instruction and help students build critical skills such as collaboration, communication, problem-solving, and self-leadership.

Funding for these student-focused initiatives may come from a combination of school operating funds, federal and state education programs, grants, and community partnerships. When available, programs such as Title I, Title IV (Student Support and Academic Enrichment), and other educational grants may support enrichment activities, leadership programming, and social-emotional development initiatives. Through the integration of the Florecer Global Teams/House System and complementary student programs, the school creates a dynamic learning environment that promotes academic excellence, positive relationships, leadership development, and global citizenship.

d) If summer school will be offered, describe the program(s). Explain the schedule and length of the program including the number of hours and weeks. Discuss the anticipated participants, including number of students and the methods used to identify them. What are the anticipated resources and staffing needs for these programs?

FCS Proposed Summer Offerings

FCS will offer summer programming focused on academic enrichment, targeted intervention, and skill reinforcement to support students who need additional academic support and those who would benefit from extended learning opportunities. The program will emphasize literacy, mathematics, and project-based learning activities designed to strengthen core academic skills while keeping students engaged. FCS offers supplemental offerings because learning is fluid and constant. We have worked to develop a series of supplemental learning opportunities that are rich and immersive for all students to succeed. Our goal is that every child is equipped to learn in their unique learning environment with the goal of gaining linguistic variety, developing a strong sense of belonging, agency, and our THRIVE values. Summer programming is intentionally planned to provide students a high quality summer learning opportunity to enhance biliteracy in (math and reading) using a cross-disciplinary approach. The abundance of research uplifts that, test scores flatten or drop on average during the summer, with larger drops typically in math than reading (75).

To successfully implement the program, several resources and staffing components will be required. The program will be staffed by certified teachers in core content areas, instructional aides, and program coordinators to oversee daily operations. A recommended staffing structure includes approximately one teacher for every 12–15 students, supported by paraprofessionals to assist with small-group instruction and classroom management. Additional staff may include intervention specialists, counselors, and support personnel as needed.

Resources needed for the program will include curriculum materials aligned with state standards, digital learning platforms, instructional technology, assessment tools, and enrichment supplies.

Facilities such as classrooms, computer labs, and common areas will be utilized to support both academic and enrichment activities. Funding may also support transportation, meals, and professional development for staff, ensuring equitable access and effective instruction.

Global Learning Institute. Florecer Community School offers a four-week FCS Global Learning Institute which is open to all students, focused on enrichment in reading, writing, STEM, and language immersion. The Global Learning Institute will convene from 8am until 1pm daily for 5 hours. Students with less than 70% mastery in grades 3-8 must attend and also we advise students above mastery to attend. Students will engage in three hours of academic instruction and two hours of lunch, recess, and a rotation of electives. We specifically use our RTI rosters and students who opt into the program and we leverage teachers who opt into the program to serve as staff members (for an additional stipend). Students will engage in rotations of learning in Math and Reading literacy using an evidence-based curriculum and elective rotations of Visual Arts, Dance, STEM, Wellness, and Music.

Comunidad. FCS has already received feedback that parents would like to develop their language skills alongside their children. As such we have created a parent volunteer weekly workshop for families to learn alongside their students en la comunidad (community) to support further language acquisition. This program is in collaboration with our proposed use of the St. Joseph's Catholic

Church school. Parents will be the driver of this family led group that meets once a week in the evening to practice their language skills in either Spanish or English.

THRIVE Camp. At FCS we value students, and families and want all stakeholders to be empowered to engage in our culture through THRIVE Camp. Each year, new students engage in one week of learning 8 hours/day for three and half days about FCS cultural procedures and routines before the start of the school year. Teachers model school-wide procedures and allow students opportunities to practice with feedback. We ensure students understand the value of each system and structure. Students are able to internalize the core values, mission and vision in our concrete systems. Our THRIVE Camp is a space created to unify our students, families and staff thereby creating a strong sense of community, collaboration and belonging. Parents are also asked to participate in our THRIVE Plan meetings and sign a commitment to sustained involvement.

Citations

(75)

<https://www.brookings.edu/articles/is-summer-learning-loss-real-and-does-it-widen-test-score-gaps-by-family-income/>

Element Review

Reviews is not provided

10. Special Populations and At-Risk Students

Reviewer Instructions

Please rate this section using the provided rubric.

Status: Completed

Form Result

Describe programming that specifically addresses and supports special populations, including efforts to hire personnel with relevant expertise. Identified populations include students with special needs, English Language Learners, students identified as intellectually gifted, and students at risk of withdrawal.

Preference: Preference will be given to applications that employ proven methods for educating at-risk students or students with special needs.

Overarching Standard/Criteria: Compelling evidence of how the school will directly and consistently ensure that it hires licensed, endorsed, experienced, and well-qualified special educators pursuant to law and how it will ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations for programming requirements of these populations.

Evidence needed for addressing the overarching standard:

a) Identify the anticipated size of the various special populations and/or at-risk groups that the school expects to serve. Justify the estimates using data from a specifically targeted school, neighborhood, or more generalized analysis of the population to be served. Discuss how the course scope and sequence, daily schedule, staffing plans, and support strategies and resources will meet or be adjusted for the expected size of the groupings and the diverse needs of these students. Identified groups include Students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) or Section 504 plans (504s); English Language Learners (ELL); students identified as intellectually gifted (Gifted); and students at risk of academic failure or dropping out (At-Risk).

Special Populations & At Risk Students Rationale

The mission of special education at FCS is consistent with the mission of regular education: to support children in becoming multilingual, multiliterate, high-achieving changemakers while sustaining audacious joy and a commitment to building an international community. FCS will comply with all regulatory special education requirements of and rights of children with disabilities guaranteed in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). As per the requirements of the IDEA, FCS will ensure that all children with disabilities have a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) available which emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their special needs. Each child with a disability will be educated in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) with the regular classroom setting as the first choice of placement. FCS will also provide children with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities. FCS will ensure that a full continuum of alternative Placements are available to meet special education related service needs of children with disabilities. As mandated by state and federal laws, FCS will operate "Child Find" in an effort to identify, locate and evaluate all children who require special education and will provide an appropriate program for these children. Those children with existing Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs) in place will be provided services consistent with their existing IEPs; however, when necessary IEPs will be adjusted to account for dual-language instruction.

Our approach to serving special populations and at-risk students is grounded in the belief that all students are capable of absolute brilliance and deserve an exceptional education. In alignment with our mission to ensure success for all, every Floreecer student is provided with precisely what they need to access grade-level content and beyond. Our students with Individualized Learning Programs (IEPs) or Individualized Language Plans (ILPs) already have a customized learning plan based on current proficiency levels, just as every other student at FCS. Likewise, our students with identified social, emotional, or academic needs are seen just like all our students, with strengths and growth areas. At FCS, we acknowledge every student's unique need and strive to create a nurturing, safe, and inclusive environment. Through this belief, we execute our plan to serve special populations and at-risk students.

According to the 24-25 Alabama State Report Card, 12% of students in Birmingham City Schools identify as students with disabilities and nearly 11% as students with limited English proficiency. Given the innovative nature of our dual language immersion model, we anticipate serving a population consisting of about 16-20% of students with disabilities and 20-25% of students with limited English proficiency (81). Additionally, according to the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC, 2022), roughly 8% of students in Alabama have been identified as gifted (82). For this reason, FCS plans to serve a gifted population of 5% of our students. Our daily schedule, including Morning Meeting or Global Teams, Reading/Math Compass Intervention or Lunch Study, and personalized THRIVE plans, combined with our staffing model, provide exemplary support for students with special needs. Our biggest asset remains in our embedded in our teacher/teacher assistant model and frequent assessment to drive DDI through tiers of services. Surrounding all academic interventions, FCS relies on adapted strategies from MTSS systems of support.

Special Populations Demographics (Based on 2024-2025 ALSDE Report Card)

Special Populations	Floreecer Anticipated Demographics	Birmingham City Schools Demographics
Students with Disabilities	15-20%	12%
Students with Limited English Proficiency	20%	11%
Economically Disadvantaged	88%	84.5%

FCS believes that intervening when students need it the most prevents lingering skill gaps. Through the practices and procedures of MTSS, we identify underperforming students to benefit from early intervention. The Renaissance Star Early Literacy, NWEA Reading and math (academics), and the Social, Academic, and Emotional Behavior Risk Screener (SAEBRS) (behavior) determine which students are at-risk and through data triangulation (surveys, questionnaires, academic and behavioral performance, etc.) decide proper placement into the MTSS tiers.

Valuing Community and Creativity: Excellence for All

All students are held to high academic expectations and follow the same scope and sequence, which may be adjusted after identifying students' strengths, weaknesses, and interests. Content areas Scope and sequence plans are individualized to student's needs and based upon their IEP, Gifted Individualized Education Program (GIEP), 504, ELL, or Personalized Learning Plan aka THRIVE plan to ensure the appropriate accommodations and modifications are made. As needed, we may adjust the scope of the curriculum to focus on the most critical skills and knowledge the student needs to acquire, which may involve prioritizing certain topics or skills over others. Sometimes, we may adjust the sequence to align with the student's learning goals, such as teaching certain skills or topics before others, revisiting previously taught material, or moving ahead to more accelerated material. Students, with support, set learning goals, monitor their progress as applicable, reflect on their learning, and consistently discuss their progress through the curriculum with advisors and support staff (83).

- Adjusted schedules are crucial to our students' academic success and social integration. Teachers and parents work together to create personalized schedules that accommodate these students' unique needs while ensuring they meet the same academic standards as their non-special education peers. Small group instruction, direct and collaborative instruction, interventions, and appropriate push-in or pull-out support allow students to work at a pace suitable for them while receiving the appropriate degree of support necessary to ensure their success. The schedule provides time for individualized and differentiated support and more time to complete tasks or assessments when needed.
- The staffing plan and hiring structure include a robust method to meet students' academic and social-emotional needs. The Executive Director ensures that the necessary leadership and staff are hired to administer and implement all special programming effectively. We continuously develop our full team and hold each other accountable for serving our students best. The staffing structure outlined in our financial plan includes enough full-time staff to support our special populations and at-risk students. If more students receiving special services are enrolled or identified than we have currently projected, we will adjust the staffing model to meet this need.
- FCS values community and creativity as one of our community values and we believe innovation lies within building a community of diverse and unique learners. We recognize that special populations and at-risk students require additional support and resources. We leverage strategies and resources to ensure a quality and transformative education through the following:
 - Use assistive technology, as applicable, to help individuals with disabilities perform tasks more independently or effectively. Some examples may include speech-to-text software, text-to-speech software, graphic organizers, adaptive keyboards or mice, visual aids, and specialized apps or programs.
 - Utilize Co-teachers to support interventions, modify instruction, and differentiate materials to promote inclusion and ensure that students receive support within the general education setting.
 - Collaborate with and utilize related service providers, such as speech therapists, occupational therapists, counselors, and nonprofit organizations to provide a comprehensive approach to supporting students.
 - Implement instructional strategies identified by the National Association of Special Education Teachers (2020), such as but not limited to:
 - Making instructions, choices, and scheduling as simple as possible

- Establishing clear learning expectations
- Establishing clear behavioral expectations
- Providing follow-up directions
- Offering graphic organizers for academic content
- Reviewing previous learning and lessons
- Using audiovisual tools
- Consistently assess student learning and behavior
- Use movement activities
- Provide an easily accessible daily and weekly student schedule
- Frequent opportunities for practice and reinforcement.
- Tiered assignments
- Peer support with typically developing peers

Citations

(81) <https://reportcard.alsde.edu/OverallScorePage.aspx?ReportYear=2025&System-Code=114&SchoolCode=0000>

(82) <https://www.naset.org/publications/special-educator-e-journal-latest-and-archived-issues/2020-archives/may-2020-special-educator-e-journal>

(83) <https://udlguidelines.cast.org/> IRIS Center (2019)

b) Describe the overall academic and organizational framework that will serve students in these groupings. Specifically address how the plans for individual groupings interrelate.

Populations Framework Narrative

Floreecer Community School's academic and organizational framework is grounded in our mission and THRIVE Community Values, which shape the school culture, instructional approach, and systems of support that serve all students. These values guide FCS supports diverse student groupings—including English learners, students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged students, and students identified as at risk. Our mission and value attribute to providing a cohesive and inclusive structure. Rather than creating separate systems for different populations, FCS integrates supports so that all students participate in a shared academic experience while receiving targeted assistance when needed.

Our THRIVE community values inform both the school's instructional program and its organizational structures, ensuring that academic rigor, social-emotional development, and community engagement work together to support the whole child's success.

Transform Myself & the World Around Me. FCS encourages students to view our unique educational offering as a pathway to personal growth and positive community impact. Our instructional model promotes critical thinking, problem-solving, and global awareness, helping students develop the skills needed to contribute meaningfully to their communities, including English learners and students with disabilities—are supported in developing leadership, self-advocacy, and a strong sense of purpose.

Harness Hope & Gratitude. FCS fosters a positive and supportive learning environment where students are encouraged to build resilience and maintain a growth mindset rooted in gratitude and appreciation for themselves and each other. Teachers and staff emphasize encouragement, recognition of progress, and strong relationships with students and families. This approach is especially important for students who may be at risk of disengagement, helping them remain motivated and connected to the school community.

Respond with Integrity. FCS promotes accountability, responsibility, and ethical decision-making. Students are supported in developing strong character and personal responsibility for their learning. Staff members model and collaborate to ensure that interventions and supports are implemented consistently and fairly across all student groups.

Ignite a Love for Learning Languages. FCS values multilingualism and global awareness as a bilingual school with a strong commitment to building bilingual/biliterate. FCS prioritizes language learning as a central component of our school model. English learners receive targeted language development support while participating fully in the bilingual education curriculum with language

celebrated as an asset. At the same time, all students are encouraged to appreciate linguistic diversity and develop communication skills that prepare them for a globally connected world. Value Community & Creativity. The school fosters collaboration, creativity, and community engagement as essential parts of the learning experience. Collaborative action-based learning, enrichment activities, and collaborative classroom structures encourage students to explore their interests and express themselves creatively. These opportunities promote engagement for all students and help strengthen connections between the school, families, and the broader community.

Excel in Everything You Do. Floreer Community School maintains high academic expectations for every student while providing the supports necessary to help students meet those expectations. Through a The Hive our MTSS approach, students receive differentiated instruction, targeted academic interventions, and individualized support when needed. Data-driven decision-making ensures that students who require additional assistance—whether due to academic challenges, language needs, or disabilities—receive timely and appropriate support.

These THRIVE values shape the interconnected cohesive systems that serve all student groupings. Students may belong to multiple groups, and the school's framework ensures that supports are coordinated rather than fragmented. For example, a student who is both an English learner and academically at risk may receive language development services alongside targeted academic intervention and mentoring support. Student support teams, teachers, counselors, and intervention staff collaborate regularly to review student data and coordinate services.

FCS is committed to grounding our academic and organizational framework in the THRIVE Community Values. FCS ensures that instruction, student supports, and school culture work together to create an inclusive and empowering learning environment. This integrated approach enables the school to meet the diverse needs of its students while maintaining a unified vision focused on excellence, audacious joy, belonging, and meaningful student growth.

c) Explain how the school will provide equitable access for all students to all programming supported by the school, including supplemental programming like clubs or sports teams.

Text

Floreer Provides Supplemental Programming Support For All Students

Floreer Community School will ensure equitable access for all students to all school-sponsored programming—including academic supports, enrichment opportunities, clubs, and athletic activities—through intentional planning, inclusive policies, and targeted supports that remove barriers to participation. Our mission and vision are rooted in the belief that all students are able to THRIVE. As a community school, Floreer will ensure equitable access to all academic and supplemental programming through implementation of the Community School framework, which is built on four core pillars:

- Integrated Student Supports,
- Expanded and Enriched Learning Opportunities,
- Active Family and Community Engagement,
- Collaborative Leadership and Practices

Through Integrated Student Supports, the school will coordinate services that remove barriers to participation, including academic support, counseling, health services, and partnerships with community organizations. These supports ensure that students from special populations—including students with disabilities, English Learners, and economically disadvantaged students—can fully participate in all school programs. This may include language support for English learners (translation/interpretation), appropriate accommodations or modifications for students with disabilities as outlined in their IEPs or 504 plans, and additional adult supervision or assistance when needed to support inclusion.

Expanded and Enriched Learning Opportunities. Floreer will provide unique offerings in clubs, athletics, arts programs, and after-school activities designed to support diverse student interests and talents. All programs will be accessible to students with appropriate accommodations aligned with IEPs, 504 plans, and language support. Additionally, the school will design all programming with universal access in mind. Activities such as clubs, enrichment programs, and athletic opportunities

will be open to all students regardless of academic performance, disability status, English learner status, or socioeconomic background. Participation policies will be clearly communicated to students and families, and the school will avoid requirements that unnecessarily exclude students from involvement. The school will remove financial and logistical barriers that could limit participation. FCS will ensure that clubs, enrichment opportunities, and extracurricular activities are offered at no cost or minimal cost to families whenever possible. If fees are required for specific activities (such as athletics), the school will provide fee waivers or financial assistance. The school will also coordinate transportation solutions when feasible and schedule activities in ways that maximize accessibility for students and families.

Active Family and Community Engagement, the school will provide multilingual communication and partner with community organizations to expand programming and ensure families are informed and able to support student participation. Staff will actively encourage participation among students/families who may be less likely to self-select into extracurricular programming. Teachers, advisors, and student support staff will identify students who would benefit from additional enrichment or engagement opportunities and will work with families to ensure they are aware of and able to access available programs.

Collaborative Leadership and Practices will ensure that families, students, and community partners contribute to planning and evaluating programs so that opportunities remain inclusive and responsive to community needs. Alongside community members the leadership team will regularly monitor participation data across student subgroups to ensure that extracurricular and supplemental programming reflects equitable access. If disparities in participation are identified, the school will adjust outreach, supports, and program design to ensure that all students—especially those from historically underserved populations—have meaningful opportunities to engage in the full range of school programming.

Through these strategies, Florecer Community School will foster an inclusive environment in which every student has equitable access to the academic, enrichment, and extracurricular opportunities that support their development and success.

Citations:

Coalition for Community Schools & Learning Policy Institute (2017). Community Schools Playbook. Learning Policy Institute (2018). Community Schools as an Effective School Improvement Strategy.

d) Explain more specifically how the school will identify and meet the learning needs of students with mild, moderate, and severe disabilities in the least restrictive environment possible. Specify the programs, strategies, and support the school will provide, including the following:

i) Methods for identifying students with special education needs (and avoiding misidentification), including use of school personnel to participate in developing Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), identify and refer students for assessment of special education needs, maintain records, and cooperate in the delivery of special education instruction and services, as appropriate.

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

iii) Plans for monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of special education students with mild, moderate, and severe needs to ensure the attainment of each student's goals as set forth in the Individualized Education Program (IEP);

iv) Plans for promoting graduation for students with special education needs (high school only);

v) Plans to have qualified staff adequate for the anticipated special needs population.

Overview of Meeting Learning Needs of Students with Varying Disabilities

FCS has systems in place to provide students with disabilities with a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) within the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). We will comply with all regulatory special education requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and any other civil rights enforced by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights. Likewise, we will fully comply with additional regulations and policies of the state of Alabama. For example, Florecer will

follow the protocols in place in BCS to identify students who may be in need of special services. These protocols include providing students with routine screenings for vision and hearing, progress monitoring student performance and students' response to intervention (RTI). FCS will follow the Child Find process, including forming a Support Team (MTSS team), in order to match resources to student needs. The MTSS team will include education professionals, school personnel, parents, and others who have special knowledge of the student. The following steps are followed in the support of students who require intervention and do not currently have an IEP. Our data-driven approach to identifying students with disabilities has been effective in Alabama in preventing an over-identification of underperforming students whose needs simply aren't being met through classroom learning activities.

Identifying Students

Identifying students with special education needs is a crucial step in providing them with appropriate support and resources to ensure their academic success and well-being. Under Federal Law, we are responsible for identifying, locating, and evaluating students who need special education. We adhere to Ala. Admin. Code r. 290-8-9-.01 to identify students through the following:

- **Child Find:** We conduct Child Find activities that begin with our recruitment and enrollment process. We use outreach efforts by sharing recruitment information with health, community, and faith-based centers. We will go door to door within our communities, use surveys and brochure mailings, hold public meetings, solicit physician referrals, contact daycare providers, and survey private school personnel. During enrollment, we request all records (academic, testing, IEPs, discipline, etc.) from the previous school and work with parents to complete a home language survey. The information ascertained from these processes will help to initiate a plan to meet the needs of each student. We use diverse data sources to identify students performing below grade level, including, but not limited to, Cumulative Student Files that include enrollment, attendance, and performance data.
- **Referral:** The Alabama Administrative Code (290-8-9) outlines the state departments' rules concerning special education services. Floreecer will comply with all federal, state, and local regulations. A student can be referred for special education services by several stakeholders, including teachers, counselors, administrators, and parents. This request must be in writing, and the parent must consent before the child may be evaluated.
- **Prereferral Intervention Strategies in the General Education Class.** At the core of meeting the learning needs of students is to determine each student's academic potential. We conduct assessments of skills regularly through tests called universal screening. At the beginning of each year, all students participate in a Universal Screening of literacy and math skills. Students take the NWEA MAP Growth Test 3 times a year as part of the universal screening and benchmark process. This will occur during the first week of school, Winter, and Spring. The results from the assessment allow teachers, advisors, and students to collaborate and create individual learning plans based on growth targets to identify reinforcement, advancement, and acceleration skills. The evaluation results will be used to decide on an appropriate educational program and trigger the implementation of a Response-to-Intervention (RTI) process.

RTI Process

Floreecer allows research-/evidence-based programs and strategies (Rtl) to be used before identifying students in a special education category. Only after a student has progressed through Tier 1-3 of Rtl will they be tested for special education services. The Alabama Administrative Code requires exceptions for articulation, voice, fluency, and traumatic brain injury (TBI) referrals. To avoid over-identification or misidentification, all other reasons for lack of success will be investigated, including but not limited to attendance, behavior, dyslexia, lack of specific interventions, frequency of interventions, and hearing and vision difficulties.

We implement a Response to Intervention (Rtl) framework with a Multi Tiered Student Support (MTSS) team to provide the appropriate levels of assistance and continued monitoring for struggling students and those performing below grade level. Rtl integrates core instruction, assessment, and intervention within a multi-tiered system to maximize student achievement and reduce behavior problems. Through Rtl implementation, we identify and monitor at-risk students, use problem-solving

and data-based decision-making to provide research-based interventions, and adjust the intensity of interventions based on the student's response." (ALSDE, 2009) Navigating academic demands in middle and high school may be particularly challenging for youth experiencing academic, emotional, and behavioral difficulties, and screening practices are a necessary first step in identifying a child in need of services.

RtI aims to address academic and behavioral deficits as soon as the interference with learning is noticed instead of waiting for students to fail. Students not experiencing success in the classroom will have access to three Tier levels of support, each increasing in intensity and frequency as needed.

Table 2.2 Explanation of RtI

Each tier has a set of concrete practices and processes the school will use to successfully identify and support students who must perform on grade level.	
Tier I: Researched-Based Core Instruction	During the RTI process, the first sign of a student not performing at grade level is when a student is unsuccessful during Tier 1: Researched-Based Instruction. During Tier 1, teachers provide all students opportunities to practice and review standards-aligned instruction and increase time on tasks. Our instructional model ensures that students have many opportunities for time on tasks. More importantly, our middle and high school grades have learning environments that provide flexible grouping, differentiated instruction, reteaching, and practice opportunities. During tier 1 instruction, teachers will use standards-based formative and iReady assessments to determine which students need to move to tier II instructional support.
Tier II: Targeted Interventions	Tier 2: Targeted Interventions are designed for students needing more support to progress during Tier I core instruction. Designed to remediate student skill and concept deficits, tier II instruction provides additional opportunities for students to practice and review concepts while receiving feedback from their teachers. Special education teachers, core academic teachers, and instructional aides will implement tier II instruction and monitor for improvements. Tier II instruction will occur during core instruction, WIN, and more frequent blocks of the schedule as determined based on student needs and progress.
Tier III: Intensive Interventions	Tier 3: Intensive Interventions are designed for students who have yet to fully respond academically to Tier I and II interventions. Tier III interventions will be provided using evidenced-based interventions, which will be facilitated by reading and math specialists. Supplied as a pull-out intervention during a scheduled Block, tier 3 interventions will be selected based on their effectiveness with similar student populations. We will use program reviews from the U.S. Department of Education's What Works Clearinghouse, ALSDE recommended lists of intervention programs, and/or EdReports.org to assess program effectiveness.

Floreecer utilizes a MTSS Team to improve general education programming for students needing support so that referral to and placement in special education programming is less likely. During the initial meeting, the team uses the data from the universal screening to set measurable outcomes for individual students and assign students to support tiers. The MTSS team will be multidisciplinary (core teachers, special education teachers, guidance counselors, etc.), with the principal and SPED and Student Support Coordinator as the facilitators. Pre-referral intervention strategies will be implemented in the general education program and monitored by the MTSS team for at least eight weeks. If these interventions are determined to be unsuccessful, then the child can be referred for evaluation.

Referral Process

The referral form must be completed whenever a student is suspected of having a disability. (a) For a parent to make a complaint or request for an evaluation, the education agency must obtain information from the child's educational process. Information must be gathered to determine if the child has a disability, if the child is at risk of having a disability, or if the child's academic achievement is significantly below grade level. Information must be gathered to determine if the child will be evaluated for special education services. If the IEP team determines that the child should not be evaluated for special education services, the areas of evaluation, data, and evaluative materials selected and administered should be evaluated. A written notice, including a description of the services that are being provided, should be given to the parent. If the IEP team determines that the child should be evaluated for special education services, the consent requirements in Ala. Admin. Code r. 290-8-9-.08(4)(a), must be followed. In addition to obtaining consent, for children suspected of

Evidence Based Strategies (EBS) for Mild, Moderate and Severe Disabilities

Strategies for students include providing text, audio, video, and hands-on learning that allows them to access the material in whichever way best suits their learning strengths (84). Other Evidence-Based Strategies (EBS) to support students with mild, moderate, and severe disabilities. May include, but are not limited to, the following(88):

Table 2.5 Strategies for students with mild, moderate, and severe disabilities

EBS for Mild Disabilities,	EBS for Moderate Disabilities:	EBS for Severe Disabilities:
Graphic Organizers, Manipulatives Assistive Technology Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Peer Tutoring Computer-Assisted Instruction Word Boxes Word Problem Mnemonics Repeated Reading	Graphic Organizers Manipulatives Assistive Technology One-to-One Tutoring Visual Schedules Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Therapy Collaborative Strategic Reading	Social Stories Task Analytic Instruction Augmentative Communication Visual Supports Functional Communication Training Manipulatives Systematic Instruction Discrete Trial Training Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Therapy

Qualified Staff:

We plan to hire qualified and fully licensed personnel to provide instruction and related services for students with disabilities, ELL, and gifted. Hiring decisions for special education staff will be based on the projected enrollment of special education students and the individual needs of enrolled students. It will adhere to the ALSDE allocation formula to determine the minimum allocation of special education teachers based on total ADM. Additional staff, including certified and classified support, may be hired based on a determination of need and funding. The staffing model may require adjustment if more special-needs students enroll than previously anticipated to ensure appropriate support and adherence to requirements are met.

Floreecer will recruit certified special education teachers through recruitment fairs on campuses of colleges and universities. We will recruit candidates who have the necessary skills and training as well as those who are willing to complete additional coursework. Maintaining a cordial relationship with colleges ensures notification of possible candidates for special education teaching positions. Through creative and comprehensive efforts, we will pursue multiple avenues to recruit and advertise for available positions, including the internet, radio, television, and social media; word of mouth; recruiting events on college campuses; and referrals solicited from community-based organizations with a focus on immigration for potential candidates who already have skills with the language and cultures of ELLs. Additionally, we will work to attract more people into the profession through other pathways, such as collaboration with local educational institutions and encouraging paraprofessionals to become certified teachers, retaining current special educators, and promoting cultural diversity in the field. FCS will maintain a list of licensed, related service providers to contract for services when and as needed.

Monitoring Student Progress

One purpose of an Individualized Education Program (IEP) is to provide parents and teachers with a tool to monitor the progress of a student with learning disabilities. By law, an IEP looks forward and is "reasonably calculated to confer an educational benefit" likely to produce progress. Progress in any context is forward movement, with starting and ending points. In IEP terms, a child is predicted to move from present levels of achievement to annual SMART goals that are or should be written in a way that both our parents and students, as appropriate, could understand. Benchmark assessments will occur three times a year using NWEA MAP assessment to monitor students' growth. I-Ready will be administered every 2-3 weeks to assess students' skills in targeted domains aligning with their areas of need and intervention to progress toward specific growth. Teachers will also use frequent formative assessments to check student learning and adjust their practices based on students' needs. Observation can also occur during one-on-one interactions between the special education

teachers and learners or group sessions. Learning process observations allow special education teachers to pick up verbal and non-verbal signals on students' learning experiences and how they view their progress.

Citations

(84) <https://udlguidelines.cast.org>

(88) <https://mtss4success.org/essential-components>

(89) <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/20164001/pdf/20164001.pdf>

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

- i) Methods for identifying ELL students (and avoiding misidentification);
- ii) Specific instructional programs, practices, and strategies the school will employ to ensure academic success and equitable access to the core academic program for these students;
- iii) Plans for monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of ELL students, including exiting students from ELL services;
- iv) Means for providing qualified staff for ELL students.

Florecer A Place to Bloom for ELL students

As a bilingual school model, FCS meets the needs of Spanish-speaking families by providing an entry point to the school system in which their native language and culture is valued and supported as they begin to acquire English and participate in the local community. In addition, when compared with English-only approaches (the approach used in existing schools in our proposed community), bilingual models have potential for narrowing the achievement gap between ELL and English-speaking students. The bilingual approach impacts the goal of English acquisition for ELL students, and research shows the superiority of dual language instructional methods in promoting long-term English acquisition and academic achievement. Currently, BCS serves approximately 11% of its students population as ELL students, with 42% of students progressing toward English Language Proficiency. Florecer is positioning ourselves to support and uplift high academic achievement in both languages. A bilingual school program, creates spaces where a high degree of transfer occurs across languages, so language concepts that students learn in one language benefit language learning in a second language. Florecer will serve as a space for all ELL students to access their linguistic repertoire through our strict adherence to our primary instructional methods rooted in the Pillars of Bilingual Education and prepared to develop the linguistic abilities of emergent bilingual students.

Students with Limited Language Proficiency

FCS is a school dedicated to supporting the emergent bilingual student from a variety of languages. Our mission is rooted in highlighting the power of students learning languages as an asset. Although our school views a love of learning languages as an asset to building global citizens, we recognize that students enter the school environment with a unique and diverse linguistic repertoire. As such our EL program is built upon the same vision as the ALSDE Vision for EL Success: "Alabama ELs will have equitable access to high-quality, rigorous instruction designed within a systematic framework built on values and respect for students' cultures and languages and a socially and emotionally supportive learning environment, empowering ELs to excel socially, academically, and linguistically and lead productive lives(85)."

In compliance with the ALSDE's ELL Policies and Procedures Manual, a Home Language Survey (HLS) is completed for every student during enrollment. If a response on the HLS indicates the use of a language other than English by the student or an individual in the home, a further assessment using the WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test (W-APT) will be conducted to determine the student's English Language Proficiency Level along with considering other extenuating circumstances. Upon completion, the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Student Support Team consisting of the SPED Coordinator, ELL Teacher, general education teachers, students (as appropriate), and parents/guardians meet to determine eligibility. Students may be deemed transitional or approaching proficiency and the appropriate services identified in the overall plan will be determined. The support team is responsible for:

1. Recommending and monitoring student participation in the ELL program,

2. Monitoring ELL students' academic progress in the regular program,
3. Providing recommendations to core teachers for ELL accommodations,
4. Determining if ELL students will participate in the statewide testing program,
5. Reclassifying ELL students as they gain proficiency in English.

When considering the need for special education services, the IEP Team must rule out environmental, language, cultural, and economic concerns that would impact the student's learning and exclude them from being identified as a student with a disability.

FCS will communicate information, in an appropriate language, about any program, service, or activity that is called to the attention of parents proficient in English. This includes, but is not limited to, information related to registration and enrollment in school; grievance procedures and notices of school programs; nondiscrimination language assistance programs; parent handbooks; report cards; gifted and talented programs; student discipline policies and procedures; special education and related services, and requests for parent permission for meetings to discuss special education, student participation in school activities, and parent-teacher conferences.

ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 is given annually to monitor and evaluate students' progress in acquiring academic English and is aligned with the WIDA English Language Development Standards. It assesses the four language domains: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. The support team will regularly review ACCESS data and students' academic progress to determine appropriate support for individual students. Students who do not score 4.8 or above on the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 test will continue to be served by the ELL program.

When a student exits the ELL program, the ELL teacher will monitor the student's progress for four consecutive years. The monitoring will take place on the same schedule as report cards are issued. This progress report will include a summary of any accommodation being used, progress in completing assignments, and any other information the teachers consider relevant. If a student who has exited the program is struggling, they will be reassessed by the W-APT screener to determine re-entry into the program.

A certified ELL teacher will plan with general education teachers to support the needs of ELL students by utilizing push-in and, when appropriate, pull-out services, supplemental small-group instruction, and co-teaching in the general education classroom.

Strategies to support student language acquisition and academic growth may include:

- Language development activities explicitly teach English language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
- Sheltered instruction is a teaching approach designed for ELL students learning content in a second language. This strategy involves modifying instruction to make academic content more accessible while developing English language skills. Teachers use simplified language, visual aids, gestures, and real-life examples to support comprehension.
- Previewing text allows students to look through a text to identify pictures or headings that provide context.
- Summarizing and Retelling: After completing a text, students put the text in their own words and make personal connections.
- Encouraging collaborative learning that promotes language acquisition and social interaction skills such as Think-Pair-Share.

Qualified ELL Staffing

All FCS teachers are trained to uphold the best academic standards. As such all Floreecer instructional team members will be trained to work with ELL students during summer professional development and throughout the school year to ensure that the designed immersion program is effective in meeting students' needs while holding students to a high standard in both languages (86). In alignment with evidence based best practices in dual language immersion around foundational literacy and practice based learning, we are confident that EL students will experience higher gains in academic literacy by learning the essential literary elements in both languages. Professional development activities addressing literacy development for ELs and Structured English Immersion are integrated into the school's overall educational program, including professional development in first and second language acquisition, methods for teaching content to English Learners, and

differentiated planning and instructional strategies. We will seek professional development externally from ALSDE Regional EL Coordinator and our local educational partners (87).

Citations

(85) https://www.alabamaachieves.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/EL_2022110_Alabama-Framework-for-English-Learner-Success_V1.0.pdf

(86) Serafini, E. J., Rozell, N., & Winsler, A. (2022). Academic and English language outcomes for DLLs as a function of school bilingual education model: The role of two-way immersion and home language support. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 25(2), 552–570. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2019.1707477>

(87) https://www.alabamaachieves.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/EL_2022110_Alabama-Framework-for-English-Learner-Success_V1.0.pdf

f) Explain how the school will identify and meet the needs of highly capable students, including the following:

- i) Methods for identifying highly capable students (and avoiding misidentification);
- ii) Specific research-based instructional programs, practices, strategies, and opportunities the school will employ or provide to enhance their abilities;
- iii) Plans for monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of highly capable students;
- iv) Means of providing qualified staff for intellectually gifted students.

FCS's Educational Approach for Highly Capable Students

Florecer embraces the opportunity to serve a diverse student population, including students identified as gifted and talented. Aligned with the Alabama Administrative Code (AAC), we identify students as intellectually gifted as those who perform or have demonstrated the potential to perform at levels in academic or creative fields compared to others of their age, experience, or environment. Through the Child Find process, Florecer screens all second-grade students using the CogAT (Cognitive Abilities Test) to identify gifted and talented students. Adhering to the ALSDE's screening guide, teachers will use inventories/checklists (such as the Slocumb Payne Teacher Perceptions Survey) to identify key behaviors and to screen students and note each student's behavior in every gifted domain. Additionally, all Florecer staff are trained on the use of the Slocumb Payne Teacher Perceptions Inventory as an identification of gifted and talented students in order to complete a holistic view of gifted learners. After gaining parental consent, the Student Supports Coordinator arranges the Student Support Team, consisting of SPED teachers, general education teachers, students (as appropriate), and parents/guardians, to meet to determine eligibility and complete the Gifted Education Plan (GEP). In addition to students identified through the Child Find process, parents, teachers, and school leaders may refer students for evaluation.

Eligible students receive services in the following settings:

- Grades K-2—Students receive accommodations in the general education setting.
- Grades 3-5—Students receive support services for 3-5 hours weekly.
- Grades 6-8—Students participate in enrichment clusters during LAZ (Learning Autonomy Zones) and take advanced classes.

Gifted Education Plans are reviewed annually to monitor student progress, outline services, and establish goals for an individual student. Every student's GEP meets their unique needs. Especially for those identified as twice exceptional, the collaboration between SPED Teachers, general education teachers, and Student Supports Coordinator is critical to implement the appropriate program.

The instructional program at FCS is ideal to meet the needs of intellectually gifted students.

Two-way dual language immersion approach provides opportunities to differentiate learning content, processes, and products to meet individual needs. The daily schedule at FCS is designed to provide significant independent work time and unique learning autonomy during independent practice, key features of differentiation for gifted students, as well as daily time for teachers to meet in small groups to meet the individual needs of students. While we expect these small groups will primarily target at-risk learners, they will also be an ideal time to provide enrichment for gifted learners. ALCOS academic standards are the foundation of our learning program, and FCS students are empowered to co-construct their own learning as they achieve and go into greater depth with the standards. For

example, a fourth grade project may require students to apply math standards related to area and perimeter to design a floorplan for a dream home. Students who have demonstrated mastery of basic formulas may go beyond the required number of room calculations or may create and calculate area and perimeter for rooms with more complex shapes.

A central framework for providing appropriate challenges for intellectually gifted students will involve teachers carefully planning learning activities to encourage higher-order thinking along Bloom's Taxonomy;

Higher Order Thinking:

- Analyzing- breaking information down into its component elements
- Evaluating- judging the value of ideas, materials, and methods by developing and applying standards and criteria
- Creating- putting together ideas and elements to develop and original idea or engage in creative thinking

Finally, our dual language program provides an additional, interesting challenge for gifted learners as they master and apply literacy skills in two languages. FCS students of all learning abilities are able to directly align to our cross-linguistic transfer and post Bridge extension activities in the language being Bridged to as a cognitive exercise of metalinguistic learning.

In-Depth Gifted Identification and Support

Aligned with the Alabama Administrative Code (AAC), we identify students as intellectually gifted as those who perform or have demonstrated the potential to perform at levels in academic or creative fields compared to others of their age, experience, or environment. FCS will develop and implement procedures to ensure that students who exhibit gifted characteristics are referred for gifted services, such as:

- Adhering to the ALSDE's screening guide, teachers use checklists of behaviors to screen students and note each student's behavior in every gifted domain.
- Standard Referral. A student may be referred for consideration for gifted services by teachers, counselors, administrators, parents or guardians, peers, self, and others with knowledge of the student's abilities. Standard referrals may occur anytime for students six years of age and older.
- Gifted Referrals Screening Team (GRST). FCS will establish a team(s) to review referrals to determine if further assessment is indicated. The team will consist of at least three individuals: someone knowledgeable about the student and someone familiar with gifted education.

To qualify for gifted services, a student must be evaluated and meet the criteria outlined in the eligibility determination of the AAC. AAC 290 – 8-9.12 (5). The ALSDE requires two forms to be completed in the Special Programs through PowerSchool System (SPPS): Referral Form for Gifted Services and the Gifted Screening/Eligibility Determination Form. These forms must be completed in SPPS and cannot be modified or changed. All other forms may be altered and photocopied as needed. All documents must be maintained in the hard copy folder at the LEA, including records with original signatures and all data collected and used on the Gifted Eligibility/Screening Determination Form. Both forms (electronic and paper) must contain the same information. Whatever is entered into SPPS must be on the paper forms in the hard copy folder at the LEA, and what is on the paper forms must be the same information found in the SPPS.

The two methods of criteria:

- Automatic Eligibility. A student may be determined automatically eligible for gifted services when the obtained full scale/composite IQ score on an individually administered test of intelligence (NOT a screener) is two standard deviations above the mean or higher, or either the Verbal Average Standard score or Figural Creativity Index of the Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking is at or above the 97th national percentile.
- Matrix of Multiple Criteria. The matrix of multiple criteria developed by the State Department of Education requires information in the areas described above (4)(a)1-4 of this section. (i) The State Department of Education must approve using other matrices. (ii) Students with environmental, cultural, economic, or language differences may only be ineligible once verbal and nonverbal abilities are assessed.

FCS may utilize various service delivery options that include but are not limited to resource room pull-out, consultation, mentorships, advanced classes, and independent study. The general education program will accommodate gifted students' need for complexity and accelerated pace. Accommodations may include flexible skills grouping, cluster grouping with differentiation, curriculum compacting, subject and grade acceleration, dual enrollment, and advanced classes. IDBA will establish and implement a procedure for considering any subject or grade acceleration requests. The State Department of Education must approve the procedures included in the LEA Plan for the Gifted. FCS students will explore innovative interests, work on passion projects, and begin to craft steps toward their HS and Postsecondary aspirations. Modes of Service used by FCS will include, at a minimum, the ALSDE recommended services identified below:

Grades 6,7,8—pull-out services include electives, enrichment clusters, advanced classes, and core content areas.

MAP data and other summative and standardized assessments will measure students' growth. Affective growth, or affective learning, relates to how our students emotionally process information. It refers to feelings, values, appreciation, enthusiasm, motivation, and attitude. With assistance from advisors, students will determine SEL (affect goals) and priorities and use the program metrics to monitor progress. Additional methods will include, but are not limited to, teacher observations and student reflections. GEPs are reviewed annually to monitor student progress, outline services, and establish goals for an individual student.

- g) Explain how the school will identify and meet the needs of students who are at-risk of dropping out. At-risk indicators include students with declining grades, high absenteeism or tardiness, students who lack engagement, and students who do not complete assignments. Include the following:
 - i) Methods for identifying students at-risk of dropping out.
 - ii) Specific programs, strategies, and support provided to these students. Include any personnel resources specifically targeting this population;
 - iii) Plans for monitoring and tracking students at risk of dropping out.
 - iv) Interventions designed to keep these students engaged and enrolled, including triggers for the intervention.

How FCS Meeting the Needs of At-Risk Students The Hive through MTSS

At FCS The goal after the 8th grade, is that all FCS Abejas (Honeybees) are armed to THRIVE in high school. We ensure this by providing intentional structures while our Abejas remain in The Hive. The Hive is Floreecer's MTSS (multi-tiered support system) that has a tiered approach to academic and behavioral support. This approach aligns with Alabama's MTSS framework that ensures academics and behavior strategies for all students based on needs. For example, Hive Protection provides all students with Tier I academic and behavior support, while Uplift the Hive ensures Tier II and Tier III support for ~20% of students likely to need them.

The Hive (MTSS) system serves to identify students with special needs and at-risk students by providing mechanisms to monitor growth and progression through tiers of services. A multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) is a proactive and preventative framework that integrates data and instruction to maximize student achievement and support students social, emotional, and behavior needs from a strengths-based perspective. FCS's MTSS program is The Hive which offers a framework for educators to engage in data-based decision making related to program improvement, high-quality instruction and intervention, social and emotional learning, and positive behavioral supports necessary to ensure positive outcomes for districts, schools, teachers, and students. The MTSS framework has four essential components: screening, progress monitoring, multi-level prevention system, and data-based decision making. Depending on state law, MTSS data may also support identification of students with learning or other disabilities (88).

Surrounding all academic interventions, FCS relies on adopted strategies from key components of successful MTSS systems to design Hive Protection (tier II) strategies and Uplift the Hive (tier III) strategies to embrace the holistic needs of each child. Through the practices and procedures of MTSS, we identify underperforming students to benefit from early intervention. The Renaissance Star Early Literacy, NWEA Reading and math (academics), and the Social, Academic, and Emotional

Behavior Risk Screener (SAEBRS) (behavior) determine which students are at-risk and through data triangulation (surveys, questionnaires, academic and behavioral performance, etc.) decide proper placement into the MTSS tiers.

FCS believes that intervening when students need it the most prevents lingering skill gaps. The Hive is composed of our counselor, teachers, support staff, families and admin. Each week data school staff meet to discuss students reporting in the bottom tiers of behavior data, absentee data, and academic data are discussed. Parents are involved at the beginning of trending data, a meeting is scheduled and the team (including parents at that time) devise a plan to support the student using Tier 2-3 strategies based on severity of the scenario. As students are tracked and supported using Tier 2-3 strategies parental involvement is constant and elevated depending on the progress. All staff, and parents are given a tracker to collect data and support informed decisions as the agreed upon supports. This monitoring process can take up to 6 weeks with weekly touchpoints so as to remain responsive to weekly data.

Students needing Tier II intervention in reading or math receive 20-30 minutes of small group instruction every day during ELA/Math/SLA Block in K-5 and Lunch Study in grades 6-8 in addition to core instruction in Tier I. Additionally, students are given 45 minutes of dedicated intervention on Fridays during Compass intervention. This data driven intervention is based on students (Learning Autonomy Zones) LAZ levels. Both the i-Ready Teacher Toolbox in ELA, Ellevation, and Eureka Math provide curriculum for small group intervention and supplement the core literacy and math blocks. These lessons connect to student proficiency levels and align with students' customized learning pathways.

In addition to Tier I behavior strategies adapted from Teach Like a Champion (What to Do, Radar, Strong Voice, Positive Framing, Precise Praise, Warm/Strict, Firm, Calm Finesse, Joy Factor) and Conscious Discipline (threshold greetings and Safe Space) strategies, Tier II interventions include, but are not limited to:

- Positive Reinforcement
- Time-Love-Connection (TLC)
- Structured Recess
- Group Therapy
- Movement Breaks
- Personalized Schedule
- Behavior Intervention Plan

In addition to Tier II support, students needing Tier III intervention receive an additional 30 minutes a day in small-group or one-on-one instruction in math fluency and computation. Interventionists use Read 180 (89) and Eureka Math to provide customized support in reading and math. Read 180 is a blended learning personalized program designed to accelerate students two or more years below grade level toward independence with rigorous, grade-level text. Eureka Math is a mathematics intervention program designed to help students develop the skills they need to compute with accuracy and efficiency, the number sense they need to reason, and the ability to apply their skills and reasoning to solve problems.

Tier III behavior interventions include, but are not limited to:

- The formal process for ensuring behavior plans centers on the why of student missteps (Function-based assessments)
- Consideration of the school's culture and context and the impact on student's well being
- Student-centered planning to align on goals, knowledge of student's past, present, and future life, and actions for change, support, development, and learning
- Implementation of a comprehensive, holistic student and family-driven plan of support from a team of professionals

We monitor student progress in Tier II and Tier III every week using student specific growth monitoring trackers. In addition, the MTSS team meets monthly to review various data types (questionnaires, i-Ready reports, lesson feedback, etc.) to evaluate student progress and determine tier changes as

necessary. If students are not adequately responding to interventions, the MTSS team considers referral to the Student Supports Coordinator for evaluation for a potential disability.

Commitment to a Culture of Belonging

Floreecer will implement timely interventions based on clear triggers that indicate increased risk. For example, a pattern of multiple unexcused absences, failing grades in one or more subjects, repeated incomplete assignments, or noticeable disengagement in class may trigger a review by the MTSS team. When these triggers occur, the school may implement interventions such as parent conferences, individualized academic plans, increased academic support, mentoring relationships, counseling referrals, or attendance improvement strategies. Staff may also work with families to address barriers that may be affecting student participation, such as transportation challenges or personal circumstances. Our school community values and embedded systems value community and belonging as a priority. By creating a audaciously joyous school culture we provide enrichment opportunities, extracurricular activities, and community responsive programming that will help strengthen student connection to the school community. Through early identification, coordinated supports, and ongoing monitoring, Floreecer Community School will ensure that students who demonstrate risk factors receive the resources and encouragement necessary to remain engaged, succeed academically, and stay on track toward the goals on their THRIVE plans.

Citations

(88) <https://mtss4success.org/essential-components>

(89) <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/20164001/pdf/20164001.pdf>

Element Review

Reviews is not provided

11. Student Recruitment and Enrollment

Reviewer Instructions

Please rate this section using the provided rubric.

Status: Completed

Form Result

Describe the recruitment efforts, including the marketing campaign, and measures to ensure fair enrollment opportunities for all interested students in the community.

Overarching Standard/Criteria: Compelling evidence of how the school will directly and consistently recruit students and market the school in such a way as to adequately ensure equal access to interested students and families. In addition, provide ample evidence of the target plan for recruiting at-risk students.

Evidence needed for addressing the overarching standard:

- a) Complete the attached enrollment projection spreadsheet that provides information on anticipated enrollments, with maximum and minimum bounds, for each grade served over the contract period.

Complete Enrollment Projections

File name:

Floreecer Community School Complete Enrollment Projections.pdf

Uploaded:

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Uploaded by:

On'draya Morris

b) Describe the school's plans for recruitment, including activities to inform the public of the school and encourage families to enroll. Provide a timeline with targets for number of applications. Include information on planned enrollment materials with target completion dates (brochures, websites, etc.). Include any known or planned recruitment activities within the community.

Text

FCS's Recruitment & Outreach Activities

Florecer Community School's Recruitment Strategy

Enrollment Goal: 120–150 students

Grades Served: Kindergarten – 2nd Grade

Recruitment Area: City of Birmingham and Greater Birmingham Region

Recruitment Vision. Florecer Community School will implement a community-centered recruitment strategy focused on building trust, ensuring accessibility, and reaching families across Birmingham neighborhoods. Recruitment efforts will emphasize the school's mission to provide a high-quality, culturally responsive, and family-centered educational environment for young learners. The school will prioritize outreach to families with young children and those historically underserved by traditional educational systems. Recruitment efforts will ensure representation of families reflecting the diversity of the Birmingham metro area. Florecer's plan to inform the public and encourage enrollment includes:

- **Community Presence:** Participating in local events to build relationships with families.
- **Information Sessions:** Hosting events designed to provide program details and foster connections within the community.
- **One-on-One Coaching:** Planned support to guide families through the enrollment process.
- **Community Integration:** Programs that foster social connections and a sense of belonging, which serve as a natural touchpoint for potential families.

Recruitment Goals

Goal	Target
Student Enrollment	120–150 students
Applications Received	180–220 applications
Community Outreach Events	20+ events
Family Information Sessions	8–10 sessions
Community Partnerships	15+ organizations

Building a waitlist will ensure full enrollment at the start of the school year.

Target Communities

Recruitment will focus on neighborhoods across Birmingham and Greater Birmingham with large populations of families with young children.

Key areas include:

- West Birmingham
- North Birmingham
- East Lake
- Avondale
- Ensley
- Woodlawn
- Roebuck
- Homewood
- Hoover
- Center Point
- Irondale

Enrollment Materials Timeline

The school is currently developing its suite of recruitment materials. The following targets have been established for completion:

Material	Purpose	Target Completion
School Website	Primary digital hub for information and applications	Refreshed/Ongoing
Brochures/Flyers	Physical handouts for community events and local businesses	Prior to Spring 2026
Social Media Assets	Digital outreach and engagement via platforms like Facebook/Instagram	Continuous
Yard Signs	Distributed to parent ambassadors for local visibility	Initial 30-day Launch Phase

Application & Enrollment Timeline

The school follows a structured timeline leading up to its Fall 2027 launch.

- Spring 2026: Launch of intensive community recruitment and distribution of informational materials.
- Early 2027: Open Enrollment period begins for the 2027-2028 academic year.
- Spring 2027: If applications exceed available seats for K–2nd grade, a Public Admissions Lottery will be held.
- Fall 2027: Official school opening.

Targets and Goals

The primary goal for the initial recruitment phase is to fill the inaugural classes for Kindergarten, 1st Grade, and 2nd Grade. While specific "number of applications" targets are often adjusted based on initial community interest, the school aims to:

- Build a Parent Ambassador network to lead grassroots recruitment.
- Achieve full enrollment for the opening grades (K-2) by the end of the Spring 2027 lottery period.
- Establish a waiting list for subsequent years through year-round application acceptance.

c) Describe the general enrollment policy and attach any preliminary materials on the school's enrollment policy. The policy should include the following:

- Tentative dates for application period, enrollment deadlines, and procedures;
- Policies and procedures for student waiting lists, withdrawals, re-enrollment, and transfers;
- Explanation of the purpose of any pre-admission activities for students or parents;
- Policies and procedures if demand outweigh identified enrollment targets approved by the Commission in the charter contract. Please note a lottery system is required by law.

FCS Enrollment Compliance

The general enrollment policy for Floreecer Community School follows the Alabama School Choice and Student Opportunity Act, which ensures that public charter schools are free, public, and open to all students residing in Alabama.

Because Floreecer is a public charter school, it cannot have "admissions requirements" like entrance exams, interviews, or tuition. Instead, it operates on a fair-access model.

Key Pillars of the Enrollment Policy

- Open Access: Enrollment is open to any student living in Alabama. While Floreecer specifically serves the Birmingham and Greater Birmingham area, any resident of the state is eligible to apply.
-

Non-Discrimination: In accordance with state law, the school does not limit admission based on ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, income, disability, English proficiency, or academic/athletic ability.

- **Grade Level Focus:** For its initial launch in Fall 2027, enrollment is limited to students entering Kindergarten, 1st Grade, and 2nd Grade.
- **Capacity & The Lottery:** If the number of applicants exceeds the available seats (target of 120–150 students), a Random Selection Process (Lottery) is held. This ensures every child has an equal chance of being admitted.

The attached file outlines FCS's enrollment policy and pertinent details.

School's Enrollment Policy	File name:	FCS Updated 2026 Enrollment Policy .pdf
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	Uploaded by:	On'draya Morris

d) Describe the school's proposed onboarding process for students and families. This process would apply to students who have secured a spot in the school but are new to the school. How is this process different or enhanced from what a continuing student would experience?

FCS's Proposed Onboarding Process

Floreceer's onboarding process for newly admitted students and families is designed to reflect the school's core community values—welcoming families with warmth, building authentic relationships, and ensuring every student begins their journey prepared to thrive academically and socially. For students who have secured a seat but are new to the school, the onboarding experience begins immediately after enrollment is confirmed and unfolds through a series of intentional steps that help families feel connected, informed, and supported. Following enrollment completion, families receive a personalized welcome communication from school leadership that introduces them to the Floreecer community and outlines the next steps in the onboarding process. Families complete required enrollment documentation and gain access to the school's family communication platforms, where they can review the parent handbook, school calendar, and important policies. To support clarity and organization, families receive an onboarding checklist that outlines key tasks and timelines.

As part of relationship-building, new families are invited to participate in a family orientation session. During this session, school leaders and staff introduce Floreecer's mission, values, and academic approach while sharing expectations for attendance, communication, and family engagement. Families also have the opportunity to meet teachers, student support staff, and other members of the school community. These gatherings are designed not only to share information but also to create space for conversation, connection, and trust-building among families and staff. To ensure that each student is supported from the first day of school, new students participate in an academic intake process. This may include baseline assessments in reading, math, and writing, as well as opportunities for students to share their interests, strengths, and learning experiences. These steps help educators develop a holistic understanding of each learner and prepare instruction that meets students where they are.

Before the school year begins, new students participate in a student orientation experience designed to help them become familiar with the campus, daily routines, and school expectations. Students meet their teachers, learn their schedules, and participate in community-building activities. When possible, new students are paired with a peer ambassador—a returning student who can help them navigate routines and build connections during the first weeks of school. Teachers and advisors also conduct check-ins during the opening days of school to ensure that students are adjusting well and feel supported.

While new families participate in this more comprehensive onboarding experience, continuing students and families engage in a streamlined back-to-school process that focuses on reconnection and preparation for the new year. Returning families receive summer communications with updates, calendars, and reminders, and they complete annual information updates rather than full enrollment documentation. Teachers also rely on existing academic data from the previous year to support

instructional planning, allowing the school to focus on continuity of learning rather than introductory assessments.

Together, these processes reflect Florecer’s commitment to community, belonging, and personalized support. By intentionally welcoming new families and thoughtfully preparing students for the year ahead, Florecer ensures that every learner enters the school community feeling known, valued, and ready to grow. Ultimately, the onboarding process at Florecer Community School is designed to transition a student from an "applicant" to a "Abeja." While continuing students focus on academic progression, the onboarding for new families is a cultural immersion into the school’s dual-language mission and community-led values. It is to be noted that new to the school students starting at the beginning of the school year will attend the THRIVE Camp in the Summer/ Mid Year Transfers will have a 2 day onboarding experience.

The following table outlines the Phases that entail the onboarding process for all parties.

Phase	Step	Description	Purpose	Applies To
Phase 1: Welcome & Confirmation	Welcome Communication	Personalized welcome email or letter from school leadership introducing Florecer’s mission, values, and next steps	Build excitement and establish connection with new families	New Students & Families
Phase 1: Welcome & Confirmation	Enrollment Documentation	Families submit enrollment paperwork, medical records, emergency contacts, and transportation information	Ensure all legal and operational requirements are completed before school begins	New Students & Families
Phase 1: Welcome & Confirmation	Family Portal Access	Provide access to school platforms, parent handbook, calendar, and communication tools	Ensure families understand how to receive updates and access information	New Students & Families
Phase 1: Welcome & Confirmation	Onboarding Checklist	Provide families with a checklist outlining key onboarding tasks and deadlines	Help families stay organized and complete all onboarding steps	New Students & Families
Phase 2: Family Orientation & Relationship Building	Family Orientation Session	In-person or virtual orientation covering school culture, expectations, academic model, attendance policies, and communication norms	Ensure families understand the school’s systems and expectations	New Students & Families
Phase 2: Family Orientation & Relationship Building	Staff Introductions	Families meet school leadership, teachers, student support staff, and operations team	Begin building relationships and trust with school staff	New Students & Families
Phase 2: Family Orientation & Relationship Building	Community Building Activities	Icebreakers, Q&A sessions, and optional campus tours	Help families feel connected to the school community	New Students & Families
Phase 3: Student Readiness & Academic Intake	Academic Diagnostics	Students complete baseline assessments in reading, math, and writing	Help teachers understand academic readiness and learning needs	New Students
Phase 3: Student Readiness & Academic Intake	Student Profile Development	Gather information about student interests, strengths, prior learning experiences, and support needs	Build a holistic understanding of the student	New Students

Phase 3: Student Readiness & Academic Intake	Student Meeting	Short introductory meeting with a teacher, advisor, or counselor	Build early relationships and support student comfort	New Students
Phase 4: Transition Into School Community	New Student Orientation Day	Orientation event where students learn schedules, tour the campus, and meet teachers	Help students become familiar with the school environment	New Students
Phase 4: Transition Into School Community	Peer Ambassador Program	New students are paired with a returning student who can help them navigate school routines	Support social integration and peer connection	New Students
Phase 4: Transition Into School Community	First Week Check-ins	Teachers or advisors conduct check-ins with new students during the first week	Identify adjustment challenges and provide support early	New Students
Continuing Student Process	Summer Communication	Families receive summer updates including school calendar, supply lists, and reminders	Prepare returning families for the upcoming school year	Continuing Students & Families
Continuing Student Process	Annual Information Update	Families update contact information and required forms	Maintain accurate records	Continuing Students & Families
Continuing Student Process	Back-to-School Meeting	Short meeting or communication reinforcing school expectations and updates	Reorient returning families to the upcoming year	Continuing Students & Families
Continuing Student Process	Academic Continuity	Teachers review previous year's academic data rather than conducting new diagnostic intake	Maintain continuity in student learning	

Lottery Narrative

Floreceer's Detailed Lottery Process

In accordance with Alabama Law, Floreceer Community School is committed to a transparent, random selection process to ensure that every student has an equal opportunity to enroll, regardless of their background or academic history. If the number of applications exceeds the school's capacity (120–150 students for the initial launch), a public lottery will be triggered.

The Lottery Hierarchy (Statutory Preferences). Per Alabama law, the lottery is not a single "pot" but a structured process that follows specific residency and relationship priorities:

1. Priority 1: Local District Residents: Students residing within the Birmingham City Schools district are enrolled first. If demand from this group exceeds capacity, a random lottery is held specifically for these residents.
2. Priority 2: Siblings & Staff: Preference is given to siblings of already enrolled students and children of the school's founders or full-time employees (the latter is legally capped at 10% of total enrollment).
3. Priority 3: Out-of-District Residents: If seats remain after all local applicants are placed, a second random lottery is conducted for students residing in the Greater Birmingham area or elsewhere in Alabama.

Ensuring a Fair and Equitable Process. To maintain public trust and remain in compliance, Floreceer implements the following safeguards:

- Public Drawing: The lottery is conducted during a public meeting called by the school's governing board. The date, time, and location are advertised in advance to allow families to witness the process in person or via a live digital stream.
-

Third-Party Oversight: To ensure impartiality, the school utilizes a certified automated lottery system (such as Lotterease or SchoolMint) or invites a neutral third party (e.g., a community leader or public official) to oversee the drawing.

- Waitlist Transparency: Students not selected for an immediate seat are placed on a numbered waitlist in the order their names were drawn. As spots become available, families are contacted strictly according to their waitlist rank.
- Bilingual Support: All lottery communications, including the live event and results notifications, are provided in both English and Spanish to ensure our dual-language community can participate fully.

Timeline of the Lottery

- Open Enrollment Closes: Late February 2027.
- Public Lottery Event: Mid-March 2027.
- Notification of Results: Within 48 hours of the lottery via email and text.
- Acceptance Deadline: Families typically have 10–14 days to confirm their spot before it is offered to the next student on the waitlist.

f) Specifically describe the plan for outreach to families in poverty; academically low-achieving students; students with disabilities; and other youth at risk of academic failure.

Student Outreach Plan for All Students

Florecer plans to recruit students from across the Birmingham Metro area based on student interest and need. We've identified the following zip codes 35218, 35208, 35217, 35216, 35207, 35220, 35215, 35048, 35173, based upon socio-economic factors and current educational outcomes. During this recruitment campaign, we will advertise our unique dual immersion academic program, our mission, vision and community values, alongside our extra curricular offerings.

Our marketing efforts and recruitment plan will target high-poverty communities in the West End area, to ensure that we reach students who have traditionally been academically or economically disadvantaged or at risk of failure. This will assist in promoting an anticipated enrollment from these communities. Reaching families in poverty, academically low-achieving students, students with disabilities, and other at-risk youth requires a multi-faceted approach. This includes community outreach and engagement with local community organizations, housing authorities, social service agencies, and faith-based institutions to host recruitment events. We plan to implement targeted marketing and communication strategies to distribute materials in languages represented within the community. This includes utilizing various communication channels such as social media platforms, local newspapers, radio stations, and community bulletin boards to disseminate information about the charter school's unique programs and support services. We will host information sessions that are inclusive of all populations, conveniently located, and flexible with times convenient to our targeted populations. We will provide families with alternative ways and support to conveniently submit enrollment applications via our website or paper copies available at recruitment events or in person as we canvass neighborhoods and meet families door to door. By implementing these strategies, we can effectively reach and enroll these populations of students.

With our goal to be an international learning community we recognize our recruitment must be multi-faceted and inclusive. Therefore our goals are to align to the idea that we can reach every child in need of a unique educational experience. Each student has a unique offering that deserves a seat at the table, and will enrich our global learning experience. We plan to advertise our special education inclusion model, English Language Learner programmatic model, and other educational supports we offer to all students to clearly articulate how FCS serves all students. Potential hurdles are the belief that one needs to be multilingual upon enrollment and or of a certain racial background to attend. Our recruitment team, our ED, Board Recruitment Committee and DSO, will work to develop a clear and inclusive narrative that debunks these potential myths.

Recruitment Strategy

1. Gather information about the local landscape (ongoing)

2. Intentionally listen to community input (ongoing)
3. Directly target incoming student populations at local community events such as neighborhood association events, festivals, local daycares and community groups.
4. Lead the recruitment with enrollment in mind.
5. Assess family enrollment specific needs (gather IEP's, home language data, assessment scores, or other pertinent information).

Element Review

Reviews is not provided

12. Student Discipline Policy and Plan

Reviewer Instructions

Please rate this section using the provided rubric.

Status: Completed

Form Result

Describe the policies and procedures for handling students' behavior problems, including measures to afford a student's right to due process.

Overarching Standard/Criteria: Compelling evidence of an approach to student discipline that will directly and consistently address compliance with applicable laws and school district and the school culture.

Evidence needed for addressing the overarching standard:

a) Describe the practices the school will use to promote good discipline, including both penalties for infractions and incentives for positive behavior.

[FCS School Discipline Policy](#) outlines the good discipline, including both penalties for infractions.

Outlined below are the Practices/Incentives for positive behavior.

Practices for Promoting Conscious Discipline and Positive Behavior

Floreecer's school motto is "Dare to Be Different." As such we believe in a multi-tiered approach to discipline that allows for clear conscious actions toward making decisions that are rooted in our THRIVE community values. FCS aligns with positive behavior practices, a proactive approach schools use to improve safety and promote positive behavior. The Tiered Positive Behavior Practices is a comprehensive and evidence-based approach to promoting positive behavior and reducing challenging behaviors among students. These practices involve the implementation of multiple tiers or levels of interventions, each targeting different levels of need. The focus is prevention, with appropriate consequences. It recognizes that students can only meet behavioral expectations if they know them. Floreecer will implement three tiers of support for students and staff:

- Tier 1 is a schoolwide, universal system for everyone in the school. Students learn basic behavioral expectations, like how to be respectful and kind. School staff members regularly

recognize and praise students for displaying the desired behavior. FCS will utilize Conscious Discipline (K-5) and nXu (6-8) to supplement the PBIS plan. Both programs are designed to help students develop and maintain their social and emotional learning through fresh, engaging lessons on topics that are important to students today. It provides consistent delivery of social-emotional learning that is fully aligned with the CASEL framework. Additionally, we have embedded SEL systems:

- THRIVE Bucks
 - Global Teams (House System)
 - Community/Morning meetings
 - School-wide culture building activities
 - Schoolwide SEL systems (Conscious Discipline/NxU)
 - Strong Academic systems of support & structure
- Tier 2 provides extra support based on data for students struggling with behavior. An evidence-based intervention and instruction may be warranted. If a student struggles with social interaction, a Tier 2 strategy might be providing Social Thinking Support to help students better understand how to react to situations. FCS will utilize the school-wide SEL approach from Conscious Discipline in a smaller group or one-on-one setting to support specific behavioral plans. FCS will include the following strategies:
 - Providing additional instruction and practice for behavioral, social, emotional, and academic skills
 - Increasing adult support and supervision
 - Providing additional opportunities for positive reinforcement
 - Increasing prompts or reminders
 - Increasing access to academic supports
 - Increasing school-family communication
 - Tier 3 is the most intensive level. This level is for students who need individualized support and services because of ongoing behavioral concerns. FCS is committed to providing the following supports:
 - Engaging students, educators, and families in functional behavioral assessments and intervention planning
 - Coordinating support through wraparound and person-centered planning
 - Implementing individualized, comprehensive, and function-based support

Substantial research supports the effectiveness of tiered positive behavior practices in schools. These practices have been shown to improve the overall school climate, increase academic engagement, reduce disciplinary referrals, and enhance social-emotional well-being among students. A case study conducted by McIntosh et al. (2010) focused on implementing a three-tiered positive behavior support model in three middle schools. The study found that using this model resulted in a decrease in problem behaviors and an increase in positive behaviors among students. The researchers also noted improvements in academic performance and school climate. Our ultimate goal is to have great independent learners and productive citizens that are globally minded and whole. Instilling our community values and practices will uplift the continuous growth of our community and future generations. The tiered strategies used by Floreer Community School are Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), Social-Emotional Learning (SEL), and Restorative Practices.

Student Incentives

THRIVE Bucks: Floreer promotes good choices by allowing students to earn incentives called THRIVE Bucks. THRIVE Bucks are distributed weekly to students using the designated school tracking system. Students can purchase items from the school store or book vending machines with the THRIVE Bucks and use them to attend celebratory and fun events. Once school starts, students will have an opportunity to suggest other ways that they would like to spend their incentives.

THRIVE Olympics: Floreer uses positive competition to motivate students and staff. Finding ways to increase motivation is crucial because it allows us to change behavior, develop competencies,

be creative, set goals, grow interests, make plans, develop talents, recognize passion, and boost engagement. We believe that motivation is everything, and everyone is motivated by something. FCS seeks to create and establish a culture of excellence in attendance, behavior, and academics. Students and staff are divided into House Systems. To tap into our students' competitive spirit, students will earn points for attendance, behavior, and academic growth. They have the opportunity to be rewarded for being the top house. Advisors will lead their community of students, motivating and monitoring students in the three key areas. Advisors will fill out a scoresheet every Friday and submit it through Google Forms. The scores are sorted in Google Sheets and will be displayed weekly in the Google slide scoreboard. The results are shared on a compelling scoreboard in the building and during morning community meetings. Students can see their house scores several times a day. This allows students to see where their house stands. Students and Houses can earn rewards from classroom pizza parties, ice cream socials, and field trips to the bowling alley and skating rink based on the points earned as a House.

In addition, the following incentives may be utilized to celebrate and encourage positive behaviors:

- Breakfast or lunch with the Head of School
- Name on the THRIVE Wall
- Raffle tickets for fun prizes
- Movie Nights
- In-school Field Trips
- VIP privileges (Students get excited to earn special benefits such as prime parking spots or premium seating at a sporting event)
- Special assembly
- Faculty versus student competition
- Field day
- School Dance
- Music in the hallways
- Students Led-Teacher Silly Games (Students will choose a faculty member to duct tape to the wall during lunch or at a school assembly. Students can also choose to do an ice bucket challenge with a teacher. They can host a teacher dance-off or a lip-sync battle. This option works well with open-minded teachers, but it's often a good time for everyone involved) .

SEL practices

FCS's intentional approach to SEL honors students' humanity and recognizes that students do not thrive in chaos; there must be a clear, consistent behavior strategy and plan that includes positive and negative reinforcements. Staff, families and the surrounding community must explicitly teach behavioral expectations and daily requirements for academic support and behavioral consequences. Alongside the space to fully understand the critical developmental needs of our students at various points in their learning journey.

K-5

Frederick Douglass once stated, "It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men." At FCS we align most closely the Seven Skills of Conscious Discipline which are Composure, Encouragement, Assertiveness, Choices, Empathy, Positive Intent and Consequences. We believe teaching students how to address these skills works as a preventative force to alleviate the catastrophic events/behaviors that uproot their purpose and hamper their intrinsic growth. These skills are in direct alignment with our THRIVE Community Values. The model is rooted in teaching with intent emotional regulation, self-awareness, boundaries and consequences for both staff and students.

6-8

As an FCS continues to develop, we recognize that intentional lessons on purpose and awareness of responsibility to themselves and others must be rooted in daily practices. As such students are given the space and opportunity to learn about their purpose through our nXu curriculum rooted in linking students personal development to their purpose. Students are guided through lessons throughout the school year with the intention of building a strong set of skills that serve as a deepening of their

purpose and thought process for next steps There are six essential durable competencies—Learner, Reflector, Communicator, Collaborator, Contributor, and Critical Thinker—ensuring they are college and career ready and aligned to our [Passport to the Globe](#).

Strong School Culture

As a school we are upheld to a standard of ethics and students are explicitly trained in and subsequently held accountable to the FCS Code of Conduct. An extensive three-week practice-lab based staff orientation is conducted during the summer to ensure that staff is prepared to effectively build a school culture that drives student achievement through a structured and disciplined learning environment. This is where we uplift our THRIVE core values to our staff and then students during our mandatory Florecer Days student practice based orientations. Research has proven that setting the highest expectation of students and meeting them where they are while upholding the standard breathes life into their growth and development. Our code of conduct is not just words in a book but a conscious school-wide. Additionally, we celebrate with our hallmark dance/cheer at every weekly meeting the growth of our global teams and ambassadors. Students receive Passport stamps for quarterly incentive trips to student-chosen places, School Swag giveaways and our Prime Minister champion belt for exemplary behavior. We follow the New Zealand All Blacks mantra “Better, never rests.” As such we strive to push our ambassadors to achieve better at every level.

Restorative Practices & Mental Health Support

Restorative practices at Florecer are essential for building community and trust as outlined in our larger vision. We anticipate always maintaining a diverse body of students that will perceive boundaries and expectations with a diverse lens. “Restorative Practices comes from the idea of Restorative Justice which brings persons harmed by crime and the person who harmed them, along with affected family and community members, together in dialogue that aims to build understanding, explore how the offense has impacted those involved, including the community, and develop agreements for what will be done to make things right. The result: truly meaningful justice for all involved.” Aligned with our school wide preventative practices and school wide cultural immersion we have measures that support dealing with conflict. We know that conflict does not go away with the implementation of a severe consequence alone, but as a true learning community we want to uplift moments where conflicts arise and learn and grow as a better collective.

Restorative practices include:

- Community Circles for processing
- Public
- apologies for misbehaviors
- Cooperation contracts
- Peer mediation.
- Restorative Conferences

At Florecer we believe that student discipline is rooted in addressing the root causes. Not just the symptomatic behaviors. In the past our practitioners have found that the most challenging students were also students that struggled with high levels of anxiety and depression. As such we believe in providing mental health counseling on site. In both small and individual group settings.

Restorative justice empowers students to resolve disputes independently and in small groups.

Establishing an effective school culture is much more than a discipline policy. If we only deal with the symptoms of the issue, then the problems will reoccur. However, if we deal with the root, we can help stop the behavior from occurring again. FCS seeks to implement strategies to prevent inappropriate behavior and student misconduct. Our goal is to prepare our staff to be culturally responsive in classroom management and provide all students with equitable opportunities for learning by minimizing discriminatory school discipline practices that occur when the behaviors are misinterpreted. Proven techniques and schoolwide systems will reinforce and establish a thriving and positive school culture. Each class will have clear and common expectations using the same vocabulary throughout the school. Conversely, restorative practices will enable us to flip the script of traditional modes of punishment that focus only on punishing bad behavior but rather add layers. In

contrast, offenders take accountability for their actions, learn to repair the harm done to people, and accept appropriate consequences for their behavior.

Citations

<https://www.pbis.org/pbis/what-is-pbis>

<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1273750.pdf>

Rain, J. S. (2014). Loving Guidance, LLC. Final report: Conscious Discipline Research Study.

<https://www.nxueducation.org/curriculum-overview>

<https://www.iirp.edu/>

b) Give a list and definitions of the offenses for which students in the school must (where non-discretionary) and may (where discretionary) be suspended or expelled, respectively.

Floreecer's Commitment to THRIVE in adverse scenarios

We believe deeply in restorative practices, and efforts to bring restoration to the hearts and minds of those who make decisions that do not align with our school community values, student commitments and school safety goals. However, we have a zero tolerance policy for egregious behaviors that harm the potential, or immediate lives of students, staff and the larger community. Our goal is that we have measures in place to circumvent these behaviors, but that all student discipline infractions that result in suspension and recommendation for expulsion are listed below. In addition to any of the preceding infractions, any breaches of Federal law, Alabama State law, or bylaws of the City of Birmingham may be handled in cooperation with the local Police Department and may result in recommendation for expulsion although FCS attempts not to expel students. In the event that students are expelled alternative instruction will be provided by a designated system. Floreecer's structures and supports work to constantly avoid expulsion at all cost, we believe that instructional time lost does not allow for the best outcomes. As such our tiered PBIS approach, SEL practices, incentives and school-wide systems work to support the unique needs of all students.

The following list of offenses is not comprehensive but addresses critical behaviors that are prevalent in the students in K-8 institutions:

- Student racial/ethnic tensions.
- Student bullying causing bodily harm or retaliatory actions.
- Student cyberbullying with threatening actions that materialize and or impact the school environment
- Student sexual harassment of other students.
- Student harassment of other students based on sexual orientation or gender identity.
- Student verbal abuse of teachers.
- Widespread disorder in classrooms, that causes physical harm to property, students, staff and threatens the safety of our school community.
- Physical abuse of any kind that results in bodily harm or the potential of harm
- Any egregious behaviors that are deemed offensive to the well-being of school staff, students and stakeholders.

The following offenses are considered severe violations of school safety and will result in mandatory suspension and/or recommendation for expulsion, consistent with applicable state and federal law.

1. Possession of a Firearm or Destructive Device. Bringing, possessing, or using a firearm, explosive, or destructive device on school property, at school-sponsored activities, or while under school supervision.
2. Possession or Use of a Dangerous Weapon. Possessing, brandishing, or using knives, weapons, or other objects capable of causing serious bodily harm on school grounds or at school events.
3. Serious Physical Assault or Battery. Intentionally causing or attempting to cause serious physical injury to another student, staff member, or school visitor.
4. Sexual Assault or Sexual Battery. Any form of non-consensual sexual contact, coercion, or assault occurring on school grounds or during school-related activities.
- 5.

Distribution or Sale of Illegal Drugs. Selling, distributing, or attempting to distribute controlled substances, illegal drugs, or unauthorized prescription medications on school property or during school-sponsored activities.

6. Arson. Intentionally starting or attempting to start a fire that endangers people or property.

7. Credible Threats of Violence. Making credible threats to harm students, staff, or the school community, including threats involving weapons or mass harm.

The following behaviors may result in disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion, depending on severity, frequency, and circumstances. The school will consider restorative practices, student intent, prior behavior, and age when determining consequences.

1. Fighting or Physical Aggression. Engaging in physical altercations or aggressive behavior that does not result in serious bodily harm.

2. Bullying or Harassment. Repeated verbal, physical, or social behavior intended to intimidate, harm, or exclude another student, including cyberbullying.

3. Possession or Use of Alcohol, Tobacco, or Drugs. Possessing, using, or being under the influence of alcohol, tobacco products, vaping devices, marijuana, or other drugs while at school or school-related events.

4. Theft or Vandalism. Stealing, attempting to steal, or intentionally damaging school property or the property of others.

5. Disruption of the Educational Environment. Persistent behavior that significantly disrupts classroom instruction or school operations.

6. Defiance of School Authority. Repeated refusal to follow reasonable directions from teachers or school staff.

7. Academic Dishonesty. Cheating, plagiarism, or falsifying academic work or school records.

8. Inappropriate Use of Technology. Misuse of school technology systems, including accessing inappropriate material, cyber harassment, or violating technology use policies.

9. Harassment or Discrimination. Behavior targeting an individual based on race, ethnicity, gender, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or other protected characteristics.

10- Trespassing or Leaving Campus Without Permission. Entering restricted areas or leaving school grounds during school hours without authorization.

c) Provide an explanation of how the school will consider the rights of special education students and students with disabilities in disciplinary actions and proceedings.

Discipline of Students with Special Education Services

At Floreecer Community School, any student identified as having an impairment under the provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Americans with Disabilities Act, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is subject to the Discipline Policies at FCS and requirements and may be suspended or recommended for expulsion. However, FCS will ensure that all procedural safeguards and necessary adjustments are aligned with all state and federal laws and mandates, including IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Plan of 1973, which refers to the discipline of students with disabilities.

If addressing a major infraction involving a 504 or special population student, a review committee will hold a manifestation meeting to determine the following:

- Is the student's misconduct a manifestation of their disability?
- Was the student appropriately placed and receiving appropriate services at the time of the behavior?
- Were behavior intervention strategies consistent with the student's IEP or 504 Plan?

If the team determines that the student's conduct was not a direct manifestation of their disability, that the student was placed appropriately, and was receiving appropriate services at the time of the behavior, at that time, the student may receive the same consequence aligned to the incident in the school's discipline handbook.

Adherence to ALSDE and Federal Guidelines

The Floreecer's Discipline Policy supports and explicitly requires the exemplary behavior of all students within our school community. In the case of a special education student, or a student who receives 504 accommodations, FCS ensures that we make the necessary adjustments to comply with all mandates of State and federal laws, including the IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Plan of 1973, regarding the discipline of students with disabilities. Specifically, if addressing a major incident involving a Section 504 student or special education student, the Executive Director/Principal convenes a review committee to determine all of the following: whether the student's misconduct was a manifestation of his or her disability; whether the student was appropriately placed and receiving the appropriate services at the time of the misconduct; and/or whether behavior intervention strategies were in effect and consistent with the student's IEP or 504 Plan.

In alignment with the ALSDE guidance adapted directly from the Department of Special Education Services we adhere to the following guidance:

- All students, those with and without disabilities, are entitled to certain rights before they can be excluded for any period of time from public school for disciplinary reasons.
- School personnel should consider unique circumstances on a case-by-case basis when determining whether a change placement is appropriate for a student with a disability who violates the code of student conduct.
- School personnel may remove a student with a disability who violates the code of student conduct from the current placement to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting, another setting, or suspension, for not more than 10 school days.
- Any disciplinary removal of a student with a disability from the current placement for more than 10 consecutive school days is a "change of placement" for the student.
- Disciplinary removals of a student with a disability for more than 10 days total in a school year might be a "change of placement" for the student if there is a pattern of removals.
- Disciplinary removals of a student with a disability that are not necessarily called "suspension" might be counted as "change of placement" days for that student.
- Care should be taken to ensure that a student is not denied access to their specially designed instruction due to frequent disciplinary removals.
- If a student is placed in ISS (in school suspension) and no special education services are provided, that day is counted as a day of removal.
- If transportation is a related service on the IEP and the student is suspended from the bus and alternative transportation is not provided, the bus removal is counted as an out of school suspension.
- School personnel have the authority to remove a student with a disability from the current placement for up to ten school days and for additional days for subsequent incidents, as long as a change of placement does not occur.
- Before a change of placement occurs, unless under special circumstances, the IEP Team must meet to make a manifestation determination.
- If the student's behavior is found to be a manifestation of the child's disability, the IEP Team shall ensure that a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) is conducted unless the Local Education Agency (LEA) had conducted a FBA in the past before the behavior resulted in change of placement occurred.
- School personnel shall implement a Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP) for the student, or if a BIP already has been developed, review the BIP, and modify it, as necessary, to address the behavior and return the student to original placement unless the school and parent(s) agree to a change in placement through the IEP process.
- Even where no manifestation is determined and placement is changed, the student must continue to receive a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) and, if appropriate, a FBA must be conducted and BIP must be developed.
-

After a student with a disability has been removed for 10 school days in the same school year, the student must

- receive “FAPE” during subsequent removals. Basically, no matter how dangerous or disruptive a student is, a school system must follow the change of placement procedures.
- When the behavior that violates the school’s code of conduct is not a manifestation of the student’s disability and leads to expulsion for regular education students who exhibit that behavior, it is technically possible to expel the student with a disability. However, the school system is still required to provide FAPE so as to enable the student to continue to participate in the general education curriculum and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the student’s IEP.
- School personnel may remove a student with a disability to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 school days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student’s disability in cases involving weapons, drugs or serious bodily injury.
- The parent of a child with a disability who disagrees with a disciplinary decision or a school system that believes that maintaining the current placement of a student with a disability is substantially likely to result in injury may request an expedited due process hearing.
- A hearing officer may order the return of the student to the placement from which the student was removed or order a change of placement to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 school days.
- When a hearing is initiated, by either the parent or LEA, the student remains in the interim alternative educational setting pending the expedited decision of the hearing officer or until the expiration of a placement change, whichever occurs first, unless the parent and the school system agree otherwise.

d) Discuss the procedures for due process when a student is suspended or expelled as a result of a code of conduct violation, including a description of the appeal process that the school will employ for students facing expulsion and a plan for providing services to students who are expelled or out of school for more than ten days.

Floreecer’s Due Process

All students facing out of school suspension are legally entitled to due process as outlined in the passing of HB188. For a short-term out of school suspension (i.e., a suspension for less than ten days), the student will, prior to the suspension, be told by the principal or school leader the basis for the suspension, the evidence supporting the consequence, and will be able to give his or her side of the story. For a suspension longer than ten days, a student will have the opportunity to present evidence to the school leader in a more formal proceeding, is entitled to be represented by counsel, will be provided the evidence supporting the suspension, and will be given the opportunity to confront the evidence against the student and to present evidence as well. The student will be removed from the school immediately if a danger to others and the school environment is determined. In appropriate circumstances the student may also be referred to law enforcement authorities. The most serious consequence, if all else fails and in extraordinary circumstances, will be recommendation for expulsion of the student from FCS. A student facing expulsion and his or her parents or guardians will be afforded all due process protections required under applicable laws and regulations including a full and fair hearing.

FCS protects all students’ educational rights and safety. Each student will be afforded due process when procedures outlined in the School Discipline/ Policy Code of Conduct are implemented. The Head of School will ensure that all staff are familiar with the applicable policies and provide each member with a copy of the plan. Students who have been referred for any discipline infraction have the right to due process aligned with local and state regulations, including the ability for students to:

- Be provided the reason for consideration of the intervention/consequence
- Present their side of the story
-

Bring forth any applicable witnesses or evidence

- Receive equal treatment without regard to race, sex, creed, color, religion, national origin, or disability.

Due processes will be documented if the school administrator or designee considers suspension. In writing, school administrators will provide the student and legal guardian with the notice of suspension, including any stipulations for reinstatement, such as a restorative meeting or restitution. The Head of School will conduct a due process hearing within 5 to 10 school days from receipt of the suspension notice. The student can present their case during a formal due process hearing. The Head of School will conduct the due process hearing using the following protocol:

- The student can call witnesses on their behalf.
- The student can present their side of the story and any evidence that applies.
- The student must appear with a legal guardian.
- The school administrator recommended that the hearing submit all proof of the alleged violation.
- The written explanation shall be provided to the student and parent within 48 hours.
- The student will be allowed to admit or deny the allegation.
- The Head of School will determine whether or not the offense has occurred and the appropriate intervention/consequence.
- If the student or parent/guardian wishes, they can appeal the Head of School's decision to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors will convene a minimum of 3 members for the appeal using the following protocol:
 - The Head of School will present their written report to the board, including evidence of due process.
 - The student will have the opportunity to advocate on behalf of their student.
 - Within 48 hours, the Board of Directors must present the parent, student, and Head of School with written notice of their decision. If the Board overturns the conclusion of the Head of School, the Head of School is responsible for assigning a reasonable alternative consequence.
 - The decision of the Board of Directors is final.

If an FCS student has been expelled or removed from school for less than ten days, when a student is alleged to have violated the school's Code of Conduct and a short-term suspension is being considered, the following procedures will occur:

1. Notice of Alleged Violation. The student will receive verbal or written notice of the alleged misconduct and the specific rule or policy violated.
2. Opportunity to Respond. Before a suspension is imposed, the student will be given an opportunity to respond to the allegations and present their version of events.
3. Parent/Guardian Notification. The school will notify the student's parent or guardian as soon as reasonably possible, typically within 24 hours, regarding:
 - The nature of the offense
 - The duration of the suspension
 - Any conditions for the student's return to school
4. Written Documentation. Parents/guardians will receive written notice describing the disciplinary action and any required follow-up steps.

If an FCS student has been expelled or removed from school for more than ten days, when a violation may result in a long-term suspension or expulsion, the school will provide additional procedural protections.

1. Written Notice of Charges. The student and parent/guardian will receive written notice of the alleged violation and the proposed disciplinary action.
2. Formal Disciplinary Hearing. The student will have the opportunity to participate in a formal disciplinary hearing conducted by the school's disciplinary committee or designated school administrator.
3. Rights During the Hearing. At the hearing, the student and family will have the right to:

- Present their version of the incident
 - Provide evidence or documentation
 - Present witnesses when appropriate
 - Be accompanied by a parent, guardian, or advisor
4. Decision and Written Determination. Following the hearing, the school will issue a written determination outlining:
- Findings of fact
 - The disciplinary decision
 - The duration of the suspension or expulsion
 - Information regarding the appeal process

Appeals Process

FCS students recommended for expulsion will have the opportunity to appeal the decision.

1. Filing an Appeal. The student or parent/guardian may submit a written appeal within a specified timeframe (typically 5–10 school days) after receiving the disciplinary decision.
2. Appeal Review. The appeal will be reviewed by the FCS School Board or a designated appeals committee, which was not directly involved in the original disciplinary decision.
3. Appeal Hearing. During the appeal process:
 - The student and family may present additional information or evidence
 - The school may present relevant documentation related to the incident
4. Final Determination. The board or appeals committee will issue a written final decision affirming, modifying, or overturning the disciplinary action. This decision will be considered final within the school's disciplinary process.

Academic Support and Restoration

Floreecer is committed to ensuring continuity of learning for students removed from the regular school environment. Students who are suspended or expelled for more than ten school days will be provided access to educational services that may include:

- Remote or online instructional assignments
- Alternative learning placement or supervised instructional setting
- Academic work packets aligned with classroom instruction
- Scheduled check-ins with teachers or academic staff
- Access to tutoring or instructional support when feasible

The school will ensure that students have the opportunity to continue academic progress and remain engaged in learning while serving disciplinary consequences. This includes special education and 504 services. The Coordinator of special education will collaborate with the FCS Team and the parents to create a remote individualized learning plan consisting of the steps for weekly progress monitoring. Once a student can return to school, the team will reconvene to create a safe reentry plan to ensure the student's success. A safe reentry plan is inclusive of the following but not limited to

- A planned reentry conference with admin, parents, and the student to review expectations for behavior and academic progress
- Provide appropriate behavioral or counseling supports if needed
- Develop a restorative plan to support the student's successful transition back into the school community.

e) Provide the school's proposed discipline policy. Discuss how students and parents will be informed of the school's policies.

[Proposed School Discipline Policy](#) has been provided (via the attachment titled School's Discipline Policy)

Highlights of the School Discipline Policy

As stated above in the School Discipline Policy, misbehavior at Florecer results in consequences. Restorative practices are used with fidelity and whenever possible to address the needs of the whole child. We believe the curated environment that our school has created will further each student's development as a human being. We are committed to building strong, resilient and integral student ambassadors. When necessary we provide restorative disciplinary practices with the utmost respect for the humanity in each child. Those restorative practices include:

- 1) holding a student accountable for his or her behavior;
- 2) restoration or remedies related to the behavior of the student;
- 3) relief for any victim of the student; and,
- 4) changing the behavior or environment (when possible) of the student through remediation.

If negative behaviors persist, or if students have not adequately fulfilled the given consequence, the severity of the consequences may be put in place. Consequences vary based on the grade level of the student, the severity of the action, and the frequency of the incident. Such consequences may include:

- Redirection meeting with the counselor or school based dean;
- Student reflection on community violation (may be written, private or public);
- Removal of school privileges (including school trips, in-school privileges, etc.);
- School/community service;
- Opportunity for Change List
- Short-term out-of-school suspension;
- Long-term out-of-school suspension; and
- Removal from the school community.

Our Rationale

To preserve valuable learning/development time, FCS strives to keep its students in school and in classrooms. However, allowing the students to repeat the same violations in the same situations can have a deleterious effect on the culture of our school. Therefore, when a student's actions are detracting from the ability of other Students to learn in a safe, asset-based environment, it may be necessary to remove the offending student from the classroom. If a student's consequence involves being sent home or suspended for any period of time, a parent or guardian may be asked to meet with an administrator regarding the student's behavior prior to his or her return to school. Please note that suspended students who are sent to school notwithstanding the consequences outlined in their suspension letters will receive escalating consequences for violating our Code of Conduct (Failure to Comply with School-Imposed Consequences).

Tiered Behavior Responses

While FCS strives to implement our behavior system consistently, we also recognize that some Students' needs may be best met through customized behavior plans. We also seek to tailor consequences to the severity and frequency of the misguided behavior and the student's individual circumstances. Both the severity of consequences and the scope and depth of structured, proactive support provided by the our FCS team to misguided Students will increase commensurate with the severity and frequency of the violations. As the consequences become more severe, we will notify and seek the involvement of families to help design and implement response plans. FCS's response to behaviors will escalate as repeated negative behaviors escalate, with the most serious infractions of the Code of Conduct receiving the most serious consequences. Violence directed to other Students or staff will lead to the most serious consequences. Additionally, any egregious behavior that is not outlined in the Code of Conduct but that poses a serious threat/potential threat to our FCS/surrounding community both in-person/online will warrant severe consequences.

Notification of Discipline Policy

Florecer Community School ensures that the Family & Student Handbook will be provided with the School's Discipline Policy as a living document that is provided to all Florecer students and families at their initial family meeting and signed for before enrollment. Additionally, we ask that parents uphold these expectations to their complete fidelity. All students and families will receive the Student and Family handbook (containing the Student code of conduct, technology policy and dress code) at the start of each year. This handbook contains the discipline policy as well as all pertinent information for making the school year a success.

Family Orientation Meetings: All students new to FCS must have a family orientation meeting with the Dean of Students/Head of Schools. During this meeting, the Dean of Students establishes the relationship with the student and family members and introduces the discipline procedures to the family.

Family Conferences & Weekly Newsletters: All parents will have access to the updated discipline policy through communication with the the weekly newsletter and through designated family conferences.

School's Discipline Policy	File name:	Updated 2026 FCS Proposed Discipline Policy.pdf
	Uploaded:	03/12/2026 06:20 AM
	Uploaded by:	On'draya Morris

Element Review

Reviews is not provided

13. Family and Community Involvement

Reviewer Instructions

Please rate this section using the provided rubric.

Status: Completed

Form Result

Provide evidence of significant engagement efforts with the community in which the proposed school will reside.

Overarching Standard/Criteria: Compelling evidence of how parents and community members will directly, consistently and appropriately be involved in the development of the proposed school.

Evidence needed for addressing the overarching standard:

a) Describe and provide evidence of the role to date of any parents and community members involved in developing the proposed school. Evidence may include sign-in sheets, surveys, photos, and direct feedback by community members.

Parent and Community Engagement

Community engagement has been an integral part of designing the charter petition for Floreecer Community School. We have involved community members in every step of the process. Community voice has been involved in decisions such as determining the name of the school, the educational model, and school location. Additionally we are a family-driven board with one of our prospective parents serving as a founding member and proposed Board Chair. Additionally, Floreecer is founded by the heart of a mother and educator with deep ties to education that will serve the needs of the community. Our conversations with community members and families also resulted in a shift in our timeline of opening. We were initially exploring a 6-12 educational model, however overwhelmingly our families asked to include an elementary model that allowed children to take part of a bilingual education early and students would benefit more from a K-8 model implemented with high fidelity since no such option exists within the state and specifically Birmingham. Another piece of family engagement has been focused on sharing information about the Dual Language immersion style of teaching and learning to families unfamiliar with it. In our conversations with families and community

members, there was an expressed interest in Florecer's plan to build relationships with schools so that once children transition from Florecer, they could continue their education in a learning environment that continues to set them up

for success. Through a community-centered, whole-child education, Florecer Community School prepares all children K-8 to develop the knowledge, skills, and agency to lead purposeful lives. All of these insights highlighted above came as a result of the work of our grassroots outreach. Our founding team has engaged with over 250 community members in many ways. We have conducted surveys, held focus groups, held tabling events, met with parents one-on-one, attended community festivals and events and held virtual zoom information sessions. There is a want and a need for Florecer.

Currently Florecer Community School has completed community design sessions on a one-on-one and small group basis. We are led by parents as our proposed Executive Director and Board Chair and several board members are parents of local school-aged children from diverse backgrounds. We have sat and engaged with local community members in Ensley, and the Birmingham region to hear about the vision for serving the community. Additionally, we have conducted community design sessions within the Ensley community with local parents, students, community members and organizations. Florecer Community School is actively engaging in continuous community feedback which includes answering questions around future partnerships, scheduling in person/virtual meetings and cultivating relationships with potential families and students. As we continue to cultivate those relationships we are also working to reach out to all elected officials associated with the focus community, neighborhood associations, and local residents to share our plans for our proposed school model, while allowing them to guide our efforts.

Building the Momentum

Through our community engagement, we have tapped into a wealth of community desire for our unique and intentional offering of dual language immersion in a K-8 learning environment. Furthermore, families and community partners recognize the need to address the language access gap that affects both monolingual learners and multilingual learners. In previous years, The US Secretary of Education has placed a priority on our educational ecosystem creating pathways to multilingualism. The State of Alabama and our governmental, business and educational partners have also aligned with this priority. In April 2022 the State of Alabama approved the Seal of Biliteracy for our multi-language learners. As such we feel that Florecer is uniquely positioned to be an incubator for this unique school model to address the pressing need of student achievement as one of the State of Alabama's hotspots for English learners and a growing population of transplant families. We truly believe all children desire a high-quality education and families are excited to build momentum alongside our model.

We continue to answer the call of families, educators and the larger community. Thus far our efforts have focused on the Birmingham/Ensley/West End community with the proposed opening in the Ensley community. We are also utilizing census and local school performance data and neighborhood demographic information to determine potential community interest and need in the area. As we consider parent/community involvement we have three goals; uplifting family voices, creating a community that supports our school community, and communicating with our families. We believe these strategic goals are the highest leverage of developing our most important catalyst: our family/community engagement.

Evidence of Community Involvement	File name:	FCS Family and Community Engagement Documentation. .pdf
	Uploaded:	03/12/2026 05:34 AM
	Uploaded by:	On'draya Morris

b) Describe and provide evidence of initiatives to assess and build parent and community demand for the school. Describe planned engagement efforts with parents and community members from the time that the school is approved through opening.

Our mission is to build a school community that is centered on community innovation and rooted in building bilingual and biliterate changemakers. Our community values were designed alongside families in the community and rooted in Valuing community and community voices. We have sat on porches, listened to residents and served alongside other community leaders to ensure we are not designing Florecer in silos.

As a growing organization our listening tours with families and community partners have been ongoing for more than 12 months. Listening to their concerns and hopes for FCS to align with a unique academically uncompromising dual language immersion model. We have completed several community forums now in designated areas for family access and with family support. We have attended Parent Symposiums for education in Alabama, and community events with HICA (HICA Open House/Latino Opportunity Summit) and featured our school in local Spanish-speaking publications.

Interested Family Meetings. We have an open door policy for families to meet and gain more knowledge about our program. This has been the most utilized tool in our assessment of family and community engagement, as we are finding families want to explore our school model in a low stakes environment that often supports their specific questions. These meetings have occurred via Zoom and in-person.

Social Media Engagement. We have launched our parent friendly social media platforms and have created a parent interest survey that has been available via our QR code and is posted on each of our flyers. We currently have nearly 100 followers on Instagram and are actively working to increase our social media presence by consulting with local social media/marketing expertise.

Community Engagement As a community school we are deeply rooted in community engagement and community voice. As such we continue to develop our community engagement model as a vital part of our school's success.

For example, we have engaged the larger Birmingham Metro Community through the following Community Engagement Opportunities:

- HICA Open House attendee, May 2024
- Latino Opportunity Summit attendee, July 2024
- Black Alabamians for Education Parent Symposium in Gadsden, August 2024
- Meeting with the Diocese serving the Ensley community in District 8 & 9, October 2024
- Canvassing in the Tarrant Community, Ensley Community and Hoover community.
- Community design forums at the East Ensley Public Library, November 14th & 21st of 2024
- District 9 Ensley Neighborhood Association Meeting, November 2024
- Outreach at the NSFA Charter School Conference, November 2024
- Outreach/Engagement at the Alabama Opportunity Summit, November 2024
- Drafted and Distributed Flyers for Family Interest with QR Codes across Birmingham
- Featured in La Jefa Social Media, November 2024
- Fall 2024 Featured advertisement in El Nido
- Ensley Unity Day June 2025
- Fiesta Bham September 27,2025 (provided bilingual educational resources, and bilingual engagement via Loteria)
- Florecer Fall 2025 Virtual Information Session (October 20, 2025)
- Provided School Information & Attended Books & Treats: A Halloween Literacy Bash at the MLK Recreation Center
- Renew Birmingham Building Bridges Dinner with a Purpose (11/7/2025)
- Renew Birmingham Mighty Moms volunteer/speaker 11/22/2025
- Magic Box Conversation Club Ready to Bloom Community Cohort (November thru now)
- Attended the gallery showing of the Ensley Childhood Project and met with members of the The Flourish;
- Provided flyers to the Operation Dignity Initiative (December 2025)
-

Conducted at Community Coffee and Conversation Event at Heritage Coffee in Ensley (1/10/2025)

- Spoke at planned BCS Public Hearing for Florecer Community School/x.STREAM Minds Academy (had over 10 speakers all in favor of Florecer) 1/14/2026
- Met with parents at the Black Women's Mental Health Institute on 3/1/2026
- Met with the Latino Business Association President 1/13/2026

We have received letters of support from the following community partners that represent a plethora of organizations, families and community stakeholders in the local community, and educational educational landscape. Through our current engagement efforts, we have garnered interest in our school model and have engaged with over 100 individuals and families. Florecer has been able to build authentic community support with the following organizations:

- The Chalker Group- The Chalker Group functions as a community partner and liaison to top recruits in the Birmingham and Huntsville regions. Their support has provided us with an abundance of resources to develop our board and business and community support. Additionally, they have highlighted the immense need for dual language immersion school models in the Birmingham metro region for diverse talent looking to relocate in Birmingham.
- Jefferson State Community College- Through our partnership with Jefferson State Community College, we will continue to support ESL classes and connect our families to Adult Education and GED Completion courses. Additionally, Jefferson State provides a wide variety of supports to uplift and empower adult education.
- Ensley Development Corporation- Met with Ensley Development Corporation developers to share our vision about creating a community space for families that would entail a strong vision for a community school in the heart of Ensley
- Cohill Foundation- The Cohill Foundation, led by LaKisha Cohill, will provide support with our Creative Arts program as another touchpoint to address the inherent traumas our children experience. The Cohill Foundation provides art therapy through their approach using the creative and expressive arts to develop coping skills, and confidence in students K-12.
- Latino News-Latino News is another community supporter that serves the Latino community through media coverage and community engagement. Latino News has provided Florecer with on-going marketing support and future communication support.
- New Schools for Alabama (NSFA)- As an alumni for New Schools for Alabama School Founder's Fellowship NSFA has committed to provide ongoing support that has included: branding support, technical assistance and charter application assistance.
- 22Beacon - 22Beacon functions as our facilities technical assistance liaison by providing technical assistance & facilities management support in site selection, due diligence support, design, and construction management.
- BuildUp Community School- BuildUp Birmingham will serve our community by providing physical space for community events as well as supporting our students/families beyond the K-8 pipeline. We envision being able to provide families holistic support in serving students in all grade bands with options that support their unique and specific needs.
- DC Bilingual- as a national front-runner in the movement for high quality bilingual education we are DC Bilingual is set to ensure that our students are able to receive the very best in a well-rounded bilingual education
- MoDiv-working to support our school model in developing high quality micro-credentials for our professional learning and development tracks.
- Rooted Impact Consulting- Rooted Impact has been pivotal in providing vocal community support for our unique model and providing opportunities for strategic alignment in getting our story out in the community.
- Magic Box Conversation Club - pairing our families/community members with bilingual education curriculum and tools for family engagement. Helped to launch the Ready to Bloom Community Cohort.
-

Carmen Novoa- a well-respected educator and leader in family engagement, who has experience in international education and has since transitioned to our founding board.

- The Flourish AL- a local arts organization that is working to develop an ongoing support for Arts integrated learning in the community and local schools.

FCS Community and Family Engagement Plan Until Opening Day

Engaging parents and community members from the time the school is approved through its opening is crucial for building a strong foundation and fostering a positive school culture. Establish open communication channels, hold information sessions, form PTOs or parent advisory committees, organize community events, seek input on policies and programs, encourage volunteerism, and collaborate with local businesses and organizations. Florecer aims to create a sense of ownership and collaboration that benefits all stakeholders. Some approaches include:

- Visual Advertising. The school will secure billboard advertising space to help families connect to the school's website.
- Digital Advertising such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, and LinkedIn to inform the community about recruitment, enrollment, and engagement events.
- Print Advertisements, including flyers, postcards, brochures, posters, handouts, and branded swag, will be distributed by mail, canvassing, and posted at community and business locations, with appropriate permission.
- Host monthly informational and collaborative meetings to keep parents and stakeholders informed of the school's progress and continue to seek feedback and input as we prepare for the opening.
- Establishing a Community Engagement team actively involved in recruitment and school communications while engaging with school team members to ensure effective communications are reciprocated and ongoing. This team will help inform parents about the school and enrollment procedures.
- Face-to-Face Interactions. FCS will engage with potential parents and students through activities at local community events hosted by other community and nonprofit organizations, canvassing youth athletic events, and presenting to the faith and civic community when possible.
- Prior to Opening we will host monthly newsletters that will then transition to weekly newsletters until we are officially open.
- Cafecito y Florecer we will continue to engage in spaces that will support our families voices with coffee and discussion in a fireside chat format.
- Hosting Monthly Information Sessions: monthly forums alternating virtually and in-person through fall 2027.
- Being in the community as a continued sign of support for change and partnering with likeminded community partners.

Note: Posts and print materials will also be in Spanish to ensure that families whose second language is English receive up-to-date information about the school and have opportunities to be actively engaged.

We are coordinating with several local organizations and venues to continue our listening tour and interest sessions in the West End and surrounding areas. Our community partners have been instrumental in supporting our efforts as well. Raising awareness and developing the space to create a community dialogue.

c) Describe planned efforts to engage and provide opportunities for parents in the life of the school beyond the role of a parent advocate on the governing board. Explain the plan for building family-school partnerships that strengthen support for learning and encourage parental involvement. Describe any commitments or volunteer activities the school will seek from, offer to, or require of parents.

Ongoing Family Engagement

FCS believes that engaging families in the life of the school at all grade levels is essential in successfully supporting student achievement. Family engagement in schools contributes to positive student outcomes, including improved child and student achievement, decreased disciplinary issues, improved parent-teacher and teacher-student relationships, and improved school environment. Additionally, research shows that student life beyond the classroom, including family and community involvement, positively impacts student academic performance, reduces absenteeism, improves behavior, and restores confidence among parents in their children's schooling.

Parental support is an integral part of a student's education, and we commit to continue every effort to ensure that parents are an active part of our community from day one. We will also work to create a volunteer based bilingual Family Liaison that will host our weekly communications, and constant parent communications. We believe in utilizing the deeply entrenched families that serve our Birmingham/Ensley community so well. Other opportunities for parental involvement include report card pick ups, Open Houses, parent nights, seasonal family luncheons/celebrations (Donuts with Dad, Muffins with Mom, Books & Brownies, The Masked Reader Competition, Reader Rally, Community Field Day, Book-A-Ween parade, and chaperoning local field lessons/end-of-year field lessons. FCS welcomes families to complete our beginning of the year strengths assessment and lend their strengths and support to participate in the life of the school through the FCC and PTO. Room Parents/Grandparents/Guardians. Volunteer based room parents, support teachers with grade and cohort level communication, coordinate volunteers and communicate with families to build community at FCS. Additionally, welcoming new families, boosting attendance at school community events and raising awareness to support Teacher Appreciation efforts.

THRIVE Team is a community advisory council called the THRIVE Team, centered around upholding our educational priorities with the utmost fidelity. Teachers and families will be trained in the Alabama Course of Study (CoS) elements that will allow for wrap-around academic support for families. During our staff PD days (which occur on Fridays) we will invite families and community partners in the building to learn alongside our staff about how to best support their ambassadors in closing the achievement gap through our biliteracy approach.

Floreecer Community Council (FCC)

The Floreecer Community Council (FCC) is the parent-teacher organization at Floreecer Community School. FCC will function as a group of elected volunteer parents partnered with school staff and teachers working together on behalf of the school community. The FCC supports Floreecer by hosting events that foster community and build school spirit; keeping families up to date on school news and events; and raising funds for critical resources that help make our unique bilingual model successful. FCC is our community effort to uplift family voices and needs. This is our in school family council that will support school wide decisions and leadership vision. FCC will report to the Executive Director/Head of School. FCC will include a makeup of the school principal, 4 FCS teachers, and 10 FCS parents/community members.

Hallmark Family Events

- Global STEAM Night (envision STEAM on a global scale)
- Cultural Heritage Expo (Bringing together the rich cultures of Floreecer through food, fun, dress and music)
- Bring your Family to School Day (spend a day in the life of your Floreecer Ambassadors)
- Semester Curriculum Nights
- Quarterly Family Nights (Fun nights in full language immersion)
- Global Movie Night
- Floreecer Annual Family Reunion
- Family Food Language Learning Labs
- Family Empowerment Summit
- THRIVE Community Service Days
- Spring Bilingual Book Fair

At Floreecer, our proposed calendar of events are scheduled based on the expressed needs of our founding families and community members. We have committed to ensuring equitable access

by providing translation of documents, and translation and interpretation services at the proposed events so as not to exclude any of our families and increase participation.

Staff also introduce and engage parents with the school culture by promoting attendance at a variety of events, including culminating performances, rituals, and traditions. Once teachers learn the talents, knowledge, and strengths parents may have to offer, they may send ongoing lists and volunteer opportunities to encourage their involvement.

Communication Plan

At FCS, we believe in the benefits of partnering with our families. To do so, communication must be fluid and consistent. Through two-way communication, we remain open to uplifting our family voices. FCS will communicate via email with families regularly. Additionally, families are encouraged to contact FCS for more information or concerns about their student's academic or socio-emotional progress.

Families can expect to receive a weekly newsletter from the Leadership Team with key instructional information, relevant dates, and reminders. We encourage families to keep informed about school events and classroom key information by reading the Classroom Weekly Newsletter that will be emailed/delivered via Whatsapp in both languages every week.

- Mi corazón has the purpose to get together and listen to the Florecer/Ensley community both in our neighborhood, and in the larger metro Birmingham area. As we are a city-wide school too. This is a planned space similar to an ongoing community forum open to members of the community and school. Notification is shared via community stakeholder database and school newsletter.

Sharing FCS's Progress and Updates Twice a year, the Executive Director will share details of the school's overall health and progress toward its goals. Aligned with the Alabama Open Meeting Act, the Board of Directors' meeting minutes and the school's financial statements will be accessible on the FCS website. FCS will provide opportunities for families to share their perspectives on the school's progress. Twice a year, FCS will send surveys to gauge the pulse of our parents and obtain helpful feedback on the overall effectiveness of pursuing our mission.

Additionally, FCS will use statewide approved communication platforms (Powerschool and Schoology) for grades, behavior and conduct.

d) Please describe any expectations for parents that are part of the school's educational plan or model. Explain clearly how parents' expectations will support the educational plan. Reflect upon alternatives if parents are unwilling or unable to participate.

Family Agreements

We require attendance at all family meetings and the signing of The Florecer Community School Commitment to Learning agreement that states a family's willingness to support their children and the educational mission of the school. These commitments include ensuring that their child is at school and on time, in their uniform each day, helping with homework and ensuring that it is complete, reading with their child each night and asking critical reading questions, assisting their child in contacting the teacher regarding any problems or questions on an assignment, providing a quiet place with light for their child to read and study at home at all grade levels, and being available to meet with the teachers at home or at school if the need arises. Parents understand that they may get a phone call from the school for any reason regarding their child. While we ask parents to sign these agreements, we understand that extenuating circumstances are inevitable. However, we want parents to know we are ready and willing to partner with them.

Parent Expectations

In our educational model, we do require parent/family activities. As such, we have certain expectations for parents that play a crucial role in supporting and enhancing the overall educational experience of their children. These expectations are designed to foster a collaborative partnership between parents and educators, ensuring that students receive the necessary support at home and in school. By actively involving parents in their child's education, we aim to create a holistic learning environment that promotes academic success and personal growth. Our educational plan encourages parents to actively engage in their child's education by maintaining open communication with teachers, creating a supportive learning environment at home, and actively participating in

school activities when possible. These expectations support our educational plan by fostering collaboration, enhancing communication, reinforcing learning, and creating a holistic educational experience for every student.

Element Review

Reviews is not provided

14. Partnership or Contractual Relationships

Reviewer Instructions

Please rate this section using the provided rubric.

Status: Completed

Form Result

Provide information on any anticipated partnerships or contractual relationships with local community organizations or other groups that will enhance the curricular or co-curricular aspects of the student experience. The next section covers partnerships with Education Service Providers (ESP), Charter Management Organizations (CMO), Education Management Organizations (EMO) and other such partnerships.

Preference: Preference is given to applications that pursue unique connections with community partners (e.g. facilities, fundraising) including those that enhance the student experience (e.g. mission specific programming, taking best-practices to scale.) Applicants are encouraged to engage such groups early in the process to allow a more meaningful and productive partnership.

Overarching Standard/Criteria: Compelling evidence of high-quality partnerships and connections with community organizations, business, or other educational institutions that enhance or support the academic plan.

Evidence needed for addressing the overarching standard:

FCS Community Resources

The Birmingham/Ensley community offers a rich network of organizations, public resources, and community partners that will support the mission of Florecer Community School (FCS). Through intentional collaboration with local institutions and community organizations, FCS will connect students and families to academic, cultural, wellness, and social resources that strengthen both learning and community engagement.

Ensley has demonstrated a strong commitment to supporting educational innovation and community-centered schools. As a result, FCS has initiated conversations with several community partners and will continue to formalize these relationships pending school approval. These partnerships will provide both in-kind and programmatic support designed to enrich the educational experience of students and families.

The Flourish AL will serve as a co-curricular partner offering arts-integrated learning.

Renew Birmingham will support Ensley schools/students as apart of their collective impact model.
Community Resources Available to Families

The Ensley community offers several public resources that will support the daily learning experiences of FCS students and families. Florecer Community School will work closely with the East Ensley Public Library to cultivate a strong culture of literacy and lifelong learning. The library will serve as a

key partner in supporting reading engagement among students and families. Potential collaborative programming may include:

- Family literacy nights
- Incentivized reading challenges
- Summer reading initiatives
- Student research and library orientation visits
- Parent workshops focused on supporting literacy at home

Through these initiatives, FCS aims to foster a deep love of reading while ensuring families feel connected to their local library as a vital community resource.

Due to its close proximity to the one of the proposed school building, the Ensley Recreation Center will serve as an important space for student wellness and community engagement.

FCS hopes to develop a partnership that allows:

- Use of recreational facilities for physical education and after-school activities
- Student athletics and wellness programming
- Community events and family engagement gatherings
- Safe, structured environments for student recreation and enrichment

This collaboration will help promote healthy lifestyles while strengthening ties between the school and the surrounding community. The McAlpine Recreation Center provides additional opportunities for students and families to engage in recreational and cultural programming.

FCS hopes to collaborate with the center to support:

- Cultural programming and community events
- Language learning opportunities
- Creative arts and community workshops
- Family-centered programming that celebrates multicultural engagement

Local churches and neighborhood associations play an essential role in Ensley's community life and will serve as valuable partners in supporting FCS students and families. These partnerships may include:

- Volunteer mentorship opportunities
- Multigenerational learning initiatives
- Language development and tutoring programs
- Community service and leadership opportunities for students

FCS will encourage community members to volunteer and serve as mentors, helping students develop leadership skills and a strong sense of civic responsibility.

The Birmingham CrossPlex provides a large-scale venue for athletics, health programming, and community events. FCS anticipates utilizing the facility for:

- Athletic competitions and student sports activities
- Community gatherings and celebrations
- School-wide events and family engagement opportunities

These opportunities will allow students and families to access high-quality athletic and community facilities within the city.

FCS continues to work closely to create concrete partnerships with community partners.

b) Provide details of all curricular or co-curricular needs that the applicant seeks to fulfill with either an unidentified community partner or an identified partner that has yet to commit.

FCS Ideal Co-Curricular Partners

As Floreer Community School approaches its Fall 2027 opening, the leadership team is actively working to finalize partnerships that will bridge the gap between core academics and a whole child focused, "community-centered" experience. While core dual-language instruction is handled by internal staff, the following curricular and co-curricular areas represent needs the school seeks to fulfill through unidentified or pending community partners:

Curricular Enrichment & Specialized Support. Florecer aims to go beyond standard Alabama state requirements by integrating global perspectives and specialized literacy support.

- Bilingual Literacy Intervention (Pending): The school seeks a partner to provide intensive, one-on-one or small-group literacy support in both Spanish and English. This partner would help provide data-driven interventions for students who are performing below grade level in either language.
- STEM/STEAM Dual-Language Integration (Pending): While the base curriculum is set, Florecer seeks a partner to provide hands-on, inquiry-based STEM modules that can be taught in Spanish. This would involve a commitment to providing bilingual kits or instructors who can lead "Science Saturdays" or integrated classroom labs.

Co-Curricular & After-School Programs. Co-curricular activities are essential for the school's Community School model, where the campus remains a hub for the community after the traditional bell rings.

- Bilingual After-Care & Homework Help (Unidentified Partner): A critical need for working families is a high-quality after-school program. Florecer seeks a partner (likely a local non-profit or community center) to run a daily program that mirrors the school's bilingual philosophy, ensuring homework support is available in both languages.
- Global Youth Sports (Unidentified Partner): The school has identified soccer and traditional dance as key co-curricular interests. Discussions are ongoing with local youth sports organizations to provide structured, bilingual coaching for K-2 students that focuses on teamwork and cultural appreciation.
- Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) & Mental Health (Pending): Florecer seeks to partner with a local health provider or non-profit to provide "wraparound" services, including bilingual counseling for students and families to support the school's focus on "audacious joy" and emotional resilience. We have begun conversations with the Black Women's Mental Health Institute that supports all ages and genders.

c) Identify any other partnerships or contractual relationships given above that are critical to the school's operations or mission, i.e. identify partnerships whose dissolution fundamentally changes the culture or nature of the proposed school.

FCS Critical Partnerships

Florecer Community School, the partnership with Dual Language New Mexico (DLeNM) is the most critical external relationship identified. Because Florecer is positioning itself as the first dual language school in Alabama, its identity is not just "a school that teaches Spanish," but a specialized institution built on the dual language immersion model.

Here is why this partnership is considered a "load-bearing wall" for the school's mission and culture: DLeNM provides the framework for "two-way immersion," which is the core of Florecer's academic model.

- The Risk: Florecer desires to set the standard of bilingualism/biliteracy that is nationally an globally competitive.

Florecer explicitly seeks to align with national best practices. DLeNM hosts La Cosecha, the largest dual language conference in the U.S.

- The Risk: In a state where dual language expertise may be less concentrated, DLeNM serves as the primary pipeline for teacher training and "metalinguistic" instructional strategies. Losing this link would isolate Florecer from the research-based professional development necessary to sustain high-level biliteracy.

The partnership is not just about language; it's about sociocultural competence. DLeNM's mission emphasizes leveraging linguistic assets as "superpowers" and disrupting marginalized educational spaces.

- The Risk: Dissolving this partnership could dilute the school's "culture of audacious joy" and its commitment to innovative learning through bilingual education.

DLeNM conducts Site Evaluation Visits to gauge program readiness and fidelity.

- The Risk: For a new charter school, these external audits are critical for accountability. Without this specific partner, Florecer would lack an objective, expert "mirror" to ensure they are meeting the rigorous standards of a true K-8 dual language immersion program.

As of March 2026 we have received in-kind consulting and through our professional network have been invited to attend two or three site visits in New Mexico.

d) Disclose and explain any existing or potential conflicts of interest between the charter school board, the charter school administration, and the proposed service provider or any affiliated business entities.

Conflict of Interest Narrative

There is not any conflict of interest identified by the proposed leadership team or proposed governing board that would in anyway cause a less than integral interest in the proposed service providers or any affiliated business entities.



Element Review

Reviews is not provided

15. Educational Service Providers (ESP), Charter Management Organizations (CMO), Education Management Organizations (EMO) and Other Such Partnerships

Reviewer Instructions

Please rate this section using the provided rubric.

Status: Completed

Form Result

Provide details on the anticipated use of Education Service Providers (ESP), Charter Management Organizations (CMO), Education Management Organizations (EMO) or similar partnerships. This includes details on the selection process.

Overarching Standard/Criteria: Compelling evidence of how any ESP, CMO, EMO, or other partnerships will be used and how these partnerships will directly and consistently enhance the school program. Evidence that the organization used proper procedures for a public school in entering into the agreement.

Evidence needed for addressing the overarching standard:

- a) Provide the details of the selection process, including evaluation criteria used to pick the provider and provide the Request for Proposal (RFP) used to solicit applicants.

Florecer is a single site charter school that is not managed by a ESP, CMO or EMO.

b) Provide evidence of the provider's or organization's success in serving student populations that are similar to the targeted population, including demonstrated academic achievement as well as successful management of nonacademic school functions, if applicable. Attach a completed Portfolio Summary for the partner organization.

Evidence of Success Narrative

N/A

c) Provide a term sheet that includes:

- i) Proposed duration of the service contract
 - ii) Roles and responsibilities of the governing board, school staff, and ESP
 - iii) Scope of services and resources to be provided by the ESP
 - iv) Performance evaluations measures and timelines
 - v) Compensations structure, including clear identification of all fees to be paid to the ESP
 - vi) Methods of contract oversight and enforcement
 - vii) Investment disclosure
 - viii) Conditions for renewal and termination of the contract
- d) Disclose and explain any existing or potential conflicts of interest between the charter school board, the charter school administration, and the proposed service provider or any affiliated business entities.

N/A

Element Review

Reviews is not provided

16. Educational Program Capacity

Reviewer Instructions

Please rate this section using the provided rubric.

Status: Completed

Form Result

Name the people who have been identified for key positions in the proposed school, their collective capacity for operating the school, and disclose any potential conflicts of interest.

Overarching Standard/Criteria: Compelling evidence of how the school will open and continue to operate a high-quality educational program with high capacity in the following areas: school leadership, administration, governance, curriculum, instruction, assessment, performance management, parent involvement, and community engagement.

Evidence needed for addressing the overarching standard:

FCS Key Members of the transitional team are listed below:

Gilberto Herrera serves as a distinguished community member and Florecer parent. He is a Google certified educator and moves with a heart to serve the community. He is a mentor to several young men in the community and a Proud leader. He serves on the HICA Junior Board, AG Gaston Boys and Girls Club and is the author of How to Scale You, a sales trainer, speaker and entrepreneur who

worked in the finance and advertising industry. Gilberto Herrera also invests in real estate and has coached thousands on how to be successful in business.

Samantha Briggs PhD has a doctoral degree in Instructional Leadership and a master's degree in Women's Studies from The University of Alabama, as well as a bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education from Clark Atlanta University. A native of St. Louis, MO, Dr. Briggs has over 30 years of experience in education as an urban school teacher, professor, curriculum and grant writer, grant evaluator, consultant, and director of non-profit education programs. The former state director of GEAR UP Alabama, a \$60million U.S. Department of Education grant, Dr. Briggs led direct services designed to significantly increase the number of students from high poverty backgrounds who are prepared to enter and succeed in college, military, or the workforce. Dr. Briggs also served as the Vice President of the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution and the Civil Rights National Monument. In this capacity Dr. Briggs led BCRI's education, curation, archives and exhibitions with a commitment to preserving and telling the Birmingham civil rights story; creating programs that encourage cultural awareness; and championing civil and human rights by facilitating an atmosphere of dialogue and understanding. Briggs currently serves as an education consultant driven by a commitment to social responsibility, community empowerment, equity and a vision for systemic change.

Carmen Novoa has more than 25 years of experience in education, family engagement, and health promotion, she brings a strong commitment to supporting diverse learners and communities both in the United States and abroad. Her professional background spans all levels of the educational system—from early childhood and K–12 environments to higher education—giving her a comprehensive understanding of the full educational continuum and a broad understanding of student needs and institutional structures. Demonstrated leadership in supporting student success initiatives, enhancing student life, promoting college readiness, and strengthening parent and community engagement. Known for building inclusive, well rounded educational environments that promote well-being and long-term success. Strong expertise in health education curriculum development, lesson planning, digital learning resources, and distance-learning delivery systems. Recognized for advancing holistic approaches to health and learning within educational institutions and the community to empower human growth and personal development. Brings formal training in school and worksite health and safety, combined with a deep cultural awareness, bilingualism, and sensitivity developed through work with diverse populations in the United States and internationally.

Jody Trautwein is an East Birmingham native, educator, and leader in the Birmingham metro community. He exemplifies true servant leadership in his approach to meeting the community exactly where they are. He works as a faith-based leader in several Birmingham metro communities. Jody is currently the Area Coordinator for First Priority of Alabama. He also serves on the Mayor's Prayer Breakfast Planning Committee. As our first board member, he has been willing to support the vision of Floreecer at its inception.

Nadra Nash-Montgomery is a bilingual trained scientist and educator. She specializes in grant writing as a consultant working to support educational equity. She works with students from Florida, Alabama and Arizona through her virtual and in-person tutoring services. She has been working in the Alabama region to support students on all proficiency levels and across Spanish and English. She has been a part of the Floreecer mission to become the first dual immersion school in the state of Alabama.

Jennifer Saliba brings over 15 years of leadership experience and a passion for making a difference in her community. With a background in Property Management and a degree in Marketing from UAB, Jennifer is currently among the top 1% of producing realtors with Keller Williams Hoover. Her enthusiasm for making a positive impact, combined with her approachable and friendly nature, ensures she connects with others to bring meaningful contributions to all endeavors she supports. Her leadership style is rooted in collaboration, compassion, and a drive to foster growth in marketing, real estate and the economic sector. As a dedicated mother of four, Jennifer is passionate about supporting children's education and development. Whether in her personal or professional life, Jennifer is driven by a love for family, faith, and fostering strong relationships.

Andrew Krist is a passionate educator who has served in the classrooms of BCS. He is a current doctoral candidate at the University of Alabama in Educational Research.

Krist earned his master's degree in secondary education and teaching from the University of Alabama at Birmingham and his bachelor's degree in mathematics from UA. He brings a wealth of experience in educational research and psychometrics.

On'Draya Morris has always had a passion for language immersion education, as a current Doctoral student in Bilingual Education with over 12 years of experience in diverse school settings. She believes language access should not be a barrier in anyone's education. As such she is reimagining charter school education in AL. The vision of Florecer began in high school as a student-led multi-cultural organization she created called STAND (Students Taking A New Direction), and has carried on with her love of the Spanish language and education. She has pursued language and cultural immersion as a lifelong passion, fueled by a multicultural upbringing and a career to serve our most marginalized students. Florecer is a vision actualized of all her experiences as an educator in both the Northeastern/Southeastern United States. As a trained educator she is prepared to build and support the bilingual education model with fidelity.

Deidre Clark with deep ties to Ensley and a lifelong passion for seeing Ensley thrive. Ms. Clark has dedicated her life to ensuring that community, and education are a part of who she is. She is the creative and founder of Kuumba Creative Arts Community built in the heart of Ensley as a Teen Design Academy. She is passionate about educational outcomes, Ensley and community. She serves as a leader in the non-profit world and a pioneer of building community.

Board Leadership Position	Proposed Board Member	Role and Responsibilities of the Position
Board President and Parent (Governance Committee Chair)	Gilberto Herrera	<p>The Board President shall be the chief presiding officer of the Board of Directors. The President shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preside at all Board of Directors and other meetings as required. • Sign on behalf of Florecer Community School all contracts, securities, and other obligations not designated to the Executive Director. • Coordinates with the school leader, officers, and committee chairs to develop board meeting agendas • Reviews operational effectiveness and sets organizational priorities for future development • Serves as ex officio member on all committees • Monitors the effectiveness of governing processes and addressing deficits in Board operations

<p>Secretary (Academic Accountability CoChair)</p>	<p>Carmen Novoa</p>	<p>The Secretary shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep hard and electronic copies of bylaws as amended or otherwise altered to date • Record official minutes of all meetings as defined in the bylaws • Keep copies of agendas and minutes, making these documents available to the public • Ensure that all notices are given as required by law • Perform all duties as from time to time may be assigned to them by the Board of Directors
<p>Treasurer (Finance & Development Chair)</p>	<p>Dr. Samantha Briggs</p>	<p>The Treasurer shall have oversight of the general custody of all money and securities of Florecer Community School and shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve as the Chair of the Finance Committee, Ensuring that the school complies with the district, state, federal, and other statutory reporting requirements • Ensure financial records are current and accurate • Render to the Board of Directors and/or Board President, upon request, a statement of the financial conditions of FCS and all their transactions as treasurer. • Participate in the preparation of the annual budget • Vet an external auditor for the annual financial audit • Ensure the Board understands the organization's financial health

Vice President and Parent (Development Co-Chair)	Deidra Clark	The Vice President shall have such power and perform such duties as may be assigned by the President. The Vice President shall perform the duties of the President. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serves as the chair of the Governance Committee
Executive Director	On'Draya Morris	The Executive Director shall be the chief administrative officer of Floreecer Community School. The Board of Directors will appoint them and shall exercise control over the affairs of the FCS, subject to the supervision of the Board. The Executive Directors shall be present at

Resumes of Key Personnel

File 1
File name: Deidre O. Clark Resume 2025.docx.pdf
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 board member but will not have voting power or be identified as a Board Member.

File 2
File name: AndrewKristCV_Fall25.pdf
Uploaded: 03/13/2026 04:21 PM
Uploaded by: On'draya Morris

File 3
File name: Carmen Novoa CV 10.25.pdf
Uploaded: 03/13/2026 04:21 PM
Uploaded by: On'draya Morris

File 4
File name: Gilberto Herrera - Resume 2024 (1).pdf
Uploaded: 03/13/2026 04:21 PM
Uploaded by: On'draya Morris

File 5
File name: Jennifer K. Saliba Resume.docx.pdf
Uploaded: 03/13/2026 04:21 PM
Uploaded by: On'draya Morris

File 6
File name: Jody Resume 7.18.2024.pdf
Uploaded: 03/13/2026 04:21 PM
Uploaded by: On'draya Morris

File 7
File name: S. Briggs VITA_2024_SBRIGGS.pdf
Uploaded: 03/13/2026 04:21 PM
Uploaded by: On'draya Morris

File 8
File name: Nadra Nash Montgomery Resume.docx
Uploaded: 03/13/2026 04:21 PM
Uploaded by: On'draya Morris

File 9
File name: Feb 2026 Updated Version .docx (1).pdf
Uploaded: 03/13/2026 04:21 PM
Uploaded by: On'draya Morris

File 10
File name: Adriana Efrach, Spanish Interpreter Bio.pdf
Uploaded: 03/13/2026 04:21 PM
Uploaded by: On'draya Morris

b) Describe the team's collective qualifications for implementing the school design successfully, including capacity in areas such as:

- i) School leadership, administration, and governance;
- ii) Curriculum, instruction, and assessment;
- iii) Financial management;
- iv) Performance management; and
- v) Parent and community engagement.

Collective Qualifications Narrative [object Object]

c) Describe the group's ties to and/or knowledge of the target community.

Community Ties Narrative

FCS Group Ties

The Floreecer Community School leadership team and governing board are deeply rooted in the Birmingham, Alabama region, bringing a wealth of local knowledge, professional expertise, and personal commitment to the educational and economic revitalization of the Ensley community. Their collective experience spans urban education, civic leadership, and strategic business development, positioning them to successfully launch and sustain an innovative dual-language charter school.

Deep Ties to Birmingham and the Target Community

The group's connection to Birmingham is characterized by lifelong residency, active civic engagement, and direct service to the city's families:

- **On'Draya Morris (Founder/CEO):** A current doctoral student in Bilingual Education with over 12 years of experience, Morris has served as a teacher in Birmingham City Schools and as the Founding Dean of Culture & Instruction at Alabama Aerospace & Aviation High School in Bessemer. Her deep local ties are further evidenced by her participation in the Lead Early Birmingham 2024-2025 cohort, where she collaborates with city leaders to improve outcomes for children from birth to age five.
- **Gilberto Herrera (Board President):** A prominent community leader and Floreecer parent, Herrera is a Google-certified educator and small business mentor. His leadership roles include serving on the HICA (Hispanic & Immigrant Center of Alabama) Junior Board and the AG Gaston Boys and Girls Club board, directly supporting the region's diverse youth and immigrant populations.
- **Jody Trautwein (Vice President):** An East Birmingham native, Trautwein is a faith-based leader who serves as the Area Coordinator for First Priority of Alabama and sits on the Mayor's Prayer Breakfast Planning Committee.
- **Deidre Clark (Board Member):** A lifelong advocate for the Ensley community, Clark is the founder of Kuumba Creative Arts Community, a Teen Design Academy located in the heart of Ensley.

Expertise in the Educational Landscape

The board possesses specialized knowledge of Alabama's educational standards and the specific needs of the Birmingham student population:

- **Dr. Samantha Briggs (Treasurer):** With over 30 years in education, Dr. Briggs is the former State Director of GEAR UP Alabama, managing a \$60 million grant to prepare high-poverty students for post-secondary success. She also served as Vice President of the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, championing cultural awareness and dialogue in the city.
- **Carmen Novoa (Secretary):** Bringing over 25 years of experience, Novoa currently serves as the Assistant Director of Family Engagement at The University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB). Her expertise in health promotion and family engagement is vital for the school's holistic "community school" model.
- **Andrew Krist (Board Member):** A former teacher in Birmingham City Schools, Krist is a doctoral candidate at the University of Alabama specializing in Educational Research and psychometrics.

- Nadra Nash-Montgomery (Board Member): A bilingual educator and grant writer, she has extensive experience supporting students across Spanish and English proficiency levels in the Alabama region.

Commitment to Economic Development

The team understands the link between high-quality bilingual education and the economic prosperity of the region:

- Jennifer Saliba (Board Member): A UAB graduate and top-producing realtor in the Birmingham area, Saliba brings 15 years of leadership in marketing and real estate. She is committed to using her professional network to foster growth in the region's economic sector.
- Gilberto Herrera: As the Director of Entrepreneurship for the Birmingham Urban League, Herrera has a proven track record of securing major contracts (such as a \$550k contract with MasterCard) to drive revenue and support minority-owned businesses in Birmingham.
- Troy Williams (Consultant): The former Chief Operating Officer of Birmingham City Schools, Williams brings deep operational knowledge of the district, including facilities management and resource allocation for over 40 individual schools.

The group's mission to establish Alabama's first dual-language immersion public charter school is a direct response to the community's demand for innovative educational options that prepare students for a globalized workforce while honoring the rich, multicultural heritage of Birmingham and Ensley.

d) Identify any organizations, agencies, or consultants that are partners in planning and establishing the school, along with a brief description of their current and planned role and any resources they have contributed or plan to contribute to the school's development.

Partners in Planning for Floreecer Community School (FCS)

As a unique and innovative school model, we are committed to developing our ongoing support for excellence in school planning and leadership. Our leadership planning partners are as follows: New Schools for Alabama (NSFA)-as a School Founder's Program alum On'Draya/Floreecer will receive ongoing charter compliance and leadership development support including but not limited to governance and management. The support consists of training experiences in application assistance, leadership and operations training. On'Draya participated in the Teach Like a Champion leadership cohort for best instructional practices and The Hope Institute for character building as part of her school model. NSFAs CFO and COO provide advisory support in startup budgeting, facilities acquisition, and strategic planning. Beginning in year 0 and beyond, NSFA will provide support in board training, startup support, back-office services, and ongoing leadership coaching.

Dual Language Education of New Mexico- (upon approval) will provide foundational support for our bilingual education pipeline in the state of Alabama. Currently Dual Language New Mexico hosts the largest DLBE conference in the Nation supported by the National Association of Bilingual Educators (NABE) called La Cosecha. We are currently strategically and preparing to align with best practices in creating a Dual Language program in our planning year as a new model in the state of AL.

Relay Graduate School of Education- as a graduate of the School Leadership program our School Founder/proposed Executive Director has access to the data based systems that support our ongoing development of a data-driven school culture and academic accountability. Additionally, once onboarded all proposed leaders will receive support in developing ongoing coaching cycles, professional development and

Rooted Impact Consulting- As a Birmingham, based community partner Rooted Impact has been critical in creating spaces for our school to continue the conversation within the community of Birmingham. We are working to develop a strategic plan for continued family engagement on an on-going basis.

DC Bilingual Escuelita Program - We are currently slated to participate in the Spring session for Escuelita around building high impact teams and engaging school culture. We will spend two-three days in a continued residency to develop our mission and vision along best practices of a high performing bilingual public charter school.

MoDiv- Serving as a current thought partner and strategic supporter of our teacher pipeline and on-going support for our innovative bilingual education professional development. MoDiv will work alongside us in our residency at Escuelita to develop a high impact teacher pipeline to prepare our team for professional development within the context of AL specific standards and expectations for educators.

Anticipated Continuous Support for capacity building

Currently, FCS has applied for philanthropic funds from New Schools Venture Fund and Charter School Growth Fund where founding schools receive start up support and coaching for the first few years supporting the ongoing capacity building of the following areas:

- School leadership, administration, and governance;
- Curriculum, instruction, and assessment;
- Performance management; and
- Parent and community engagement.

e) Identify the principal/head of school candidate and explain why this individual is well-qualified to lead the proposed school in achieving its mission. Summarize the proposed leader's academic and organizational leadership record. Provide specific evidence that demonstrates capacity to design, launch, and manage a high-performing charter school. If the proposed leader has never run a school, describe any leadership training programs that (s)he has completed or is currently participating in. Also provide, as an attachment, the qualifications, resume, and professional biography for this individual. Discuss evidence of the leader's ability to effectively serve the anticipated population.

If no candidate has been identified, attach the job description or qualifications, and discuss the timeline, criteria, recruiting and selection process for hiring the school leader.

Founding Co-Director aka Principal (Position Hire Summer 2026)

Florencer has decided to follow a unique leadership model where the Executive Director, Co-Director(Head of School) and Director of School Operations work in concert to support and uplift the unique and comprehensive duties related to the founding school environment. As such we are actively seeking to identify a Founding Co-Director. FCS will aim to fill this position by implementing a thorough and robust recruitment plan to attract, identify, and screen applicants with proposed hiring occurring by late Summer 2026. We have begun several conversations with ideal candidates in the local and regional community. However, at this time we are working with our expansive networks from New Schools For Alabama, Relay Graduate School, New Schools Venture Fund, Teach of America, and John Hopkins University to identify key proposed leaders with a heart of the founding school environment and experience in developing successful dual language/global learning school programs. A job description for [FCS Co-Director/Principal](#) has been provided.

On'Draya Morris will work to screen the best candidate for Co-Founder/Head of School according to the skillsets and responsibilities outlined in the Job Description. The Founding Leadership Team, (ED and DSO) will leverage its resources, networks, and connections to the community to source candidates with aligned mindsets, key experience, and documented outcomes aligned to the essential responsibilities of the role and Florencer's startup needs. The Executive Director, the Director of School Operations and a representative from our Personnel Committee will serve as the interview team to hire the position to ensure a strong start to executing our overall school mission including but not limited to Summer Professional Learning, Instructional vision, and the Start of the School Year. Florencer will adhere to the hiring process outlined in the Staffing section.

Supporting Documents	File name:	FCS Co-Director_Principal.pdf
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	Uploaded by:	On'draya Morris

f) Describe the responsibilities and qualifications of the school's leadership/management team beyond the principal/head of school. If known, identify the individuals who will fill these positions.

Provide the qualifications, resumes, and professional biographies for these individuals if not so provided above. If these positions are not yet filled, explain the timeline, criteria, and process for recruitment and hiring.

FCS has attached the roles and shared responsibilities of the leadership team. The following individuals have been recruited due to their unique discipline and willingness to actively work in a start school environment.

[Mrs. On'Draya Morris](#), Proposed Executive Director

On'Draya Morris, the proposed Executive Director, is an educator with over 12 years of experience who is a visionary, responsive to the needs of the community, and a results-driven professional educator with experience in developing strong academic outcomes, positive relationships, and transformational change. On'Draya began her intentional educator journey in 2009 working with the Children's Defense Freedom School in Louisville, KY as a 4th grade Summer Reading Teacher. In 2013, she joined Teach for America Metro Atlanta Corps serving mostly black and brown students in Clayton County as an 11th grade English Teacher. Throughout her career she has supported students in various grade bands. Additionally, he served in the South Bronx, as a 7th/8th grade Reading Teacher at Bronx Prep Middle School. She served in Springfield, MA as a founding charter school ELA teacher/academic coach serving a mostly Spanish-speaking community. She later served for 4 years in Gwinnett County GA at a diverse top performing middle school as an ELA teacher and Community Impact committee lead. Upon arriving in Birmingham she served as a middle school ELA teacher and on the founding leadership team of the first Aviation high school in AL, Alabama Aerospace & Aviation High School (AAHS), as the Dean of Culture and Instruction. She has served as a National Principal's Academy Fellowship fellow at the Relay Graduate School of Education. Most recently she completed her New Schools for Alabama School Founder's Fellowship and is graduate of The City of Birmingham's LEA Early 2024-2025 cohort. On'Draya is deeply committed to serving the community and has recently joined the Youth Services & Education Pipeline team at Renew Birmingham in Ensley.

Mrs. Morris has the unique background of having served as a charter school leader in an Alabama founding charter school. Throughout her career, Mrs. Morris has proven to transform academic outcomes for students in district and charter schools. As a teacher-leader in Springfield, MA and Atlanta, GA, Mrs. Morris used data-driven instructional analysis to coach teachers in two diverse middle schools to increase the percentage of all students meeting standards on the state ELA assessment by 5% and 10%. Building upon this success, Mrs. Morris supported first-year founding teachers in an urban charter school in Springfield, MA to improve student achievement in ELA and Math by 20% on state assessments. Through instructional coaching, curriculum development and community engagement Mrs. Morris has over 12 years of experience within the K-12 learning ecosystem at the systems, classroom and coaching level. In her current role as a consultant, she supports schools and community organizations in crafting educational visions that are rooted in data collection and instructional best practices.

As an alumni of the highly selective New Schools for Alabama School Founder Fellowship (NSFA), from July 2023 to February 2025, Mrs. Morris has studied over 10 high-performing charter schools in North Carolina, New York, Tennessee, California, Washington, D.C., Texas, and Massachusetts. Additionally, she completed school leadership residencies/excellent school visits with five high-performing charter schools, DC Bilingual (Washington DC) and Leadership Prep/Memphis Rise of Memphis, Aventura (Nashville) and Maureen Joy Charter School of (Durham, North Carolina). Currently, Mrs. Morris receives mentorship and coaching from the CEO at DC Bilingual Daniela Anello. DC Bilingual has been selected as a 2024 National Blue Ribbon School and the highest scores in the school's history with gains in both ELA and math and making DC Bilingual the highest performing elementary LEA (local education agency) in the city. Additionally, NSFA will continue to support Floreecer through governance training, financial advisory, and leadership development.

[Ms. Maria-Elena Murrieta](#), Proposed Director of School Operations

Maria-Elena is a proud math/ESL educator. She grew up in the Stockton, CA area and has dedicated her life to serving in leadership and classrooms that serve marginalized students of color. She is a

proud bilingual math educator and mom that has made the transition from CA to the Southeast to continue the fight for educational equity in our schools. She has experience in both STEM education, School administration and ESL education. She currently serves on the North Gwinnett Middle School team and has shown the highest percentage of academic achievement in her grade level including specific subgroups such as ELL students, and SPED students and Economically Disadvantaged students.

[Adriana Efrach](#), Proposed Student Supports Coordinator

Adriana Efrach is a dedicated and experienced professional with over 30 years of expertise in Spanish language services, including interpretation, translation, tutoring, and family liaison roles. Adept at working with diverse populations, including ELL (English Language Learner) students and families, to bridge communication gaps and foster strong partnerships between communities and educational institutions. Skilled in cultural outreach, program coordination, and supporting special education services.

[Mr. Troy Williams](#), Consulting Operational Support

Troy Williams is the current President/owner of TJ3 Consulting, LLC, where he provides consulting services and project management support to charter schools, as well as school district operations teams. Troy has held several executive level operations positions with K-12 schools districts, most recently with Atlanta Public Schools. Troy is also the former Chief Operations Officer with Birmingham City Schools, where he oversaw all district operations, including facilities, maintenance, food services, transportation, safety and security, technology and athletics. Troy is able to provide valuable support from his extensive operations experience with urban school districts, but also from his district and charter school start-up work during his time as Senior Director of Operations and Chief Operations Officer with the Tennessee Achievement School district. Part of Troy's role with the Tennessee Achievement School District not only included overseeing day-to-day school operations with the direct-run schools, but also as coordinator and collaborator for Operations compliance and support services with the charter organizations that were authorized to operate the neighborhood schools.

Compensation of Staff during planning year

Upon authorization, the Board of Directors will officially hire the proposed Executive Director, On'Draya Morris, full-time during its planning year. Philanthropic funds will fund this role. In collaboration with Dual Language Education of New Mexico, Florecer's proposed Executive Director will begin essential framework and planning for bilingual education frameworks aligned with our mission, vision, and community values. Dual Language Education of New Mexico is a national partner in dual language/bilingual education with expertise in building Dual immersion programs, policies, procedures, and instructional frameworks around biliteracy. Dual Language Education of New Mexico will work on a part time consulting basis to support our ED and part time contracted Co-Director after approval in the Summer-Fall 2026 timeframe. All contracts will be funded via philanthropic funds. The Executive Director plans to hire the Director of School Operations (DSO) and the Founding Co-Director (FCD) full time as early as March 2027 pending grant funding. The founding team will leverage our networks and connections to the community to source candidates with essential mindsets, experience, and achieved outcomes aligned to the roles and responsibilities and charter school startup needs. The Executive Director, the CD, and the DSO serve as the interview team to hire the Counselor, Student Supports Coordinator, and other key roles by May 2027. This timeline allows time for transition into FCS's culture and leadership team, ensuring a strong start in August 2027. We continue leveraging our networks and community connections to source all other school leadership positions.

We are currently seeking philanthropic funds from the following sources:

Charter School Growth Fund & New School Venture Fund for the planning year 2026 for a proposed opening of fall 2027.

File 1

File name: Year One Organizational Chart.pdf
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File 2

File name: MariaElenaMurrietaResume (1).pdf
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Uploaded by: On'draya Morris

File 3

File name: Adriana Efrach, Spanish Interpreter Bio.pdf
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Uploaded by: On'draya Morris

g) Explain who will work on a full-time or nearly full-time basis on the development of the academic model during the pre-opening phase. This includes developing the curriculum, training materials, policies and procedures, on-boarding of teaching staff, etc. Include the plan to compensate these individuals.

During the pre-opening phase of a new school, a small group of key personnel is typically hired 6–18 months before students arrive to plan operations, recruit staff, enroll students, and ensure compliance with regulations. Below is a typical structure with common positions, estimated salaries, and benefits (U.S. averages for 2025–2026). Actual amounts vary by region, school type (public, charter, private), and experience.

The story of opening Florecer Community School begins long before the first bell rings. It starts in a quiet office or a borrowed community center room, nearly a year before the doors open, with a small team of "architects" building the foundation of what will become a dual-language sanctuary for Birmingham students.

Twelve months out, the Executive Director (ED) is the first on the scene. With a salary ranging from \$90,000 to \$110,000, the ED isn't just an administrator; they are a storyteller and a navigator. Their days are spent in state-level compliance meetings, securing the final installments of Charter School Program (CSP) grants, and meeting with local donors. They carry the weight of the school's legal and financial viability on their shoulders.

By their side is the Director of Operations (\$75,000 – \$5,000). While the ED looks at the vision, the Director of Operations looks at the "bones." They spend the pre-opening phase navigating the complexities of Birmingham zoning laws, overseeing the renovation of the school facility, and negotiating contracts for everything from high-speed fiber internet to the first fleet of school buses.

Six Months Out: The Heart and the Voice

As the facility begins to take shape, the school needs a "Heart" and a "Voice." The Principal (School Leader) arrives, typically earning between \$95,000 and \$125,000. Their pre-opening mission is academic: they are the ones scouring dual-language curricula, ensuring that the Spanish and English instruction isn't just translated, but culturally resonant. They begin the grueling process of interviewing the founding faculty, looking for educators who are comfortable with the "startup" mentality.

Simultaneously, the Community Liaison (\$45,000 – \$60,000) becomes the face of Florecer in the neighborhood. They are at the local markets, churches, and community centers. Because Florecer is a "Community School," this person is building the bridge between the classroom and the home, ensuring that the initial 200 or 300 students aren't just names on a list, but families who feel a sense of ownership in the school's success.

Compensation of Staff during planning year

Upon authorization, the Board of Directors will officially hire the proposed Executive Director, On'Draya Morris, full-time during its planning year. Philanthropic funds will fund this role. In collaboration with Dual Language Education of New Mexico, Floreecer's proposed Executive Director will begin essential framework and planning for bilingual education frameworks aligned with our mission, vision, and community values. Dual Language Education of New Mexico is a national partner in dual language/bilingual education with expertise in building Dual immersion programs, policies, procedures, and instructional frameworks around biliteracy. Dual Language Education of New Mexico will work on a part time consulting basis to support our ED and part time contracted Co-Director after approval in the Summer-Fall 2026 timeframe. All contracts will be funded via philanthropic funds. The Executive Director plans to hire the Director of School Operations (DSO) and the Founding Co-Director (FCD) full time as early as March 2027 pending grant funding. The founding team will leverage our networks and connections to the community to source candidates with essential mindsets, experience, and achieved outcomes aligned to the roles and responsibilities and charter school startup needs. The Executive Director, the CD, and the DSO serve as the interview team to hire the Counselor, Student Supports Coordinator, and other key roles by May 2027. This timeline allows time for transition into FCS's culture and leadership team, ensuring a strong start in August 2027. We continue leveraging our networks and community connections to source all other school leadership positions.

We are currently seeking philanthropic funds from the following sources: Charter School Growth Fund & New School Venture Fund for the planning year 2026 for a proposed opening of fall 2027.

Conflict of Interest Narrative

Conflict of Interest Disclosure (Pursuant to Alabama Ethics Law, Ala. Code § 36-25-1 through § 36-25-30)

In accordance with the Alabama Ethics Law, all individuals named in this section have reviewed the requirements regarding ethical conduct and potential conflicts of interest applicable to public officials and public employees.

Under Ala. Code §36-25-1, a conflict of interest exists when a public official or employee's private financial interests, or those of a family member or associated business, may influence or appear to influence the performance of official duties.

Disclosure Statement

At this time:

- None of the individuals identified in the pre-opening staffing plan have any financial interest, ownership stake, or employment relationship with vendors, contractors, or service providers that would materially benefit from decisions made in connection with the establishment or operation of the school.
- No individual listed holds a position in a business or organization that may receive contracts or compensation from the school that would constitute a conflict of interest under Alabama law.
- No individual intends to use their position with the school for personal gain beyond the compensation authorized by the governing board, as prohibited under the Alabama Ethics Act.

Element Review

Reviews is not provided

4. OPERATIONS PLAN AND CAPACITY

Effective management, including oversight by a governing board, is critical for long term and sustainable school success. This section outlines the organizational aspects necessary for effective management of a high-quality public charter school.

1. Organization Structure and Relationships

Reviewer Instructions

Please rate this section using the following rubric.

Status: Completed

Form Result

The organization charts should clearly delineate the roles and responsibilities of – and lines of authority and reporting among – the governing board, school leadership, any related bodies (such as advisory bodies or parent/teacher councils), and any external organizations that will play a role in managing the school. The organization charts should also document clear lines of authority and reporting within the school.

Overarching Standard/Criteria: Evidence of organizational charts for governance, management and staffing.

Evidence needed for addressing the overarching standard:

Organizational Chart

File 1

File name: Floreecer Community School_Full Build Out Org Chart.pptx (1).pdf

Uploaded: 03/13/2026 07:30 AM

Uploaded by: On'draya Morris

File 2

File name: FCS Year 1 School Staffing Chart .pdf

Uploaded: 03/13/2026 07:30 AM

Uploaded by: On'draya Morris

File 3

File name: Floreecer Community School_Year 1 Org Chart (2).pdf

Uploaded: 03/13/2026 07:30 AM

Uploaded by: On'draya Morris

Responsibilities of Major Positions

File name: School Organizational Responsibilities and Board Committees - Sheet1.pdf

Uploaded: 03/13/2026 07:30 AM

Uploaded by: On'draya Morris

Element Review

Reviews is not provided

2. Governing Board

Reviewer Instructions

Please rate this section using the provided rubric.

Status: Completed

Form Result

The governing board holds the charter contract and should be an active participant in overseeing the school in partnership with the school administration. The board is responsible for the success of the school and should be responsive to the various stakeholders. The board should periodically evaluate the leadership team and hold the team responsible for school performance.

Overarching Standard/Criteria: Evidence of an effective and ethical governing philosophy and structure that directly and consistently guides the board toward educational and operation success and effective representation of key stakeholders, including parents.

Evidence needed for addressing the overarching standard:

a) Explain the governance philosophy that will guide the board, including the nature and extent of involvement by key stakeholder groups. Include how the board will interact with the principal/head of school and any advisory bodies. Attach the governing bylaws for the proposed school.

Governance Philosophy

Floreecer's Governance Philosophy

The governance philosophy that guides Floreecer Community School's board consists of five guiding principles that are rooted in the mission of FCS. The board will operate under the principles of strategic governance, accountability, transparency, community partnership and long term success as outlined with continuous improvement that shapes the board's decision-making processes, policies, and practices. It provides a framework for how the board operates and promotes a culture of continuous improvement by setting clear expectations for academic performance, financial management, and compliance with legal and regulatory requirements. Each member of the 5-9 voting members commits to governing not managing:

- **Mission Alignment:** Oversee the educational program, ensuring the mission and vision are guiding principles for strategic planning. All governance decisions will prioritize student learning outcomes, educational access for all students, and fulfillment of the school's mission.
- **Transparency:** Develop, vote, and provide oversight of policies and procedures for the school. With board meetings, decisions and policies will be open and accessible to the school community.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Ensure effective long-term business and organizational planning, are rooted in consistent evaluation of the Executive Director and alignment to the charter contract while strategically planning for
- **Accountability/Stewardship:** The board will ensure responsible fiscal stewardship of public funds and monitor academic outcomes to ensure the school meets its performance goals. Additionally the board will maintain accountability to the needs of the community by regularly evaluating its

effectiveness and refine governance practices to support school success. The board will hire, evaluate and support the Executive Director in executing the agreed upon charter contract.

- **Community Engagement:** As a community school FCS governing board will ensure families, educators, and community partners will have structured opportunities to inform school governance and decision-making.

The board will delegate day-to-day operational responsibilities to the Principal/Head of School, who serves as the school's chief executive officer and reports directly to the board

Board Bylaws	File name:	Florecer Community School Bylaws.pdf
	Uploaded:	03/12/2026 01:26 PM
	Uploaded by:	On'draya Morris

b) Describe clearly the governance structure of the proposed school, including the primary roles of the governing board members. In this explanation, please include the following:

- i) Describe the size, current and desired composition, powers, and responsibilities of the governing board;
- ii) Identify key skills and areas of expertise desired among board members;
- iii) Identify key constituencies/stakeholders that will be represented on the governing board.
- iv) Include specifically which school employees report directly to the board and how the board will evaluate these employees.
- v) Describe how the board will hear from key stakeholders, including parents and community members.

Governance Structure

Proposed Governing Board Structure

The Board of Directors for Florecer Community School is composed of dedicated educators, parents, and community leaders who are dedicated to the mission and vision of Florecer Community School and have the experience and expertise to govern a successful public charter school.

The Bylaws are compatible with Robert's Rule of Order and state that the board shall consist of a minimum of five (5) members and a maximum of fifteen (15) members. FCS's desired and ideal composition consists of (9) members. It complies with ACT 215-3 (10) GOVERNING BOARD, which states: "The governing board shall have at least 20 percent of its membership be parents of students who attend or have attended the public charter school for at least one academic year." Before the first day of instruction each year, the 20 percent membership requirement will be satisfied by parents who intend to have their students attend FCS.

FCS has a self-perpetuating board of directors that manages its membership subject to its regulations as identified in its ByLaws. The Bylaws indicate that the Board will include four elected officers to meet specific organizational needs. Each officer will serve a renewable two-year term for a maximum of three consecutive terms. Executive positions include a president, a vice president, a secretary, and a treasurer. Each remaining position will be an at-large voting position.

Board members have fiduciary duties to the organization, including care, loyalty, and obedience.

- The duty of care includes exercising prudent judgment in all decisions for the school and its stakeholders.
- The duty of loyalty requires board members to act in good faith and in the school's best interest.
- The duty of obedience dictates that board members adhere to all policies, laws, and regulations while governing the charter school.

Primary Role

Board members will be responsible for the school's governance, while the administration will be responsible for the school's day-to-day operations. The board's primary responsibilities are communicating and measuring the school's success in reaching key objectives. These include the following:

1. Ensuring the success and effectiveness of the school's academic program.
2. Ensure that the school complies with all statutory and regulatory requirements while working within the bounds of its charter and taking regular strides in meeting its mission.
3. Continually ensure that the school is financially healthy, is appropriately staffed, and regularly meets or exceeds goals set by the board.

Board Member Roles & Responsibilities (see table below)

Board Leadership Position	Proposed Board Member	Role and Responsibilities of the Position
<p>Board President and Parent (Governance Committee Chair)</p>	<p>Gilberto Herrera</p>	<p>The Board President shall be the chief presiding officer of the Board of Directors. The President shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preside at all Board of Directors and other meetings as required. • Sign on behalf of Florencia Community School all contracts, securities, and other obligations not designated to the Executive Director. • Coordinates with the school leader, officers, and committee chairs to develop board meeting agendas • Reviews operational effectiveness and sets organizational priorities for future development • Serves as ex officio member on all committees • Monitors the effectiveness of governing processes and addressing deficits in Board operations
<p>Secretary (Academic Accountability Co-Chair/Community Engagement Chair)</p>	<p>Carmen Novoa</p>	<p>The Secretary shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep hard and electronic copies of bylaws as amended or otherwise altered to date • Record official minutes of all meetings as defined in the bylaws • Keep copies of agendas and minutes, making these documents available to the public • Ensure that all notices are given as required by law • Perform all duties as from time to time may be assigned to them by the Board of Directors

<p>Treasurer (Finance & Development Chair)</p>	<p>Dr. Samantha Briggs</p>	<p>The Treasurer shall have oversight of the general custody of all money and securities of Florecer Community School and shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve as the Chair of the Finance Committee, Ensuring that the school complies with the district, state, federal, and other statutory reporting requirements • Ensure financial records are current and accurate • Render to the Board of Directors and/or Board President, upon request, a statement of the financial conditions of FCS and all their transactions as treasurer. • Participate in the preparation of the annual budget • Vet an external auditor for the annual financial audit • Ensure the Board understands the organization's financial health
<p>Vice President (Development Co-Chair)</p>	<p>Deidre Clark</p>	<p>The Vice President shall have such power and perform such duties as may be assigned by the President. The Vice President shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the absence or inability of the President, perform the duties of the President. • Serves as the chair of the Governance Committee

Executive Director (reports to the governing board)	On'Draya Morris	The Executive Director shall be the chief administrative officer of Floreecer Community School. The Board of Directors will appoint them and shall exercise control over the affairs of the FCS, subject to the supervision of the Board. The Executive Directors shall be present at all meetings and participate in board training but will not have voting power or be identified as a Board Member.
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Board Meetings

Board meetings will occur at least once per month, ten months each year, and will fully comply with the Alabama Open Meetings Act. Additional meetings may be called as necessary and will continue to abide by all Alabama Open Meetings Act provisions.

Committees will meet at designated times between the regular monthly board meetings to conduct a thorough analysis, discussion, and decisions to be recommended to the full board during the regular meetings to ensure that all aspects of the charter school continue to develop toward reaching the school's stated mission.

Interaction with the Executive Director

A strong relationship between the Board of Directors and the school leader is key to success. The working relationship between the board and the Head of the School is one of transparency, mutual respect, and trust and is anchored in effective communication. The board will consistently collect data from the school leader in the following areas:

- Academic Achievement,
- School Climate and Culture,
- Financial health

After receiving feedback and guidance from the Board of Directors, the Head of School will create a plan that responds to the successes and challenges indicated in the data. The evidence provided will be the basis for the Head of School's annual evaluation. This evaluation will occur formally every school year by the Governance Committee. It will be shared with the full board before discussing the findings and possible improvement plans with the Head of School. The final evaluation will be saved in the personnel folder of the Head of School.

Founding Board Member Selection

At Floreecer's inception, FCS consulted educational institutions in academic excellence, restorative practices, and whole-school reform. The founding board members of Floreecer Community School were recruited and selected by the founder, On'Draya Morris, based on community input, recommendations and criteria of relevant skills and expertise, willingness to dedicate themselves to educational excellence, teamwork, and a philosophical alignment with the mission and vision of Floreecer Community School. The proposed board comprises members representing our community's demographics and diversity. This will be our continual goal as members cycle on and off the board. This group has reviewed, contributed to, and supported this charter application and the school design throughout the process.

They bring a wealth of knowledge and demonstrate sustainability, fiscal responsibility, and organizational growth, as demonstrated by the success of their endeavors. They are actively involved in the Birmingham community, serving on several outreach boards that support community growth and development. Their individual and collective expertise includes but is not limited to leaders in both for-profit and nonprofit arenas, legal, finance, entrepreneurship, technology, STEM, small business, non-profit, organization and operational management, strategic development, program management, human resources, community engagement, parental engagement, student advocacy, contractual, fundraising, business, community organization, military, education, real estate, facility

acquisitions, and community outreach. The board will engage these skills regularly when developing and consistently implementing processes and procedures to govern the school.

Hearing from all stakeholders including but not limited to (teachers, leaders, staff, students, and parents) is a priority in order to actively assess and uplift the needs of our evolving school community. FCS's Community Engagement Commitment is rooted in our mission, and one of the five guiding principles of our governance philosophy:

- Maintain open communication with families and stakeholders through open board meetings, and interactions with school community events, and parent/family town halls. Teacher round-tables/leadership evaluations and surveys.
- Provide opportunities for community input (Florecer Community Council, THRIVE Council, quarterly Culture Walkthroughs)
- Promote transparency in governance decisions with open communication (annual transparency of board strategic priorities)

Committees

FCS's Bylaws indicate that the Board of Directors will have standing committees. Additional Board committees or task forces may be added as needed by the resolution of the Board. Select committees will include our parents and business communities to involve key stakeholder groups further. They will be established to receive community feedback and provide input on various topics affecting the school. Committees will include members of the Board, staff members, parents, and community members, as determined in the resolution. Each committee meets once per month and is composed of a minimum of 2 active Board of Directors, except for the Governance Committee, which comprises three active members.

Governance Committee. The purpose of this committee is to ensure the Board has the necessary strength to govern Florecer Community School. In addition, the Governance Committee will create tools for evaluating the strength of the Board and provide development opportunities for members. The Governance Committee will also be responsible for new members' identification, recruitment, nomination, and training. The committee will develop a succession plan in which each member is tasked with replacing not only him- or herself but also recruiting one or two additional board members. Potential candidates will be invited to serve on one of the committees as a trial period for both the board and the individual. If a board position becomes available, these committee members or new members may be elected to the board within three months of the vacancy, depending on the needs of the current board. Otherwise, they will be elected to the board at its annual meeting. This Committee will receive input from community leaders and parents before submitting nominations to the Board for approval. This will ensure all stakeholders have a voice and involvement in selecting Directors.

Finance Committee. The purpose of this committee is to closely oversee the school's financial management and work with the Executive Director, or appropriate designee, and back-office financial provider to ensure fiscal responsibility and sustainability. The Finance Committee's tasks will include reviewing monthly cash flow statements, preparing financial reports, presenting these reports to the Board, and taking the lead in hiring the school's auditor and interpreting the financial audit results for the Board as a body.

Academic Accountability Committee. This committee aims to work with the Executive Director to analyze students' academic progress and ensure that the school meets accountability goals outlined in the charter application and any additional internal measures of success that the board and school leadership may establish. During the start-up phase of the school, this committee will also support the recruitment and enrollment efforts of the school.

Development Committee. This committee shall advise in external communications and developing and implementing fundraising goals and programs. Its responsibilities may include setting annual fundraising goals, developing periodic capital campaigns, providing for appropriate parent and alumni communications, and continuing the cultivation of support for FCS. The Development Committee shall also advise with efforts to strengthen communication and outreach programs for parents and develop programs to better communicate with and maintain the support of the FCS broader community of alumni, neighborhood residents, education and business communities, and others.

Facilities Task Force Committee. This committee will engage in strategic planning for the acquisition, development, and maintenance of school facilities. This involves thorough assessments of current and projected facility needs, considering factors such as enrollment growth, programmatic requirements, and community demographics. The task force may collaborate with architects, engineers, and other professionals to develop long-term facility plans that align with the educational goals and objectives of the charter school. Additionally, the task force may assist in securing funding for facility-related expenses. This may involve researching and applying for grants, advocating for public funding allocations, or exploring alternative financing options such as bonds or loans.

Executive Director Reporting/Evaluation

The Executive Director/Head of School will be the only employee who reports directly to the Board of Directors. All other school employees—including teachers, administrative staff, and support personnel—will report to the Executive Director/Head of School or their designated leadership team. This structure ensures a clear separation between governance and management responsibilities. The board will conduct an annual evaluation of the Executive Director/Head of School using a structured evaluation process.

The evaluation will assess performance in key areas and in direct alignment with the charter school contract including:

- student academic outcomes
- school culture and climate
- staff leadership and development
- financial management
- operational effectiveness
- progress toward strategic goals/vision

The board will use a combination of quantitative performance data and qualitative feedback to assess leadership effectiveness. The board chair or a designated evaluation committee will oversee the evaluation process and present findings to the full board.

c) Explain how this governance structure and composition will help ensure that the school will be an educational, operational, and financial success.

Governance Narrative

Governance Structure and Capacity for Educational, Operational, and Financial Success

The governance structure of Floreecer Community School is designed to ensure strong educational outcomes, effective operational management, and long-term financial sustainability. The Founding Board consists of individuals who have worked collaboratively on the organization and design of Floreecer Community School since July 2024. Board members were intentionally selected based on their alignment with the school's vision, their relevant professional expertise, and their willingness to dedicate time and leadership to the successful launch and growth of the school. The Board provides strategic leadership, policy oversight, and accountability while empowering school leadership to manage daily school operations and implement the academic program. This separation between governance and management ensures that the Board focuses on long-term strategy, oversight, and accountability while school leaders focus on delivering high-quality instruction and student support. The Board's collective expertise across education, research, nonprofit leadership, community development, entrepreneurship, bilingual education, real estate, and youth mentorship ensures that the school has the governance capacity necessary to achieve educational, operational, and financial success.

Educational Success

The Board includes members with extensive experience in education, research, instructional leadership, curriculum development, and student support services, providing strong oversight of the school's academic program and ensuring that instructional practices remain aligned with the school's mission.

- Dr. Samantha Briggs brings more than 30 years of experience in education as an urban school teacher, professor, nonprofit education leader, curriculum developer, and grant evaluator. Her doctoral training in Instructional Leadership and her experience directing the statewide GEAR UP Alabama initiative provide deep expertise in college readiness, program evaluation, and

educational program design. Her leadership experience at the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute further strengthens the school's commitment to education and community engagement.

- Andrew Krist contributes strong expertise in educational research and assessment. As a doctoral candidate in Educational Research at the University of Alabama and a former classroom teacher in Birmingham City Schools, he brings valuable experience in instructional practice, data analysis, and psychometrics. His research background supports the Board's ability to evaluate academic outcomes and guide data-driven decision-making.
- Carmen Novoa brings more than 25 years of experience in education, family engagement, and health promotion across early childhood, K–12, and higher education environments. Her expertise in health education, student life programming, and culturally responsive education strengthens the school's ability to create inclusive learning environments that supports the whole child. Her bilingual background and international experience working with diverse communities further strengthen the school's commitment to serving multilingual learners and families.
- Nadra Nash-Montgomery further strengthens the Board's academic expertise as a bilingual scientist and educator specializing in supporting students across multiple proficiency levels in Spanish and English. Her experience in tutoring, curriculum support, and educational equity initiatives contributes directly to the school's vision of becoming Alabama's first dual-language immersion charter school.

Together, these members provide strong oversight of the school's instructional model and ensure that academic decisions are informed by research, data, and best practices.

Operational Success

The Board includes members with strong experience in organizational leadership, entrepreneurship, nonprofit management, and community engagement, providing the operational insight necessary to support the successful implementation of the school.

- Gilberto Herrera, proposed Board Chair, is a respected community leader, entrepreneur, author, and mentor who brings valuable experience in leadership development, business strategy, and community engagement. As a Google-certified educator and mentor to young leaders in the community, he has demonstrated a strong commitment to empowering individuals and strengthening communities. His experience in the finance and advertising industries, along with his work as a sales trainer and entrepreneur, provides strategic leadership that supports the school's organizational development and long-term sustainability.
- Deidre Clark, brings deep community ties and extensive nonprofit leadership experience in Ensley, where she founded the Kuumba Creative Arts Community Teen Design Academy. Her work focuses on youth development, creativity, and community empowerment. Her longstanding commitment to Ensley and her experience supporting startup educational initiatives provide valuable perspective on community engagement and grassroots program development.
- Jody Trautwein brings extensive experience in community leadership and youth engagement as a faith-based leader and Area Coordinator for First Priority of Alabama. His work across Birmingham communities demonstrates a strong commitment to servant leadership and building relationships with youth and families. His involvement with local initiatives such as the Mayor's Prayer Breakfast Planning Committee further strengthens the school's connection to community networks.
- Jennifer Saliba contributes operational expertise through her leadership experience in property management and real estate as a top-producing realtor with Keller Williams Hoover. Her experience managing property assets, negotiating contracts, and working with families strengthens the Board's ability to oversee facilities planning and community relationships. She is a top-ranking real estate expert in the Greater Birmingham region.

Together, these leaders provide operational insight that supports effective school implementation, strong community partnerships, and strategic organizational growth.

Financial Success

The Board also includes members with business, financial, and grant management expertise who help ensure responsible stewardship of public funds and long-term financial sustainability.

- Gilberto Herrera's background in finance, entrepreneurship, and real estate investing provides valuable insight into financial planning, business development, and resource management. His experience coaching entrepreneurs and business leaders further strengthens the Board's capacity to guide long-term strategic planning and financial decision-making.
- Dr. Samantha Briggs brings extensive experience managing large federal grants and education initiatives, including her leadership of the \$60 million GEAR UP Alabama program funded by the U.S. Department of Education. Her experience overseeing large-scale program budgets and grant compliance strengthens the Board's capacity to oversee financial reporting, grant management, and fiscal accountability.
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Nadra Nash-Montgomery contributes additional expertise in grant writing and funding development, supporting the Board's efforts to pursue additional resources that strengthen educational programming and student opportunities.

- Jennifer Saliba's background in real estate and property management further strengthens the Board's financial perspective by contributing expertise related to facilities planning, property management, and asset oversight.

These combined experiences ensure that the Board has the financial knowledge necessary to oversee budgeting, financial planning, and compliance with state and federal financial regulations. Governance Leadership and Community Accountability

The Board's governance structure reflects a strong commitment to community representation, transparency, and accountability. Members have deep connections to the Birmingham community and bring experience working with local families, youth organizations, nonprofit initiatives, and educational institutions.

Board members such as Gilberto Herrera, Deidre Clark, Jody Trautwein, and Jennifer Saliba have demonstrated longstanding commitments to strengthening communities and supporting youth development. Their relationships with local organizations and community stakeholders will help ensure that the school remains responsive to the needs of families and students. Through regular board meetings, community engagement initiatives, and transparent governance practices, the Board will ensure that Floreecer Community School remains accountable to the community it serves. By combining expertise in education, research, community leadership, entrepreneurship, and financial oversight, the Board of Directors is well positioned to guide Floreecer Community School toward sustained educational excellence, effective operations, and long-term financial stability.

d) List all current and identified board members and their intended roles. Provide the qualifications, interest for serving on the board, full resume, and professional biographies for these individuals. If these positions are not yet filled, explain the timeline, criteria, and process for recruitment.

Board Members

Founding Board Members Biographies & Intended Roles

The Founding Board is a group of individuals who have worked formally on the organization of Floreecer Community School since July of 2024. Board members were initially invited based upon clarity of vision, relevant skills and expertise, and willingness to dedicate themselves to educational excellence, and this group has reviewed, contributed to, and supported this charter application and the school design. Each Floreecer Founding board member is aware of the following:

1. Ensuring the success and effectiveness of the school's academic program.
2. Ensure that the school complies with all statutory and regulatory requirements while working within the bounds of its charter and taking regular strides in meeting its mission.
3. Continually ensure that the school is financially healthy, is appropriately staffed, and regularly meets or exceeds goals set by the board.

Gilberto Herrera (proposed Board Chair) serves as Floreecer's Board Chair and a distinguished community member. He is a Google certified educator and moves with a heart to serve the community. He is a mentor to several young men in the community and a Proud leader. He serves on the HICA Junior Board, AG Gaston Boys and Girls Club and is the author of How to Scale You, a sales trainer, speaker and entrepreneur who worked in the finance and advertising industry. Gilberto Herrera also invests in real estate and has coached thousands on how to be successful in business. Deidre Clark (Proposed Vice Chair) with deep ties to Ensley and a lifelong passion for seeing Ensley thrive. Ms. Clark has dedicated her life to ensuring that community, and education are a part of who she is. She is the creative and founder of Kuumba Creative Arts Community built in the heart of Ensley as a Teen Design Academy. She is passionate about educational outcomes, Ensley and community. She serves as a leader in the non-profit world and a pioneer of building community. She has been apart of other startup educational organization as a parent and community advocate.

Carmen Novoa (proposed Board Secretary) With more than 25 years of experience in education, family engagement, and health promotion, she brings a strong commitment to supporting diverse learners and communities both in the United States and abroad. Her professional background spans all levels of the educational system—from early childhood and K–12 environments to higher

education—giving her a comprehensive understanding of the full educational continuum and a broad understanding of student needs and institutional structures. Demonstrated leadership in supporting student success initiatives, enhancing student life, promoting college readiness, and strengthening parent and community engagement. Known for building inclusive, well rounded educational environments that promote well-being and long-term success. Strong expertise in health education curriculum development, lesson planning, digital learning resources, and distance-learning delivery systems. Recognized for advancing holistic approaches to health and learning within educational institutions and the community to empower human growth and personal development. Brings formal training in school and worksite health and safety, combined with a deep cultural awareness, bilingualism, and sensitivity developed through work with diverse populations in the United States and internationally.

Andrew Krist (board member) is a passionate educator who has served in the classrooms of BCS. He is a current doctoral candidate at the University of Alabama in Educational Research. Krist earned his master's degree in secondary education and teaching from the University of Alabama at Birmingham and his bachelor's degree in mathematics from UA. He brings a wealth of experience in educational research and psychometrics.

Samantha Briggs (proposed Board treasurer) PhD has a doctoral degree in Instructional Leadership and a master's degree in Women's Studies from The University of Alabama, as well as a bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education from Clark Atlanta University. A native of St. Louis, MO, Dr. Briggs has over 30 years of experience in education as an urban school teacher, professor, curriculum and grant writer, grant evaluator, consultant, and director of non-profit education programs. The former state director of GEAR UP Alabama, a \$60million U.S. Department of Education grant, Dr. Briggs led direct services designed to significantly increase the number of students from high poverty backgrounds who are prepared to enter and succeed in college, military, or the workforce. Dr. Briggs also served as the Vice President of the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution and the Civil Rights National Monument. In this capacity Dr. Briggs led BCRI's education, curation, archives and exhibitions with a commitment to preserving and telling the Birmingham civil rights story; creating programs that encourage cultural awareness; and championing civil and human rights by facilitating an atmosphere of dialogue and understanding. Briggs currently serves as an education consultant driven by a commitment to social responsibility, community empowerment, equity and a vision for systemic change.

Jody Trautwein (Board Member) is an East Birmingham native, educator, and leader in the Birmingham metro community. He exemplifies true servant leadership in his approach to meeting the community exactly where they are. He works as a faith-based leader in several Birmingham metro communities. Jody is currently the Area Coordinator for First Priority of Alabama. He also serves on the Mayor's Prayer Breakfast Planning Committee. As our first board member, he has been willing to support the vision of Floreecer at its inception.

Nadra Nash-Montgomery (board member) is a bilingual trained scientist and educator. She specializes in grant writing as a consultant working to support educational equity. She works with students from Florida, Alabama and Arizona through her virtual and in-person tutoring services. She has been working in the Alabama region to support students on all proficiency levels and across Spanish and English. She has been a part of the Floreecer mission to become the first dual language immersion school in the state of Alabama by providing ongoing support and expertise.

Jennifer Saliba (board member) brings over 15 years of leadership experience and a passion for making a difference in her community. With a background in Property Management and a degree in Marketing from UAB, Jennifer is currently a top-producing realtor with Keller Williams Hoover. Her enthusiasm for making a positive impact, combined with her approachable and friendly nature, ensures she connects with others to bring meaningful contributions to all endeavors she supports. Her leadership style is rooted in collaboration, compassion, and a drive to foster growth. As a dedicated mother of four and prospective Floreecer parent, Jennifer is passionate about supporting children's education and development. Whether in her personal or professional life, Jennifer is driven by a love for family, faith, and fostering strong relationships. In her free time, Jennifer enjoys spending weekends at the lake with her husband Jonathan and their children, cheering for Alabama football, and creating lasting memories together.

Identified Board Members' Resumes

File 1

File name: Nadra Nash Montgomery Resume.docx
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Uploaded by: On'draya Morris

File 2

File name: S. Briggs VITA_2024_SBRIGGS.pdf
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Uploaded by: On'draya Morris

File 3

File name: Jody Resume 7.18.2024.pdf
Uploaded: 03/12/2026 01:26 PM
Uploaded by: On'draya Morris

File 4

File name: Jennifer K. Saliba Resume.docx.pdf
Uploaded: 03/12/2026 01:26 PM
Uploaded by: On'draya Morris

File 5

File name: Gilberto Herrera - Resume 2024 (1).pdf
Uploaded: 03/12/2026 01:26 PM
Uploaded by: On'draya Morris

File 6

File name: Carmen Novoa CV 10.25.pdf
Uploaded: 03/12/2026 01:26 PM
Uploaded by: On'draya Morris

File 7

File name: AndrewKristCV_Fall25.pdf
Uploaded: 03/12/2026 01:26 PM
Uploaded by: On'draya Morris

File 8

File name: Deidre O. Clark Resume 2025.docx.pdf
Uploaded: 03/12/2026 01:26 PM
Uploaded by: On'draya Morris

e) Disclose any potential conflict of interest for identified board members and their association with the school. Consult the Alabama Ethics Law. Ala Code § 36-25-1 through 36-25-30 (1975) and Ala Code § 16-6F-4(16)b.

Conflict of Interest

FCS Conflicts of Interest with the Proposed Board of Directors

At this time, Florecer Community School has not identified any actual or potential conflicts of interest among its proposed Board of Directors or their association with the school. All board members have been selected based on their professional expertise, commitment to the school's mission, and ability to provide independent governance and oversight. FCS is committed to full compliance with the Alabama Ethics Law (Ala. Code § 36-25-1 through § 36-25-30) and has adopted conflict of interest policies outlined in its Board Bylaws. These policies require all board members to disclose any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest upon appointment and annually thereafter. Board members are also required to disclose any potential conflicts as they arise and to recuse themselves from discussions, decisions, or votes where a conflict may exist.

f) If the current applicant team does not include the initial governing board, explain how and when the transition to the formal governing board will take place.

Transition Narrative

Transition to Governing Board

The current applicant team for Florecer Community School is responsible for developing the charter application, establishing the foundational vision of the school, and coordinating the planning process. While members of the applicant team may serve on the governing board, following charter approval, the applicant team will transition governance responsibilities to a formal Board of Directors that will assume full legal and compliance oversight of the school. The founding board will continue to seek community input and recommendations for potential board members with individual skills and collective expertise in both for-profit and nonprofit arenas, legal, finance, entrepreneurship, technology, bilingual education, small business, operational management, strategic development, program management, human resources, community engagement, parental engagement, student advocacy, fund raising, real estate, facility acquisitions and community outreach. While some of the selection process for governing board members is already underway, the transition to the formal governing board will occur within sixty days of charter approval.

Upon charter approval, the founding board members will begin the process of finalizing and appointing the initial governing board. This process will include:

- Identifying qualified board candidates with expertise aligned with the school's needs
- Ensuring representation from key community stakeholders
- Vetting candidates for potential conflicts of interest
- Confirming commitment to the mission and governance responsibilities of the school

The founding board will consist of ideally 9 members with expertise in areas such as education, finance, nonprofit governance, law, and community engagement. Our goal is that all founding board members will transition to the governing board members.

Step 1: FCS Charter Approval (Immediately Following Authorization). Within 30–60 days of charter approval, the founding team will:

- Finalize the selection of governing board members
- Conduct background checks and conflict-of-interest disclosures
- Adopt governing bylaws and board policies
- Hold the first official board meeting

At this meeting, the governing board will formally assume legal authority over the school.

Step 2: Board Orientation and Training. Prior to the start of school operations, newly appointed board members will participate in a comprehensive governance orientation, which will include training in:

- charter school governance and oversight
- board roles and responsibilities
- financial oversight and fiduciary duties
- academic accountability
- state and federal compliance requirements
- open meeting and ethics laws

This training will ensure the board is prepared to provide effective governance from the outset.

Step 3: Transfer of Authority

Once the governing board is formally constituted, it will assume responsibility for:

- hiring and overseeing the Executive Director/Head of School
- approving the school's budget and financial policies
- adopting operational and governance policies
- overseeing compliance with charter contract requirements

In the event Board Members are unable to continue as governing board members FCS has drafted a board member description to begin the board member recruitment process based on the qualifications listed in the Board Member Description adapted from the Governing Bylaws.

[Floreecer Board Member Description](#)

g) If this application is being submitted by an existing nonprofit organization respond to the following:

i) Will the existing nonprofit board govern the new school, or has the school formed a new non-profit corporation governed by a separate board?

ii) If the nonprofit's current board will govern the charter school, what steps have been taken to transform its board membership, mission, and bylaws to assume its new duties? Describe the plan and timeline for completing the transition and orienting the board to its new duties.

iii) If a new board has been formed, describe what, if anything, its ongoing relationship to the existing nonprofit board will be.

iv) If a new board has been formed, does the new board have 501(c)3 status or has it applied for 501(c)3 status? Only organizations that have secured 501(c)3 status are eligible to hold a charter contract.

Formation of a new board

Floreecer Community School is not being submitted by an existing nonprofit organization. Our proposed school model does not currently operate under the governance of an established nonprofit entity. Instead, the organization associated with Floreecer Community School is being formed solely for the purpose of establishing and operating the charter school.

Element Review

Reviews is not provided

3. Legal Status and Governing Documents

Reviewer Instructions

Please rate this section using the provided rubric.

Status: Completed

Form Result

Only organizations that have a 501(c)(3) nonprofit federal tax-exempt status may hold a charter school contact in the State of Alabama.

Overarching Standard/Criteria: Evidence of nonprofit and federal tax-exempt status.

Evidence needed for addressing the overarching standard:

Legal Status

Floreecer Community School is under the incorporation of Gratia International Dual Language Academy and has been incorporated as an Alabama non-profit organization with the sole purpose of opening a charter school (EIN number is 93-4751125). We will be conducting business as Floreecer Community School. We will comply and operate under the laws of the State of Alabama and all applicable federal non-profit laws. We have received our 501c3 status as of March 2025.

A copy of the Articles of Incorporation, the tax exempt status, and signed statement of assurances are provided in the attachments.

Articles of Incorporation	File name:	Articles of Incorporation .pdf
	Uploaded:	03/10/2026 04:19 AM
	Uploaded by:	On'draya Morris
Proof of non-profit status and tax exempt status (or copies of your filings for the preceding items)	File name:	Non Profit Status Proof .pdf
	Uploaded:	03/10/2026 04:19 AM
	Uploaded by:	On'draya Morris

b) Attach, the completed and signed Statement of Assurances (template provided).

Completed and signed Statement of Assurances	File name:	Floreecer's Statement of Assurances.pdf
	Uploaded:	03/10/2026 04:19 AM
	Uploaded by:	On'draya Morris

Element Review

Reviews is not provided

4. Performance Management & Mission Specific Goals

Reviewer Instructions

Please rate this section using the provided rubric.

Status: Completed

Form Result

Applicants may propose to supplement the authorizer's performance standards with school-specific academic or organizational goals.

Note: The authorizer will evaluate the performance of every charter school annually and for renewal purposes according to a set of academic, financial, and organizational performance standards that will be incorporated into the charter agreement. The academic performance standards will consider status, growth, and comparative performance based on federal, state, and school-specific measures. The financial performance standards will be based on standard accounting and industry standards for sound financial operation. The organizational performance standards will be based primarily on compliance with legal obligations, including fulfillment of the governing board's fiduciary obligations related to sound governance.

Overarching Standard/Criteria: Compelling evidence of high quality and sustainable performance standards and evidence of direct and consistent performance monitoring over time, which considers status, growth, comparative performance, and fulfillment of legal standards.

Evidence needed for addressing the overarching standard:

Floreecer Community School has an innovative school model that is rooted in creating a high level of academic achievement in reading and math, through the evidence-based power of a bilingual education. However, this model does not work without intentional measures of achievement and measurable impact; it works on measurable outcomes to determine our impact on a student's academic achievement. Our measurable outcomes are rooted in a strong sense of urgency, and the knowledge that we are working to transform academic outcomes each day. Our mission, to provide a culturally diverse and rigorous global learning experience to prepare ALL students to flourish as multilingual, multiliterate, high-achieving changemakers while sustaining audacious joy and a commitment to building an international community aligns with the ALSDE's strategic plan to improve student achievement, which targets areas of 1) Academic Growth and Achievement; and 2) College, Career, and Workforce Ready 21st Century skills. FCS recognizes that the authorizer will evaluate the performance of every charter school annually and for renewal purposes according to a set of academic, financial, and organizational performance standards that will be incorporated into the charter agreement. FCS has identified five of these mission-specific academic and organizational goals and targets below:

- Student Achievement
- Student Growth
- Operational Excellence
- Bilingualism/Biliteracy Achievement
- Financial Goals

Measure	Year 1	Year 3	Year 5
Student Achievement	By the end of year 1, 25% students at Florecer will be prepared to exceed their local district average in ELA, Math, and Science as measured by ACAP aligned benchmarks in preparation for ACAP testing in year 2 .	By the end of year 3, 40% students at Florecer will exceed their local district average in ELA, Math, and Science as measured by ACAP.	By the end of year 5, 60% of students at Florecer will exceed their local district average in ELA, Math, and Science as measured by ACAP.
Student Growth	In year 1, 80% of students will score a Median Growth Percentile (MGP) of 50 or above in Reading and Math, from fall to spring, as measured by NWEA Growth assessments.	In year 3, 90% of students will score a Median Growth Percentile (MGP) of 50 or above in Reading and Math, from fall to spring, as measured by NWEA Growth assessments.	In year 5, 100% of students will score a Median Growth Percentile (MGP) of 50 or above in Reading and Math, from fall to spring, as measured by NWEA Growth assessments.
Operational Excellence	A score 80% or above on Anvilar, Birmingham City Schools LEA Reporting.	A score of 85% or above on Anvilar, Birmingham City Schools reporting. Fewer than 4 findings on state monitoring.	An 90% or above score on Anvilar, Birmingham City Schools LEA Reporting.
Bilingualism/Biliteracy Achievement	By the end of year 1, 20% of students will show Novice-High (N-4) in both English/Spanish as measured by American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL)'s, Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL)	By the end of year 3, 50% of students will show intermediate fluency in both English/Spanish as measured by American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL)'s, Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL).	By the end of year 5 75% of students will show intermediate fluency in both English/Spanish as measured by American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL)'s, Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL).
Financial Goal	A decrease in expenditures and/or increase in revenue that generates an average of one month reserve as indicated by the EOY financial statements.	A 5% decrease in expenditures and/or increase in revenue that generates an average of one month reserve as indicated by the EOY financial statements.	A 10% decrease in expenditures and/or increase in revenue that generates an average of one month reserve as indicated by the EOY financial statements.

b) How does the school measure success in meeting its organizational goals? Give specific, quantitative or qualitative, measures of success with benchmarks. Describe what success looks like for the school relating to the organizational aspects of the school's mission and vision.

Measure of Success Narrative

FCS is focused on bringing these metrics to life, we must view the school not just as a building of classrooms, but as a living ecosystem where mission and operations pulse in sync. When a school successfully meets its organizational goals, it manifests as a seamless alignment between high-level vision and daily execution. This narrative of success begins with Financial and Operational Vitality, which serves as the bedrock. Success in this arena looks like a balanced budget where resource allocation is a direct reflection of stated values—for instance, a mission centered on "technological fluency" is evidenced by a robust budgetary carve-out for IT infrastructure and a steady 90-day cash reserve. This fiscal health ensures that the "machinery" of the school is shielded from external volatility, allowing the leadership to focus on long-term growth rather than short-term survival. Ultimately, the culmination of these efforts is Community and Stakeholder Trust, which acts as the school's "social currency." A successful FCS is one where enrollment is consistently at 95% capacity and parents aren't just customers, but advocates, with 85% reporting high satisfaction with safety and communication. This narrative concludes with the school functioning as a community hub—evidenced by active partnerships and internships with local industries—ensuring that when a student graduates, they aren't just leaving a school, but are being launched from a stable, mission-driven platform into a measurable future of success.

Measure	Year 1	Year 3	Year 5
Student Achievement	By the end of year 1, 25% students at Florecer will be prepared to exceed their local district average in ELA, Math, and Science as measured by ACAP aligned benchmarks in preparation for ACAP testing in year 2 .	By the end of year 3, 40% students at Florecer will exceed their local district average in ELA, Math, and Science as measured by ACAP.	By the end of year 5, 60% of students at Florecer will exceed their local district average in ELA, Math, and Science as measured by ACAP.
Student Growth	In year 1, 80% of students will score a Median Growth Percentile (MGP) of 50 or above in Reading and Math, from fall to spring, as measured by NWEA Growth assessments.	In year 3, 90% of students will score a Median Growth Percentile (MGP) of 50 or above in Reading and Math, from fall to spring, as measured by NWEA Growth assessments.	In year 5, 100% of students will score a Median Growth Percentile (MGP) of 50 or above in Reading and Math, from fall to spring, as measured by NWEA Growth assessments.
Operational Excellence	A score 80% or above on Anvilar, Birmingham City Schools LEA Reporting.	A score of 85% or above on Anvilar, Birmingham City Schools reporting. Fewer than 4 findings on state monitoring.	An 90% or above score on Anvilar, Birmingham City Schools LEA Reporting.
Bilingualism/Biliteracy Achievement	By the end of year 1, 20% of students will show Novice-High (N-4) in both English/Spanish as measured by American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL)'s, Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL)	By the end of year 3, 50% of students will show intermediate fluency in both English/Spanish as measured by American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL)'s, Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL).	By the end of year 5 75% of students will show intermediate fluency in both English/Spanish as measured by American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL)'s, Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL).
Financial Goal	A decrease in expenditures and/or increase in revenue that generates an average of one month reserve as indicated by the EOY financial statements.	A 5% decrease in expenditures and/or increase in revenue that generates an average of one month reserve as indicated by the EOY financial statements.	A 10% decrease in expenditures and/or increase in revenue that generates an average of one month reserve as indicated by the EOY financial statements.

5. Staff Structure

Reviewer Instructions

Please rate this section using the provided rubric.

Status: Completed

Form Result

Provide a staffing chart that identifies all key personnel necessary to operate a high-quality public charter school.

Overarching Standard/Criteria: Evidence of a staffing chart that identifies all personnel.

Evidence needed for addressing the overarching standard:

- a) Attach a completed staffing chart for the school that includes:
 - i) Year 1 positions, as well as positions to be added in future years;
 - ii) Administrative, instructional, and non-instructional personnel;
 - iii) The number of classroom teachers, paraprofessionals, and specialty teachers; and
 - iv) Operational and support staff.

School Staffing Chart	File name:	Updated Fall 2027 FCS Staffing Plan (1).pdf
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	Uploaded by:	On'draya Morris

- b) Identify key responsibilities within the staffing chart including, but not limited to:

- i) Child Nutrition;
- ii) Federal Programs;
- iii) Special Education;
- iv) Health Services;
- v) Standardized Testing;
- vi) Transportation (if applicable); and
- iv) Financial Reporting.

FCS Staff Structure Rationale

Floreecer Community School's staffing structure is intentionally designed to ensure that all key operational, compliance, and student service responsibilities are clearly assigned to qualified staff members. The school's staffing model balances strong instructional leadership with operational expertise to ensure that academic programs and operational systems function effectively from the school's opening.

As outlined in the staffing plan, the school will operate with three primary functional teams: Leadership, Academic, and Operations. The Leadership Team will consist of the Executive Director/Head of School, Co-Director (Assistant Principal), Director of School Operations, and Student Supports Coordinator. This team will collectively oversee academic programming, compliance, operational systems, and student services while ensuring coordination across all school functions.

The Academic Team will include classroom teachers, literacy and math specialists, enrichment teachers, and special education staff responsible for delivering high-quality instruction. The Operations Team will include the Office Manager, receptionist (as enrollment grows), and the school nurse, who support daily administrative and student service functions.

In addition to internal staffing, several operational services that are commonly outsourced by high-performing charter schools—including food service, financial management support, custodial

services, security, and information technology—will be provided through qualified external vendors under the oversight of the Leadership Team.

The following outlines the key responsibilities assigned to school leadership for critical operational functions.

Child Nutrition. The Director of School Operations will oversee the school's Child Nutrition Program and will serve as the primary liaison with the contracted food service provider responsible for meal preparation and program administration.

Responsibilities include:

- Oversight of compliance with the National School Lunch Program and related federal nutrition programs
- Vendor contract management and service monitoring
- Administration of free and reduced-price meal eligibility processes
- Coordination of meal service logistics and meal count reporting
- Ensuring compliance with Alabama State Department of Education Child Nutrition Program requirements

The Executive Director will provide strategic oversight to ensure that child nutrition services meet all federal and state program standards.

Federal Programs. Oversight of federal programs will be shared between the Executive Director/Head of School and the Student Supports Coordinator, ensuring that all federal program requirements are implemented with fidelity.

Responsibilities include:

- Ensuring compliance with federal education programs, including Title I and IDEA
- Oversight of program implementation and monitoring requirements
- Coordination of required reporting and documentation for federal programs
- Monitoring equitable access to services for eligible students
- Coordinating federal program reviews and audits

The Student Supports Coordinator will play a key operational role in implementing services that support federally funded programs and ensuring appropriate documentation and service delivery.

Special Education. The Student Supports Coordinator, who holds certification in Special Education and/or English as a Second Language, will oversee the implementation and compliance of the school's special education program.

Responsibilities include:

- Coordination of Individualized Education Program (IEP) development and implementation
- Supervision of special education teachers and paraprofessionals
- Coordination of evaluations and related services
- Monitoring compliance with IDEA and state special education regulations
- Supporting inclusive instructional practices and collaboration between general education and special education staff
- Special education teachers and special education teacher associates will provide direct services and instructional support to students with disabilities.

Health Services. Health services will be provided by the School Nurse (reporting to the Director of School Operations), who will ensure that the school maintains appropriate health and safety standards for students.

Responsibilities include:

- Maintaining student health records and monitoring immunization compliance
- Administering medications and managing individualized health plans

The School Nurse will work in coordination with the Leadership Team to ensure compliance with state health and safety regulations.

- Conducting required health screenings
- Coordinating emergency health procedures and response protocols
- Communicating with families and healthcare providers regarding student health needs

Standardized Testing. The Co-Director (Assistant Principal) will serve as the school's Testing Coordinator and will oversee all aspects of standardized testing administration.

Responsibilities include:

- Coordinating administration of all state and federally required assessments
- Ensuring compliance with state testing security procedures and protocols
- Training staff on testing procedures and requirements
- Developing testing schedules and coordinating logistics
- Overseeing assessment data collection and reporting
- As the school grows, the Dean of Academics will support analysis of assessment results and assist in using data to inform instructional planning and school improvement efforts.

Transportation (if applicable). If transportation services are provided, the Director of School Operations will oversee transportation coordination and vendor management.

Responsibilities include:

- Managing transportation vendor contracts or service agreements
- Ensuring transportation safety compliance
- Coordinating bus routes and schedules
- Communicating transportation procedures with families

If the school does not initially operate its own transportation services, the Director of School Operations will assist families in understanding available transportation options.

Financial Reporting. Financial reporting and fiscal management will be overseen by the Director of School Operations in coordination with an external financial services provider.

Responsibilities include:

- Development and monitoring of the school's annual operating budget
- Preparation of monthly financial statements and reports
- Oversight of accounts payable, accounts receivable, and payroll
- Ensuring compliance with financial policies and internal controls
- Coordination with external auditors and financial consultants

The Executive Director will review financial reports regularly and present financial updates to the Board of Directors to ensure transparency and accountability.

Summary Floreecer Community School's staffing structure ensures that all critical operational responsibilities are clearly assigned to qualified leadership staff. The Leadership Team—including the Executive Director, Co-Director (Assistant Principal), Director of School Operations, and Student Supports Coordinator—provides coordinated oversight of academic programs, operational systems, compliance requirements, and student services. This structure allows the school to maintain strong operational management while prioritizing instructional excellence and student support as the school grows and enrollment expands.

c) Explain how the relationship between the school's senior administrative team and the rest of the staff will be managed. Note the teacher-student ratio, as well as the ratio of total adults to students for the school.

Relationship management narrative

Year One Staffing Vision and Model

Floreecer's staffing model aligns with our mission and vision to maximize achievement through dual language immersion, maintain fiscal sustainability, and plan for our growth. To remain in response to student needs, we maintain a low student-to-teacher ratio in all grades and staff cohorts of grade level cohorts ideally between 40-50 students with two teachers and 1 teacher associate (paraprofessional) that floats to support staff. Our teacher associates are hired with the intention of growing into teachers and are trained during professional development to support the content and language standards. Our ideal classroom sizes are roughly at 1:11 teacher to student ratio during literacy and math and 22 students per teacher during other times of the day. In grades 6-8, we maintain a ratio of 1:22. Over the first five years in operation, the teacher-to-student ratio averages 1:11. Maintaining our school model as a small school community focused on high academic achievement.

In the first two years of operation, the Executive Director (ED) serves as the highest authority in the day to day school operations and reports directly to the governing Board of Directors and provides updates to the Board Chair. The ED reports academic, cultural and financial data to the board at monthly board meetings or addresses any immediate concerns at special called meetings. The ED also maintains many academic responsibilities as a principal while overseeing the school's overall progress toward organizational goals. In year 4, a Dean of Academics focused in (K-4) instruction is selected to ensure time for key instructional processes that lead to long-term academic success and build upon the development of a cohesive plan toward foundational literacy in both English and Spanish.

In year 1, Floreecer's leadership team is composed of the ED, the Director of School Operations (DSO), the Co-Director (CD), the Student Supports Coordinator (SSC) and Counselor.

The Director of School Operations will support operational/logistical schoolwide systems, as the ED & CD will support academics, cultural and assessment priorities. The Student Supports Coordinator is also a case manager for the SPED department, providing training and support for all staff. This individual is dually certified in SPED and ESL. Additionally, FCS has included a School Counselor role to support the mental, social and emotional developmental needs of students. The School Counselor will support the SEL implementation and counseling services needs in our founding years. FCS Full Staffing Vision and Model

As we progress in the growth and development of our school, Biliteracy Specialists, the Counselor, and the Dean of Student Culture (DSC) manage FCS staff through collaboration and shared leadership. The DSO organizes the school's business model and establishes processes and procedures to maximize instructional time and safety. In addition, they manage the operation team, partnerships, and vendor relationships. The ED and CD are responsible for the oversight of academic programming and supervise the Student Supports Coordinator and teachers. The DSC oversees SPED compliance and supports SPED students in the first two years of operation. In addition, they manage SPED teachers and teacher associates, ELL teachers, and contracted SPED services. Finally, the CD oversees student culture and behavior support alongside the DSC. In our first two years of operation we have decided to adopt SEL professional development services with Conscious Discipline practices and have our school counselor manage and provide mental health services, social-emotional training, and staffing mental health training and support to all staff.

Element Review

Reviews is not provided

6. Staffing Plans, Hiring, Management, and Evaluation

Reviewer Instructions

Please rate this section using the provided rubric.

Status: Completed

Form Result

Provide details on the hiring and management of school staff that provides opportunities for meaningful staff contributions and gives staff rights suitable to their position.

Overarching Standard/Criteria: Evidence of appropriate contractual relationships with staff.

Evidence needed for addressing the overarching standard:

a) Explain the relationship that will exist between the proposed charter school and its employees, including whether the employees will be at-will and whether the school will use employment contracts. If the school uses contracts, explain the nature and purpose of the contracts. Attach any personnel policies or an employee manual, if developed.

Florecer recognizes that high-performing and qualified teachers positively influence students' short-term academic growth and long-term educational success. Given the nationwide teacher shortage and the competitive market for quality teachers, Florecer is confident that teachers will be attracted to Florecer because of these distinct features:

- Focus on practice-based instruction
- Authentic relationships with colleagues, families, and students as the foundation for culture and character building
- Non-traditional school daily schedule, with time for teachers to adequately plan collaboratively and support in responding to the individual needs of students
- Protected 60-minutes of meeting-free, duty-free planning daily
- Weekly coaching and planning support alongside school leaders
- Prioritized and personalized professional development, including 2 hours each Friday
- Small school model with small caseloads of students
- Competitive salaries
- Holistic approach to health and wellness of staff.

Florecer intends to fill classrooms with exceptional educators with at least three years of professional/teaching experience and a willingness to grow and learn the foundations of bilingual education and continue to hone their skillset to become expert leaders in Alabama's bilingual education ecosystem.. Recognizing that bilingual pedagogy is nuanced we are prepared to coach/grow teacher understanding through a solid foundation in Bilingual Education support (Dual Language New Mexico and The Canizales Group). Our ideal candidate has experience in the principles of instruction and is willing to learn how to grow and develop based on our practice-based professional development model. But, most importantly, FCS teachers must live our mission and are ready to uphold our core commitments and community values as stewards of our future changemakers.

Florecer Community School employees will receive an annual employment contract that outlines the at-will employment conditions, which outlines their terms of employment as at-will employees, annual pay, supervisor and job description. The nature is to outline the scope of work and expectations for both parties; the contract builds a foundation for a long-term relationship based on performative data and professional duties. The purpose of the contract is to establish agreement between the school and the staff regarding their rights and duties (i.e., who does what, what restrictions there are, and what happens in the case a party does not meet the agreed-upon terms). Contracts are renewed on an annual basis, provided the employee is satisfactorily conducting the duties of the job, including a positive employee evaluation based on the outlined teaching framework. Adversely, should formal evaluations and informal observations indicate that teacher performance remains unsatisfactory, the teacher is placed on a corrective action plan that includes specific metrics and timelines for growth. If improvement is not deemed satisfactory and/or at a rapid enough pace, the contract with the teacher is terminated.

Personnel Policies or Employee Manual	File name:	FCS Employee Manual.pdf
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b) Outline the proposed school's salary ranges and employment benefits for all employees, as well as any incentives or reward structures that may be part of the compensation system. Explain the

school's strategy for retaining high-performing teachers. If available, include a salary chart based on years of experience.

Floreecer Community School intends to offer salaries commensurate with the local school district compensation for similar positions, which may be at or above the state minimums required in Alabama and may, from time to time, offer bonuses, stipends, and other forms of compensation when funding resources allow. The current plan is to offer stipends to bilingual and Special Education teachers. Salaries are determined by prior teaching experience, educational attainment, and certifications. The average teacher salary is between \$45,770 and \$54,686, representing teaching experiences between 1 and 10 years. A standard benefits package similar to those offered by the local school districts will be offered to full-time and other applicable employees, including but not limited to medical-dental-vision insurance, employee leave, and state retirement packages. Retaining high-performing teachers is crucial for maintaining a high-quality education system. Teacher retention is a critical issue in education, directly impacting student success and achievement. When teachers leave their schools or the profession altogether, it can disrupt the learning environment and decrease student engagement and academic performance. These educators play a significant role in shaping our students' academic success and overall experience. To ensure their retention, FCS will employ a multi-faceted approach of evidence-based teacher retention strategies that effectively improve teacher satisfaction and reduce turnover. Strategies were identified in a report commissioned by the Education Commission with proven results, "Teacher Retention Strategies That Work" by the Education Commission of the States (2019).(109)

These strategies include:

1. Professional Development Opportunities: Providing teachers with regular, meaningful professional development opportunities can help them stay current on best practices, develop new skills, and feel more confident and competent in their roles. This can include workshops, conferences, and support groups, and is highly valued by their colleagues and school leaders are more likely to stay in their jobs. This can involve creating a positive school culture, providing opportunities for collaboration and feedback, and offering resources such as mentorship programs and decision-making power.
2. Collaboration and Support: Teachers who feel supported and valued by their colleagues and school leaders are more likely to stay in their jobs. This can involve creating a positive school culture, providing opportunities for collaboration and feedback, and offering resources such as mentorship programs and decision-making power.
3. Autonomy and Decision-Making Power: Teachers with more autonomy and decision-making power in their classrooms and schools tend to be more satisfied and engaged in their work. This can involve giving teachers more control over curriculum design, lesson planning, and assessment practices.
4. Competitive Compensation and Benefits: Providing teachers with competitive compensation and benefits can help attract and retain high-quality educators. This can include offering salaries comparable to those in other industries, providing health insurance and retirement benefits, and offering flexible scheduling options.
5. Work-Life Balance: Encouraging work-life balance can help teachers manage the demands of their jobs and maintain their physical and mental health. This can involve offering flexible scheduling options, providing time off for personal and family obligations, and supporting teachers in managing stress and burnout.
6. Recognition and Appreciation: Recognizing and appreciating teachers' hard work and dedication can go a long way in retaining them. This can involve recognizing teachers' achievements through awards, bonuses, or public recognition and providing opportunities for teachers to share their successes with their colleagues and the broader community. This also includes tapping candidates first for internal positions before posting them externally and providing career advancement opportunities for teachers that may offer increased compensation.
7. Principal Leadership and Support: Strong, supportive leadership can be critical to teacher retention. Effective communicators, collaborators, and problem-solvers can help create a positive school culture and provide teachers with the resources and support they need to succeed. FCS will also develop a fair and rigorous evaluation system that provides regular feedback to teachers on their performance and areas for improvement that will help them grow professionally and feel more confident in their roles.
8. Student Behavior Management: Teachers with access to effective behavior management strategies and support can better manage their classrooms and reduce the stress and burnout that can lead to turnover. This can involve providing training on evidence-based classroom management techniques and establishing a positive classroom culture.
9. School Climate and Culture: A positive school climate and culture can help attract and retain teachers. This can involve fostering a sense of community among teachers, students, and families, promoting diversity and inclusivity, and providing opportunities for teachers to participate in decision-making and leadership roles.

Salary Chart

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c) Describe the school's strategy, plans, and timeline for recruiting and hiring the teaching staff, including the school's plan for hiring "Highly Qualified" staff in accordance with the state accountability plan. Explain other key selection criteria and any special considerations relevant to the school's design. Identify which school positions will be funded via federal funds and what certifications are required to allocate federal funds in this way.

Beginning Spring 2026, upon authorization, the Executive Director will collaborate with marketing experts at NSFA, LEE (Leadership for Educational Equity), philanthropic funders and Board members to launch a robust recruitment strategy to engage high-quality candidates to become founding educators for Floreecer Community School. Our community partners have identified key leaders in the dual language education field and are prepared to assist in the recruitment process. Additionally, we have identified local bilingual teachers/leaders that have shown interest in being a part of our founding school community.

FCS plans to recruit such staff using the internet and social media to advertise available positions and draw on its vast network of educators and industry members to recruit interested candidates. FCS professional affiliations, Leadership for Educational Equity (LEE), National Teach for America alumni network, New Schools for Alabama, NewSchools Venture Fund, and Charter School Growth Fund will serve as the initial recruiting networks across the Charter School sector. LinkedIn, other social media tools, and our website will serve as a primary sourcing platform. All available efforts will be made to encourage local educators interested in available positions at FCS to apply. FCS will also participate in regional and state recruitment and career fairs in neighboring and surrounding states and build recruiting relationships with teacher preparation programs. FCS will attend events throughout Alabama and surrounding states to conduct wide-ranging searches for high-quality teachers looking to relocate or for a potential leadership trajectory position in a newly founded charter school. We will connect with other local talent incubator networks to recruit high-quality teachers. Additionally, we have identified bilingual paraprofessionals, or local community members that are interested in continuing their education through our professional education network at Reach University and Texas A&M Kingsville. By January 2027, FCS plans to have identified and hired all candidates for the senior leadership positions; all hiring is expected to be completed by April 2027.

Timeline for Hiring

The timeline for hiring teachers begins during the planning year upon authorization. It is as follows:

- June 2026 Post Leadership Positions on Website and Social Media Platforms
- July 2026 Post Job descriptions on social media platforms and website
- August 2026 Send referral emails and notifications to our professional networks
- September 2026 Post Job Vacancies and advertise open positions
- October 2026 Begin Hiring Process (see below)
- December 2026 30% of staff receive an offer letter
- February 2027 60% of staff receive an offer letter
- April 2027 100% of staff receive an offer letter

d) Outline the school's procedures for hiring and dismissing school personnel, including conducting criminal background checks.

Hiring and Dismissing Personnel

Teacher Hiring Process. A thorough selection process will occur for all potential teacher candidates. FCS will incorporate the following hiring process:

Application	INTERVIEW	CRIMINAL BACKGROUND
Interview	Week 1-2	Check
Video Screening	Week 2-3	Check
Board Approval		Check

Acknowledging ALSDE Educator Certification

FCS shall comply with all applicable federal laws, rules, and regulations regarding the qualifications of teachers and other instructional staff. Floreecer Community School acknowledges the school's understanding of the ALSDE's Educator Certification Section and criminal history background check process. If approved, FCS will comply with this process and adhere to the necessary steps to ensure compliance. Likewise, Floreecer Community School will be subject to the same civil rights, health, and safety requirements, including, but not limited to, state and local public health and building codes, employee fingerprinting, and criminal background checks applicable to other public schools in the state except as otherwise specifically provided in Act 2015-3, Section 9 (d)(1).

Teacher Dismissal Process

Floreecer Community School will implement a progressive discipline policy while attempting to educate the employee simultaneously. This policy, which will be incorporated into employment materials, will follow the following dismissal procedures:

1. Verbal Warning. A Verbal Warning will be used in situations involving minor infractions or early signs of poor work performance. Multiple Verbal Warnings may be used in situations where the conduct is of a minor nature. For major issues/infractions, Verbal Warnings may not be appropriate.
2. Written Warning. A Written Warning will be used in situations involving repeated minor infractions following the use of Verbal Warnings, or for more serious infractions. For major issues/infractions, Written Warnings may not be appropriate.
3. Performance Improvement Plan/Final Warning. A Performance Improvement Plan and/or Final Warning may be used in situations of repeated minor infractions or for more serious and major infractions. This step will incorporate the Principal/Head of School and applicable supervisors in determining a course of action to improve the employee's work performance by a certain date. If proper improvement has not been made by date certain, termination may be recommended. A Performance Improvement Plan / Final Warning may not be appropriate for major issues/infractions.
4. Suspension. Suspension may be used for repeated minor infractions or for more serious and major infractions. Suspensions may be in length up to 14 days.

e) Explain how the school leader will be supported, developed, and evaluated each school year. Attach any leadership evaluation tool(s) that have been developed.

Floreecer's Support for School Leaders

At FCS we believe in Paul Bambrick-Santoyo's philosophy about leveraging leadership to address equitable schools, "Measuring outcomes is only useful if you know what the target should be. If the target is different in each classroom, then we have no way to know how students are doing across the cohort relative to each other. The students are stuck with varying degrees of rigor depending on which teacher they have. That's not fair to our students⁹⁴."

Floreecer Community School's leadership team will be coached, supported, and evaluated in a number of ways. By utilizing best practices from Leverage leadership, the Co-Director and the Director of School Operations and all leadership team members will be coached and evaluated on a regular and consistent schedule by the Executive Director/Head of School.

Regular formative feedback will be provided through weekly check-ins and joint observations. The Co-Director and the Director of School Operations will be formally evaluated twice a year by the Executive Director/Head of School. Additionally, the Executive Director will utilize the Leverage Leadership Readiness assessment alongside the ALSDE PLP planning template to develop a tailored plan to coach, and lead the team to organizational success.

The FCS Board of Directors will conduct a formal evaluation of the Executive Director/Head of School every Spring, and weekly/monthly check ins will be conducted to ensure consistency in strategic priorities and mission alignment. An Executive Director Support/Evaluation committee will be formed that will be charged with creating or adopting a comprehensive evaluation tool that encompasses

feedback from board members, staff, parents, leadership team members, students, and a third-party consultant to ensure FCS has a highly effective leader.

The school administrators will also apply for fellowships and participate in networks for school leaders that support their continuing development and provide support during the planning year and early years of the school. On'Draya Morris the proposed Executive Director is currently applying for grants from the New Schools Venture Fund for Innovative schools and Charter School Growth Fund Seed Cohort which provide 2-3 years of on-going leadership support, coaching and specialized training to the leadership team in instructional, organizational, operational, and financial best practices.

Additionally, upon approval the DC Bilingual Head of School Daniela Anello will continue to provide formalized coaching support, and residency partnership through the Escuelita program to continue to grow and develop Floreecer's leadership team with best practices for a Blue Ribbon School. All leadership and staff will receive ongoing training in bilingual education application of best practices on an ongoing basis alongside our partners.

Citations

94 Bambrick-Santoyo, P. (2018). Leverage leadership 2.0 : a practical guide to building exceptional schools (First edition). Jossey-Bass, a Wiley Brand.

Leadership Evaluation Tool(s)	File name:	Leadership Evaluation Tool.pdf
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	Uploaded by:	On'draya Morris

f) Explain how teachers will be supported, developed, and evaluated each school year. Attach any teacher evaluation tool(s) that already exist for the school.

Floreecer's Support for Educators

Once onboarded, the faculty has the support of robust professional development bolstered by internal staff expertise, external partnerships Dual Language New Mexico, and instructional resources. The THRIVE Summer Learning Institute will be the bedrock of how teachers are supported. FCS believes teachers need to plan, reflect and assess teaching and learning often. In compliance with the ALSDE teaching priorities all teachers will be evaluated using the guiding principles in the Alabama Teacher Observation Tool (ATOT). This professional planning, coaching and collaboration, is embedded into the daily schedule of the school through a common planning block, and two hours on Fridays for collaborative PD. Faculty members will have access to a number of best-in-class programs, including local and state conferences and programming offered by local partners.

Within the staffing model are key positions whose roles are to support the professional development of teachers through coaching and collaboration. This curriculum leadership team will facilitate collaboration around evaluating student work and data through Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), planning curriculum, learning to use assessment data to inform instruction, and sharing best teaching practices across the school. This team will consist of the Founding Executive Director, Co-Founding Director/AP, Dean of Academics and Student Supports Coordinator. This support system will provide teachers with instructional support, weekly planning and one-on-one coaching, and weekly data meetings. .

With respect to supervision and evaluation of the instructional staff, FCS will adopt tools and procedures that allow our leadership team to give teachers targeted and specific feedback on their teaching so that each teacher realizes his or her full potential and SMART Goals. FCS will use the [Danielson Framework for Teaching](#) to evaluate instructional staff. For nearly three decades, the Danielson Framework has been used by over 1500 organizations in nearly 50 states and is widely accepted as an effective tool to improve teaching and learning. Additionally, evaluators will work in compliance with [Alabama's Teacher Growth Program](#) (by using the Alabama Teacher Observation Tool) to create teacher development plans to meet and exceed growth measures and goals.

Teacher Evaluation Tool(s)

File 1

File name: Leadership Evaluation Tool.pdf
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File 2

File name: danielson-framework-teaching-2022.pdf
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Dismissal Narrative

Educator Performance and Staff Turnover

Florencer Community School students deserve a high-quality education to prepare them to be successful in college and careers. This challenging work requires the collective efforts and commitment of all educators, including the principal, teachers and operations staff members, families and community members. Educators are driven by the conviction that all students can succeed and understand the tremendous responsibility to dramatically improve student outcomes. Through our holistic approach steeped in systematic structure and systems, we intend to support teachers whom are dedicated to the mission, community values and successful life outcomes of our students. FCS will act in the best interests of the students and understands that, unfortunately, there will be occasions where there is unsatisfactory instructional leadership/administrator or educator performance. In such situations where there is unsatisfactory performance, a performance improvement plan will be created.

Holistically, faculty are supported through a coaching model where all members of the teaching and leadership team meet weekly with an assigned coach for feedback and support. Weekly collaborative planning and professional learning time is built into the school schedule, which may provide for additional support to focus on responding to data. Quarterly data sprints provide an opportunity for the whole staff to work together to analyze data and plan collaboratively in response to trends. When individual teachers produce consistently low academic achievement results, a time-bound improvement plan is created and implemented by school leadership and the teacher's coach to support them in improving their practice and alignments with FCS organizational priorities. Failure to show adequate progress results in early termination or failure to renew the employment contract. The Executive Director/Head of School and Co-Director will be responsible for implementing all corrective plans. The plan will be based on the data driven approaches and proven best practices. Plans could include school-wide plans, grade level corrective plans, and subject area and/or individual teacher corrective plans. Each plan will be prescriptive based on the needs.

Corrective actions could include:

- Dismissal/Termination
- Placement on a School Improvement Plan
- Mentor teacher provided for additional support
- On-going professional development, including coaching

FCS's Attention to A Teachers

Maintaining a positive climate after a staff departure requires a narrative of stability, transparency, and shared purpose. When a team member leaves, the remaining staff often experience a "vacuum" that can lead to anxiety or burnout if not addressed with empathy. Florencer's approach is to frame turnover not as a loss of momentum, but as a "season of recalibration." By openly communicating the transition plan and acknowledging the temporary increase in workload, leadership validates the team's efforts while reinforcing that their well-being is the priority. This transparency prevents the "rumor mill" from creating a climate of uncertainty, replacing it with a sense of collective resilience.

Beyond mere communication, the narrative is supported by tangible support and recognition. Rather than simply absorbing the vacated duties, Florecer encourages managers to host "huddle sessions" where teams can redistribute tasks based on current capacity, ensuring no one feels buried by the transition. This is also an opportune time to celebrate the contributions of the departing peer while highlighting the growth opportunities that a new perspective might bring to the team. By treating the departure with dignity and the subsequent hiring process with excitement, the organization signals that every role is valued, but the mission and the team's health are what remain constant.

Creating a positive climate for staff after significant staff or leadership

The approach is divided into two main areas: preventative retention and operational recovery.

Florecer focuses on "Strategic HR" to keep top talent engaged by addressing the root causes of burnout and stagnation.

- **Competitive Compensation & Benefits:** They prioritize regular market benchmarking to ensure salaries and benefits (like health and work-life balance perks) remain attractive compared to industry standards.
- **Predictive Analysis:** Florecer leverages AI and data sets to identify patterns in employee behavior (e.g., lower engagement levels or interaction changes) to predict which staff members are at risk of leaving before they actually resign.
- **Professional Development:** Through Learning Management Systems (LMS), they provide tailored training and clear career pathways, ensuring employees don't feel "stagnant" or "bored."
- **Culture of Inclusion:** They emphasize a "Healthy Work Culture" where diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) are integrated into daily operations, fostering a sense of belonging that serves as a primary retention tool.

FCS recognizes the immense sensitivity that sudden personnel changes can create as such we utilize the following procedures to address the unique sensitivity that may ensue.

Action Stage	Key Procedures
Feedback Loop	Exit Interviews: Conducted for all resignations to gather honest insights into workplace conditions and identify systemic issues that may cause future turnover.
Knowledge Transfer	Cross-Training: Florecer encourages "redundancy" by training multiple team members in key tasks so that no single role holds "exclusive" knowledge.
Operational Continuity	Process Reviews: Managers review the departing employee's standard operating procedures (SOPs) and task lists to ensure all responsibilities are documented and transferable.
Hiring & Replacement	Behavioral Recruitment: For new hires, they use behavioral interviewing to ensure the replacement fits the organizational culture, reducing the risk of "early-stage" turnover.
Compliance	Structured Meetings: Whether a resignation or dismissal, HR oversees the final meeting to ensure legal compliance, return of company property, and clear communication of final benefits.

Element Review

Reviews is not provided

7. Facilities

Reviewer Instructions

Please rate this section using the provided rubric.

Status: Completed

Form Result

Provide evidence towards securing a safe, up to code, facility to house the school.

Overarching Standard/Criteria: High quality facilities plan that provides for the procurement of a suitable independent facility.

Note: Alabama charter schools may be able to utilize existing public school buildings for charter schools if they are located on the unused facility list.

Evidence needed for addressing the overarching standard:

a) Describe the process used to identify and secure a facility including any brokers or consultants employed to navigate the real estate market, plan for renovations, timelines, financing, etc.

Florecer's Facilities Identification Process

Florecer Community School (FCS) has established a multi-partner process for identifying and securing a school facility, primarily leveraging the expertise of 22Beacon and New School Facility Partners (NSFP) to navigate the real estate market and prepare for school opening in August 2027. Florecer has implemented a structured and proactive process to identify, secure, and prepare a facility that fully supports the academic, operational, and safety needs of the school. Our facility planning prioritizes accessibility for families, compliance with all local and state requirements, financial sustainability, and the ability to accommodate projected enrollment growth. The facility search began during the planning phase of the charter application and is guided by clearly defined criteria. These criteria include proximity to the communities Florecer intends to serve, access to major transportation routes, safe traffic flow for student drop-off and pick-up, adequate parking, appropriate zoning for educational use, and sufficient square footage to accommodate classrooms, administrative offices, student support services, and shared learning spaces. Based on projected enrollment and programmatic needs, Florecer is seeking a facility that can support both initial operations and future enrollment growth. In pursuit of facilities spaces, FCS has identified two viable options.

Strategic Charter Facilities Partners

- 22Beacon: Rebecca Salvo, Senior Vice President of Real Estate Development at 22Beacon, has provided direct support in identifying property solutions, issuing Letters of Intent (LOI), and developing providing advice in locating and identifying facility solutions
- New School Facility Partners (NSFP): Sarah Turner (CEO) and Phillip Campbell (Senior Project Manager) have offered technical assistance in site selection, due diligence, design, and construction management. Their focus and expertise in AL charter facilities has supported solving facility-related challenges while keeping operational costs low to maximize classroom funding.
- Real Estate Navigation: FCS also works with firms like Graham & Co. in Birmingham to evaluate specific building opportunities such as the one presented in the proposed LOI at 1809 Avenue E in Ensley.

Renovations and Planning

Option 1: Ideal facilities solution with pre-existing school structure and room for growth. (approx 28,000 sqft, estimated renovation costs 1.2 million)

- Site Identification: FCS has identified the former St. Joseph's Catholic Church school property and annex (located at 1019 30th Street Ensley) as an ideal location for our school providing ample space and classroom allocations for a growing school model. This property is owned by the Catholic Diocese of Birmingham.

- **Renovation Scope:** The process includes evaluating necessary repairs to meet current codes, developing use timelines, and establishing initial cost-sharing agreements between the landlord and the school.

Option 2: Ideal startup space (approximately 14,000 sqft, estimated renovation costs unknown however property is in ideal condition)

- **Site Identification:** FCS has identified the Regions Bank Building (located at 1809 Avenue E, Birmingham, Alabama 35218) that meets the storm shelter requirements for AL public schools. This Property is owned by Ensley Development Corporation, a community partner that has identified a strong commitment to revitalizing the Ensley community.
- **Renovation Scope:** A currently occupied building that would need to be partitioned for classrooms, given a design/architectural review for best use of space. Additional conversion needs based on it being utilized as a bank.

Timelines:

- For either option continue evaluating feasibility assessments/renovation costs and development of tentative timelines alongside 22Beacon NSFP.
- Complete site visits and gather most up to date costs for financial sustainability. And facility requirements for both facilities. Option 1: Begin official conversations with the Diocese for renovations and leasing upon charter approval.
- If choosing Option 2: FCS will complete the necessary requirements to identify next steps for the building conversion.

Ideal Next Steps after Charter Approval:

- Summer 2026-Spring 2027: Complete Signed lease and commencement of renovations
- August 2027: Target school opening.

Financing and Due Diligence

- **Financing Strategy:** The school uses project cost calculators, such as those provided by LISC, to estimate pre-opening phase expenses.
- **Support & Commitment:**
- Once approved FCS will have access to a CSP Planning grant, and other funding sources to support facilities.
- 22Beacon provides \$300,000 pre-development funds to support the pre-development costs of facilities acquisition.
- **Corporate Support:** First Horizon Bank has also provided a letter of support, indicating early engagement with corporate partners.

b) If a facility has been purchased or an MOU or other proof of intent to secure a specific facility, please provide proof of the commitment as an attachment. Briefly describe the facility including location, size, and amenities. Provide, as an attachment, supporting documents providing details about the facility. Charter school facilities must comply with applicable state, local and authorizer health and safety requirements. In addition, charter school applicants must be prepared to follow applicable city planning review procedures.

Floreecer's Facility Plan

Floreecer's Community School founding team has been working with its partners for over a year to evaluate potential sites suitable for a charter school. Our partners and advisors have included technical assistance from New Schools for Alabama, existing charter school leaders, predevelopment facilities consultants (22Beacon/New Schools Facilities Partners), lenders, and potential landlords. This effort has resulted in several formal discussions with facilities in the District 8&9 area. We are currently pursuing a signed letter of intent to lease with our potential facility partners and upon approval of a charter will immediately move forward negotiating a lease.

Procuring the facility for Floreecer Community School is a critical decision that has implications across the school model. While we have identified our target location in the area of District 8 & 9 we are still working with our partners at 22Beacon and New Schools Facility Partners to acquire a facility that

will support our needs as a K-8 school. To date we have identified a space located at 1809 Avenue E, Birmingham, AL 35218 at approximately 14,000 sq feet. We have received As we navigate the proposed space, we find it to be an viable space allowing us to be a visual beacon of change, uplifting the ongoing revitalization of District 8 & 9 and intentional positioning to support the families that live, work and do life in the western side of Birmingham AL.

Year 1 facility requirements essential to our mission are:

- The facility requires 8,000-10,000sqft of space and access to space to accommodate six academic classrooms at an average of 700 sq ft per classroom.
- The facility space must have or have the capacity to build kitchen/warming facilities and provide space for a dining hall.
- Office spaces, a teacher work room, access to a gym or multipurpose room, general meeting space, small group quiet spaces, a nurse’s office, and storage, and at least one ample space for school-wide gatherings
- There must be capacity for reconfiguration and renovation upon acquisition, if needed, to meet programmatic needs.
- The facility will comply with all appropriate ADA and other legal requirements.
- The facility lease, renovation, furniture, fixtures, and equipment costs will ideally fall within the specified amount of 7% of Floreecer’s state foundational revenue.

Our ideal facility would meet the above requirements and also have approximately 20,000-25,000 sqft and consist of the following:

- 12-15 classrooms, various offices, a main entry, and a kitchen, multipurpose room used for cafeteria, group activities, and community gatherings.
- Sufficient parking and adjacent greenspace to complement the facility and additional surface area to accommodate additional modular classrooms if needed.

Our walkthroughs and site visits with several potential facilities have indicated there may be improvements required. All improvements will align with Alabama Building Code and Alabama Fire Protection Code and any other requirements outlined in Act 2015-3, including, but not limited to, restrooms, fire safety, campus security, air quality control, and weatherproofing. FCS will follow construction requirements and procedures set forth by the Alabama State Department of Education and the Alabama Building Commission and is prepared to follow city and county planning review procedures before renovations. Ideally, renovations can begin as early as the Summer of 2026 in preparation for school opening in August 2027.

In addition to technical assistance from NSFA, Floreecer has engaged 22Beacon, a nonprofit facilities advisory program that provides guidance and support to charter schools that are developing or renovating facilities. It supports schools with essential facilities-related technical assistance such as architectural & design management, bidding process and construction management, and owner’s representation services. The design, development, and architectural support will be significantly discounted or free. FCS will continue to partner with New Schools for Alabama and 22Beacon to identify cost-effective resources and support in connection with contractors for possible renovations. For our proposed location we have already spoken to our partners at 22Beacon about the estimated cost of renovations and included an estimate of renovation costs in our proposed budget.

Proof of Commitment	File name:	Floreecer Community School - LOI - Entire Building.pdf
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Supporting Documents	File name:	Floreecer Term Sheet_3.11.26.pdf
	Uploaded:	03/12/2026 10:08 PM
	Uploaded by:	On'draya Morris

Element Review

Reviews is not provided

8. Advisory Bodies

Reviewer Instructions

Please rate this section using the provided rubric.

Status: Completed

Form Result

Advisory bodies, including professional organizations, can provide valuable insight to enhance the effectiveness of the governing board and school administration. Applicants are encouraged to consult with these outside bodies, and secure their participation, to strengthen the application. New advisory bodies tied to the school become stakeholders in the success of the institution and should be included in the decision-making process.

Overarching Standard/Criteria: Compelling evidence of the use of advisory bodies to directly and consistently enhance the successful operation of the school.

Evidence needed for addressing the overarching standard:

a) List any existing professional organization or body that will be joined or consulted by the governing board to inform their work.

Florecer Community School is committed to integral, transparent and consistent best practices at every level. As we continue to develop our school model we anticipate joining the following professional organizations and bodies to develop a systematic and transparent level of board governance that most closely aligns with the stewardship of resources and continuous develop of our school mission and model. The following professional organizations have been identified in our research to promote effective, sustainable and transparent community school best practices:

[Alabama Association for School Boards](#) (Associate Boards)

- FCS values excellence in everything we do, and that includes best practices for our governing board as a AL based school board.

[CLAS \(Council for Leaders in Alabama Schools\)](#)

- Creating a leadership team that has professional support and learning development opportunities in the state of Alabama.

National School Board Association

- FCS will join the National School Board Association in order to develop a clearer trajectory for best practices.

[Coalition for Community Schools](#)

- The coalition provides free professional development/networks for district and school leaders. We value this as our governing board will work to navigate the nuance of building a community school as a school board.

[National Association for Family, School and Community Engagement](#)

- FCS will create parent/community advisory bodies that will report to the governing board based on best national practices.

Advisory Bodies Formed

In an effort to further involve key stakeholder groups, Florecer Community School's By-Laws provide for the creation of Advisory Boards that support school operations and foster ongoing communication between the school and the broader community. These advisory bodies are designed to promote stakeholder engagement, provide meaningful input on school initiatives, and ensure that the school remains responsive to the needs of students, families, and the surrounding community.

Florecer Community School will establish two advisory bodies:

1. Florecer Community Council (Parent Advisory Board)
2. The THRIVE Team

Together, these advisory groups will serve as consultative bodies that provide feedback and recommendations to school leadership while strengthening relationships between the school and its stakeholders.

Roles and Duties

The Advisory Boards will provide input and recommendations on matters affecting the school, including:

- Academic achievement and instructional priorities
- Allocation of school resources
- School-specific learning needs and student supports
- Community educational partnerships and supports
- School culture and alignment with the school's mission and values

The THRIVE Team will have an additional focus on ensuring that the school's culture remains aligned with its mission and community values. This team will conduct quarterly culture walkthroughs to assess how effectively the school environment reflects the school's vision, values, and expectations for students and staff.

These advisory groups will serve as a structured mechanism for gathering feedback from key stakeholders and ensuring that school leadership remains informed about community perspectives.

Composition of Advisory Bodies

Florecer Community Council (Parent Advisory Board)

The Florecer Community Council will ideally consist of at least two parents per grade level, establishing a formal structure for parental participation in school decision-making processes that directly impact their children.

THRIVE Team

The THRIVE Team will be composed of members from the parent community and community stakeholders, reflecting the broader community served by the school.

Each advisory body will consist of up to 10 members, selected to ensure diverse representation and meaningful stakeholder participation.

Desired Composition Strategy

Floreceer Community School will actively recruit members through community outreach efforts to ensure participation from a broad range of stakeholder groups. Recruitment strategies will include:

- Outreach to families during enrollment and family engagement events
- Communication through school newsletters, meetings, and community gatherings
- Invitations to neighborhood partners and community members who support the school's mission

The proposed Executive Director, On'Draya Morris and the proposed leadership team, will lead the recruitment and selection process for advisory board members to ensure balanced representation and alignment with the school's mission and values.

Role of Parents, Students, and Teachers

Parents will play a central role in the Floreceer Community Council by providing feedback on school policies, academic programming, and the overall educational experience of their children. Their participation ensures that family perspectives are included in school planning and decision-making. Community members and neighborhood partners participating in the THRIVE Team will contribute to strengthening school culture and ensuring that the school remains connected to the values and needs of the surrounding community.

School leadership and board representatives will also participate in advisory meetings to support communication and alignment between advisory bodies and school governance.

Reporting Structure

The Advisory Boards will report directly to the Executive Director/Head of School, who will use their feedback and recommendations to inform school operations and improvement efforts.

To ensure alignment between advisory bodies and governance, at least one member of the Board of Directors or the school leadership team will serve on each Advisory Board. This individual will act as a liaison, facilitating communication between the advisory groups and the governing board.

The board liaison will:

- Provide updates to the Board of Directors regarding advisory board discussions and recommendations
- Bring relevant issues from the advisory boards to the attention of the governing board
- Invite advisory board members to present at Board of Directors meetings when appropriate

Through this structure, Floreceer Community School ensures that stakeholder voices are heard while maintaining clear lines of communication between advisory groups, school leadership, and the governing board.

Element Review

Reviews is not provided

9. Grievance / Complaint Process

Reviewer Instructions

Please rate this section using the provided rubric.

Status: Completed

Form Result

Provide documentation for a grievance policy that gives students and parents due process rights.

Overarching Standard/Criteria: Evidence of a useful grievance process for use by parents and students.

Evidence needed for addressing the overarching standard:

a) Explain the process the school will follow should a parent or student have an objection to a governing board policy or decision, administrative procedure, or practice at the school. Attach any adopted policies or procedures.

FCS welcomes families as collaborative partners in ensuring the academic success of every FCS student and commits to an open-door policy and fair and honest treatment, free of discrimination or harassment. FCS implements restorative practices to foster an equitable, respectful, and positive school community. Restorative practices demand that all parties involved with a perceived grievance or complaint have the opportunity to participate in reaching a mutually amicable solution. Therefore, FCS encourages parents and staff to work with one another to resolve concerns or disagreements about a program or a student's education. Structures exist to ensure frequent communication with clear lines of reporting. When grievance procedures are effectively practiced, relations are enhanced. It is in the best interest of all parties to resolve complaints and grievances rapidly and informally through discussion when a problem or issue arises. Face-to-face dialogue is preferred throughout the grievance procedure with a reminder to keep the following values in mind: Respond with Integrity, Value Community, and Respect for others humanity.

If a parent or student objects to a governing board policy or decision, administrative procedure, or practice at the school that remains unresolved through traditional interventions, we utilize a defined grievance procedure to resolve complaints based upon guidance from the National School Boards Association (NSBA).

As a restorative practices school we believe in utilizing the restorative practices that invoke restorative circles and allow for all parties to engage in discussion that will ideally work to resolve most conflicts. We consider this to be the Informal Discussion: where parents or students have an informal discussion with the relevant school staff member or other appropriate person who can address the concern. This discussion aims to clarify the issue and seek a resolution at the lowest level possible.

Entering in the Grievance Process

Formal Complaint: If the informal discussion does not resolve the issue satisfactorily, the parent or student may file a formal complaint by completing a digital complaint form on the website or writing a letter detailing the objection and submitting it to the Head of School. The complaint should clearly state the policy, decision, procedure, or practice being objected to and provide any supporting evidence or documentation.

Review by School Administration: Once the formal complaint is received, the school administration or authorizing body will examine the complaint and begin an investigation within 5 business days. This could involve interviewing relevant parties, reviewing relevant documents, and examining other evidence related to the issue. The investigation aims to ensure that all perspectives are considered and that a fair and informed decision can be made.

Decision and Resolution: Based on the information gathered during the review and investigation process, a decision will be made by the school administration or authorizing body within 30 days. The school administration will communicate the decision to the parent or student in writing, clearly explaining the rationale behind the decision.

Appeal Process: If the parent or student is unsatisfied with the decision, they may submit a written appeal to a higher-level authority, such as the Executive Director or the Board of Directors. If the complaint involves the Executive Director, a formal letter of complaint is sent to the Board of Directors. A written appeal is sent to the Charter Authorizer if the complaint involves the Board of Directors.

Review by Higher-Level Authority: Once an appeal is submitted, it will be reviewed by the higher-level authority (see Table above) designated in the appeal process. This authority will examine the complaint, review any relevant documentation, and consider any additional information provided by both parties involved. They may also conduct their investigation if necessary.

Final Decision: After reviewing the appeal, the higher-level authority will decide on the objection raised within 30 days. This decision is written to the parent and student and clearly explains its rationale. In some cases, this decision may be considered final and binding, while in others, further avenues for appeal may be available by the board. The grievance policies will be posted on the FCS website in the family handbook.

Citations:

National School Boards Association (NSBA) - www.nsba.org

Adopted Gievance Policies and Procedures	File name:	FCS Proposed Grievance Procedures.pdf
	Uploaded:	03/10/2026 09:16 PM
	Uploaded by:	On'draya Morris

Element Review

Reviews is not provided

10. Professional Development

Reviewer Instructions

Please rate this section using the provided rubric.

Status: Completed

Form Result

Provide details on known professional development policies and procedures, including the position or person responsible for implementing these policies.

Overarching Standard/Criteria: Compelling evidence of a high quality professional development program for staff.

Evidence needed for addressing the overarching standard:

Person	On'Draya Morris
Title	Proposed Executive Director

b) Discuss the anticipated core components of professional development and how these components will support effective implementation of the educational program. Discuss the extent to which professional development will be conducted internally or externally and will be individualized or uniform.

Florecker's Approach to Professional Development

At FCS our Professional Development (PD) plan is rooted in our belief that as adult educators, we are lifelong learners with a growth mindset that a person's capacities and talents can be improved over time. According to Darling-Hammond, our program incorporates components that will lead to

“changes to teacher knowledge and practices, and improvements in student learning outcomes.”

Components are:

- Driven by data and aligned with the school's goals and strategic plan
- Personalized for professional growth that matches the individual needs of educators
- Connected to teacher practice and student learning expectations (curriculum, standards, assessment, student work)
- A collaborative approach to involve teachers in the design, planning, and delivery of PD activities, creating opportunities to share best practices, discuss challenges, and learn from other's experiences,
- Ongoing and intensive support and engagement with time for deliberate practice and reflection on implementations,
- Led by high-quality instructors (we anticipate working alongside external partners to augment our professional development as a founding dual language immersion team)

These components play a vital role in supporting the implementation of our educational program. By enhancing the knowledge and skills of educators, promoting collaboration and networking opportunities, encouraging reflective practice and feedback, and through continuous professional growth, we empower educators to create a rigorous, relevant, and relational learning environment. Professional development plays a crucial role in improving the skills and effectiveness of teachers. It is especially important as we face teacher shortages and states, such as Alabama, begin offering alternative certification pathways as an option for the teaching profession. According to ALSDE, there is an increased number of teachers with alternative and emergency certificates in the classroom. Subsequently, some teachers need the traditional teacher preparation program to enter the profession. At the same time, students also show that student proficiency scores in math and English Language Arts show no correlation at the school district level attributable to the percentage of teachers with master's degrees. We are experiencing great challenges in teacher quantity and quality in many places. Professional development can be a significant factor in improving teacher and school quality.

To ensure the academic success of our students, FCS commits to ensuring the professional development of all teachers and staff, enabling them to stay current with advancements in education, expand their knowledge base, acquire new skills, foster collaboration, and address the diverse needs of their students.

The PD plan includes teacher and staff development and practices in the following areas:

- Bilingual Education Knowledge aligned with Content knowledge and pedagogical skills to ensure a solid foundation and deep understanding of key concepts and standard expectations for true biliteracy. By enhancing content knowledge, educators are better equipped to design effective instructional strategies, develop appropriate assessments, and facilitate meaningful student learning experiences. This includes Teach Like a Champion (TLAC) teaching strategies and techniques to differentiate and adapt teaching strategies to meet the diverse needs of every student and planning with the Biliteracy Framework.
- As SEL plays a crucial role in our students' academic success and overall well-being, educators need PD opportunities to effectively implement these practices during advisory sessions in their classrooms and throughout the school. This also includes learning how to create positive learning environments and manage student behavior. A highly-trained coach will lead frequent and ongoing training of the Conscious Discipline Seven Skills/aligned with our community values so students can acquire and apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve goals, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.
- The PD plan is designed to enhance educators' understanding of a variety of types of data (e.g., formative assessments, standardized tests), data collection methods, and statistical concepts. Educators train in data analysis techniques that enable them to extract meaningful insights from raw data, including disaggregated data by student subgroups, to identify achievement gaps and address equity issues. Educators learn to set SMART goals and use data to

differentiate instruction, identify areas for intervention or enrichment, and monitor student progress over time.

- Educators receive PD focusing on cultural competence and diversity, including learning about students' diverse backgrounds and experiences and how to create an inclusive and respectful learning environment. This also includes learning about the ethical principles that guide teaching, such as respecting students' rights and dignity and maintaining professional boundaries.

PD is designed to be interactive, engaging, and practice-based to encourage active participation in learning, collaboration with colleagues, and applying new knowledge and skills in authentic contexts. Learning is modeled and practiced before implementation and then monitored for fidelity. The PD plan provides sustained support through follow-up sessions, coaching, mentoring, PLCs, and online communities where educators continue to learn from experts and collaborate with peers. The teacher development cycle below creates a targeted pathway to provide intentional professional development and support to every teacher.

Professional Development Specifically for FCS's Bilingual Educational Needs

FCS will serve as the first bilingual charter school in the state of Alabama, as we will implement a comprehensive professional development program designed to target, measure and assess the effective implementation of our dual language bilingual educational model.

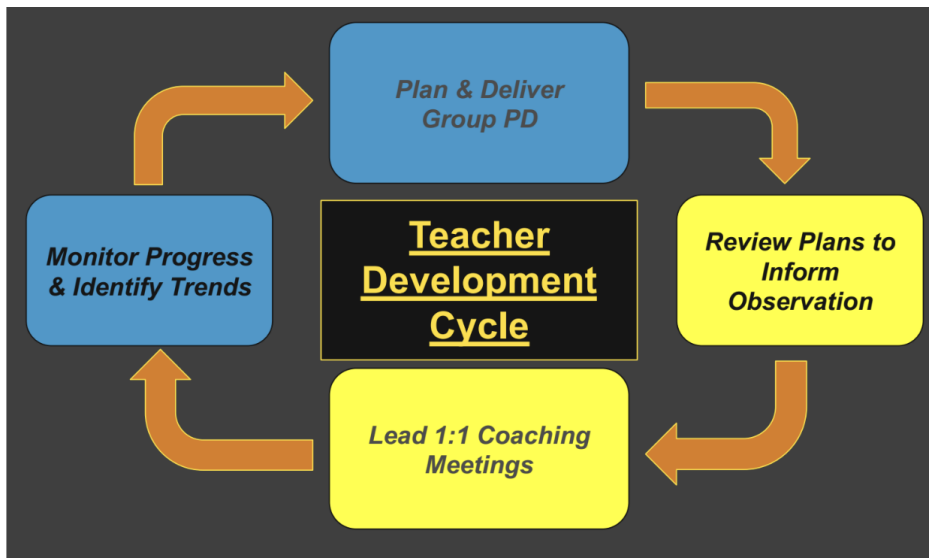
Professional development will focus on strengthening teachers' capacity to deliver rigorous academic instruction while promoting bilingualism, biliteracy, and cross-cultural competence rooted in the pillars of bilingual education.

The core components of professional development will include dual-language pedagogy, biliteracy instruction, multilingual learner support, culturally responsive teaching, curriculum implementation, and data-driven instruction. Teachers will receive training in strategies for delivering content instruction in two languages, supporting language development across subjects, and maintaining appropriate language allocation within the bilingual program. Additional training will focus on effective literacy instruction in both English and Spanish, differentiated instruction for multilingual learners, and culturally responsive classroom practices that affirm students' linguistic and cultural identities. Professional development will begin with a pre-service summer institute prior to the opening of each school year. During this training, teachers will learn the school's instructional model, bilingual program design, curriculum expectations, and classroom practices. Throughout the school year, professional learning will continue through regular staff development sessions, collaborative planning meetings, and PLC's. These structures will allow teachers to analyze student data, refine instructional strategies, and ensure alignment across grade levels and language programs.

Floreceer will utilize a combination of internal and external professional development. Internal training will be led by the school's leadership team and instructional coaches and will focus on curriculum implementation, instructional practices, and school-specific systems. External professional development will include partnerships with bilingual education experts, professional organizations, and higher education institutions to provide specialized training in dual-language instruction and biliteracy development.

Professional development at Floreceer will include both uniform and individualized components. All teachers will participate in shared training aligned with the school's mission, bilingual instructional model, and curriculum expectations. In addition, teachers will receive individualized support through instructional coaching, classroom observations, and targeted professional learning based on their experience and instructional needs. Through sustained, high-quality professional development, Floreceer will build a strong instructional team capable of effectively implementing its bilingual education program and ensuring high levels of academic achievement for all students.

Teacher Development Cycle



Diving Deeper

FCS prioritizes our highest academic leverage areas in teacher professional development that are aligned to student achievement through both a management trajectory and rigor trajectory. Using the Get Better Faster Scope & Sequence We provide ongoing Teacher PD, Teacher planning time, teacher coaching, data meetings. In alignment with ALSDE’s Strategic Vision we are committed to the teacher development cycle (See Teacher Development Cycle) and execution of our priorities; high quality curriculum & instruction, uniquely rigorous data driven learning environment, and practice based learning. As stated in the Strategic Vision of the ALSDE Highly Effective Educators “receive ongoing, high-quality, embedded professional development, and instructional coaching as additional keys to growing teacher and principal effectiveness.”

As a team we recognize the coherence in teacher learning is most richly developed in a learning practice lab that is targeted, continuous and intensive throughout the year. Our approach is practice-based using the See It, Name It, and Do It framework that allows educators and leaders to coach in real time or as we like to say “poolside” to consistently practice learning in a format that is experiential and steeped in their daily regimen. Additionally, we value ensuring that we use three major leverage points to assess our continuous teacher development; data driven instruction, high quality codified instructional materials, weekly PLC inclusive of our Floreer Community Council voices, weekly content/grade level planning/coaching sessions, one-on-one coaching, and weekly data meetings. As a part of our staff development and culture we will celebrate academic wins through our weekly academic community meetings, and highlight our bright spots as pillars of academic excellence. All learning is steeped in our THRIVE community values.

Ongoing Teacher PD

Effective professional development is content focused, incorporates active learning utilizing adult learning theory, supports collaboration, typically in job-embedded contexts, uses models and modeling of effective practice, provides coaching and expert support, offers opportunities for feedback and reflection and is of sustained duration. Beginning in the summer teachers complete 75 hours of professional development where school culture and academics are explicitly taught and internalized to develop cohesion across all academic routines. FCS believes that teacher PD is vital to our teachers ensuring that students are Ready for Rigor and mission aligned.

FCS teachers engage in 2 hours of professional development every Friday following early student dismissal for 72 hours a year. The first Friday of the month is dedicated to whole group professional development around instructional and cultural priorities for the year and responding to top trends around student academic/culture data. Leadership will facilitate the sessions using the small bite-sized chunks outlined in the Get Better Faster Scope and Sequence, which includes top action

steps around academic rigor and culture management to launch a teacher's development, FCS will set the year's learning sequence utilizing the topics provided:

Table (Management & Rigor Trajectory PD Focus)

Management Trajectory	Rigor Trajectory
Develop Essential Routines & Procedures	Develop Content Expertise & Lesson Preparation
Systems Rollout & Monitoring Routines	Academic Routines
Building Trust & Rapport	Activating Knowledge & Modeling
Engage Every Student	Deepen Discourse
Increase the Energy of the Classroom	

Throughout weeks 2-4 leaders are dedicated to continued content development using the lesson delivery model for both math and literacy curriculum for bilingual education. In small content groups, teachers will collaborate around intellectual lesson prep and internalization, modeling lessons and instructional routines aligned to the curriculum, and receive feedback from their academic leaders/coaches. Teachers will practice lessons and observation laps in order to refine our lesson execution. On a daily basis we uplift the bright spots in our school by observing the great lesson execution in classrooms via videos and materials celebration.

Teacher Planning Time

In addition to the 2 hours weekly of group professional development provided on Fridays, FCS teachers have 5 hours a week for individual/collaborative instructional planning time for over 250 hours per year (not including summer professional development). Teachers engage in lesson planning, lesson internalization in preparation for strong instructional delivery, review student data for lesson planning, and grade daily exit tickets. FCS leaders support teacher development during this time by engaging in one-on-one lesson planning support and lesson modeling. Using our Biliteracy Unit Framework, curriculum, Instructional methods, assessment strategies and academic roadmap teachers are asked to plan for the productive struggle of all students. Intellectual Preparation/Lesson preparation is intentional time to create lessons that are practice based, planning for error, utilizing the school wide instructional methods and assessment strategies. While teacher creativity is encouraged, we uphold academic priorities that are intentional in our execution toward academic excellence. Intellectual Prep materials are due two weeks in advance to allow for academic coaching and the assurance that students receive HQIM. For example, 3rd grade ELA lessons are crafted two weeks in advance (teachers are given an edge through summer PD to prepare two weeks in advance), therefore allowing the academic leader(s) to provide feedback, meet with the teacher and eliminate barriers that hinder mastery of the content.

Teacher Coaching

Florece teachers engage in weekly differentiated coaching cycles managed by the ED/CD and content specialists. The cycle begins with 30-minute observations weekly, followed by a 60-minute coaching conversation at least 24 hours after the observation for 54 hours in individual professional development for the year. Based on these observations, leaders create an action step - a specific, granular shift in teacher practice - which outlines a formula for closing the gap in student learning. This is influenced by TLAC Teacher Development Cycle and the [See it, Name it, Do it \(SND\)](#) framework to drive our coaching conversations.

This model supports teachers in seeing a model of the action to close the gap and then analyzing the gap between the model and their current practice. FCS leaders then name the strategy teachers adopt using concrete, shared language. To ensure successful implementation, teachers use intentional practice to ensure successful action step performance. Leaders monitor performance in routine, consistent follow-up observations until mastery of the action step.

Additionally, we believe learning is sticky. Teachers that are in need of greater management and rigor support we provide real time feedback during classroom observation [Real Time Feedback Guidance](#). As a practice-based learning culture we believe that learning is best in real time. This

practice is a part of our responsive learning practices that supports teaching approaching the three pillars of bilingual education and is informed by data that is approaching mastery.

Data Meetings

Data-driven decision making (D3M), overseen by the ILT, is the systematic collection, analysis, and application of many forms of data from myriad sources in order to enhance student performance while addressing student learning needs. FCS is driven by rigorous data-driven instruction to produce the best outcomes for students. Data is consistently used both informally and formally to provide teachers, students and leaders with opportunities to uplift bright spots and close the gaps.

For teacher development, data meetings are facilitated weekly during coaching sessions, biweekly during exit ticket analysis, quarterly during all large-scale assessments. Before data meetings, teachers have taken the exam to prepare for the lesson, planned for error and modeled the learning and thinking for students during lesson delivery. The data review of assessments serve as a mechanism to close the gaps and review reteaching methodology around standard mastery. This approach avoids “surprise” assessment results during summative, benchmark and state testing. Data meetings are embedded in the teacher development cycle and modeled by leadership to showcase how we make learning sticky, and iterative during our DDI days as outlined in our yearly calendar. Teachers are provided a Google tracker with their cohort information and trackers that are updated with the most recent student data that is connected to the standards.

For summative/benchmark assessment data we complete a data deep dive for students into three groups - high, medium, and low. After a data deep dive, teachers name the gap in student understanding based on the standards aligned to each assessment item. This step would include referring to know-show charts, and outlining whether the gap includes procedural or conceptual knowledge or both. During the meeting, teachers review previous success and the examples alongside mastery and analyze the gap with their peers. Finally, the error and conceptual misunderstanding are stamped (clarified as accurate or correct), and a plan for reteaching is defined and practiced for excellence in execution.

Data Driven Specific PD Learning Supports (based on our mission we believe the following PD supports are needed):

Reading Assessments: Starting in the summer and continuing professional development new teachers receive intensive professional development in administering and scoring a benchmark reading assessment such as the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment system. They engage in opportunities to practice and are mentored by more experienced teachers as they begin to evaluate students. Teachers are supported by mentors and school leaders in making informed decisions about a child's instructional reading levels in English and Spanish in order to provide appropriate individualized reading instruction. Returning teachers have the opportunity to review and refine benchmark testing and implementation of findings in instruction.

Demonstrations of Learning Rubrics/Mastery Rubrics: All teachers receive introductory and continuing professional development in crafting evaluation rubrics for our multidisciplinary projects. Mastery rubrics are a means of assessing mastery of academic standards from various disciplines along with learner behaviors and 21st century skills that are worked on during a project. When designed well, rubrics support students in carrying out the work of a project by providing clear and achievable expectations for the end product and embedded learning outcomes.

Portrait of a Graduate & Global Competency Framework Rubric: At FCS we are passionate about beginning learning with the end in mind. As such we believe that Global Competency Framework allows us to merge rigorous content, complex ideas and school culture with measured outcomes. In whole-school professional development during the summer teachers and school leadership collaboratively examine data in order to develop organizational priorities for the following school year and holistically align our practices with measures that allow teachers and leadership to develop a theory of action and metrics that will demonstrate success in achieving organizational priorities.

THRIVE Culture Days

FCS believes in teacher development and schoolwide professional development being intentional and deeply rooted in our school's success. As such we have THRIVE culture days (1 In-service days in each semester = 14 hours) at the top of each semester where we reset our cultural norms based on our culture walkthrough data, teacher data, student, staff, and family culture surveys. We

believe that school culture for staff is just as pivotal for the school's success as it is for students. As such we partake in proposed systems reboots and or reinvention to create outcomes. FCS teachers engage in approximately 75+ hours of professional development in the summer to unpack and internalize the cultural vision of Florecer, learn cultural routines, and unpack and internalize our school-wide systems. Based on culture walkthrough data, teachers engage in professional development around sustaining and improving the culture for at least 90 minutes per month. When teachers require additional support in cultivating strong classroom culture aligned with our mission, vision, and community values, the FCS leadership team facilitates THRIVE labs to teach and practice bite-sized actions that lead to a more robust class culture.

THRIVE Labs are structured to embed mirco-learning into the daily, weekly and monthly practice for teachers:

Common Planning Time (internal): Teachers will collaborate to analyze student data, design projects, review upcoming cognitive skills, provide feedback to each other, review socio-emotional data, and analyze data from student assessments. These sessions will include training and planning for data-driven instruction, individualized learning, social and emotional support for students, and other components to support educator growth. Under the guidance and support of the school instructional team, PLC sessions will be led by teacher leaders and/or members of the instructional leadership team.

The Professional Learning Community (Internal): Teachers will participate in weekly sessions. Instructional leaders will lead PLC meetings based on observations of daily walk-throughs. They will analyze student work and instructional practices based on observed behaviors and student outcomes.

Instructional Rounds (internal): The goal of instructional rounds is not to provide feedback to the observed teacher, although this is an option if the observed teacher so desires. Rather, the primary purpose is to observe teachers to gain valuable insight into instructional best practices by comparing their instructional practices with those of the exemplary teachers they observe. The benefit of this practice-based approach is focused in the discussion among observing teachers at the end of the observation and in subsequent self-reflection. Instructional leaders identify best practices among teachers and schedule a group of teachers to observe a best practice during a planning period. Coverage is sometimes provided to ensure a teacher can observe a particular practice. Typically, this is utilized as a point of connection to support a new instructional practice, or empower teachers that are challenged to build a community of practice and reflection among peers.

School Leadership/Staff Commitments

Although our school is a beacon for all to Flourish or Bloom, we are not the only source of change and achievement. Through professional development we offer clarity, systems of support and coaching to help staff internalize the dedication that must exist for our students to live out our community values. Upon providing sustained support and room to grow, we also ask our entire staff to commit to ensuring they are showing up as the best version of themselves. As we work to better our community we must also work to uplift the families, businesses and partners in the community. As a leadership team we will work to build accessible equitable touchpoints for families and community partners to support our students. Family involvement

The following commitments are required of our staff:

- School staff will model the Florecer THRIVE Community Values..
- Teachers will work individually and collaboratively alongside community partners/stakeholders to develop lessons that are Alabama Course of Study standards aligned with daily practical skills.
- Leadership/admin will have pathways to teacher leadership, school leadership and real time coaching.
- Teachers will receive weekly targeted collaborative time to plan and address student data, and attend excellent school visits to sharpen their acumen.
- Teachers will receive weekly Professional development for each Friday and a three week summer intensive.
-

Teachers will receive Work-Life Balance tools/strategies as a way to serve personal/family needs.

- Staff will coordinate Family College/Company Visits: Floreecer will offer family involved field trips and learning opportunities during the school year. These visits will be motivational factors for students and families to touch, taste, and see the tangible good that explore the world around us

c) Provide a schedule and explanation of professional development that will take place prior to school opening. Explain what will be covered during this induction period and how teachers will be prepared to deliver any unique or particularly challenging aspects of the curriculum and instructional methods.

THRIVE Summer Teacher Institute (TSTI)

At FCS Summer Professional Development aka THRIVE Summer Teacher Institute (TSTI) is the first actualization of who and what we are as a founding team. The structure and dedication to teacher and leader development are critical to the execution of excellence in every area. At FCS our THRIVE community values are not just for students but for educators as well. Upon arriving at summer PD teachers are given our PD norms aligned to our THRIVE community values. Setting an expectation that we are models for our students and learning community.

Following the Teacher Development Cycle and the Get Better Faster Scope and Sequence [THRIVE Summer Teacher Institute](#) will focus on two major trajectories: management and rigor both are rooted in academic excellence and school culture systems for an excellent bilingual educational model. Our summer professional development is essential to supporting our academic/school culture success. THRIVE PD will convene from July 26, 2027-August 23, 2027 from 10:00 am - 3:00 pm for 5 hours daily for a total of 75 hours of Summer PD. As a bilingual school we plan to develop our teachers through a series of best practices in the Teaching for Biliteracy Unit Framework and best practices around the pillars of bilingual education with intensive biliteracy training.

FCS Community Values	Professional Learning Expectations
Transform myself and the World around me	We believe in bilingual education as a transformative part of creating change in our school community and beyond. We know that transformation is critical to supporting our most vulnerable populations.
Harness Hope and Gratitude	We believe gratitude and hope are harnessed by crafting lessons, projects, conversations and actions that infuse the hope and gratitude in our students, families and each other. During lesson prep, culture building and interactions with staff and students. We express our hope through gratitude, empathy and joy.
Respond with Integrity	We believe that our responses must be integral, and filled with best practices as outlined by the seven skills of Conscious Discipline and guiding students through the process of learning in a healthy and safe environment.
Ignite a love for learning languages	We are teaching, modeling and creating a love for learning about learning language through culture. By using the pillars of bilingual education (high academic achievement, bilingualism & biliteracy, sociocultural competence) we curate a safe and welcoming linguistic environment that challenges students to learn and grow.

Value creativity & community	We offer our versatile and unique skills, thinking and abilities to move the needle for student learning outcomes. We uplift neurodivergent thinking and the versatility of expression that bilingual education provides.
Excel in everything we do.	We expect and believe that all students are capable of achieving excellence in the classroom and beyond and we set our expectations with the highest outcomes in mind. Everyday, we express excellence and expect excellence in return.

FCS ensures teachers have the skills to deliver effective instruction by investing in teacher preparation. Throughout the summer and school year our PD programs, collaboration among educators, ongoing and continuous support and mentoring, and access to high-quality instructional resources, teachers are prepared to deliver instruction that meets all aspects of our curriculum. While our THRIVE Summer Teacher Institute is deeply rooted in our community values and mission, we believe that effective teacher preparation is the catalyst to cultivate the conditions for innovation. As such we are consistently building capacity in our teachers and leaders with the 5C's for Research&Design (R&D) listed below:

- Conviction- FCS teachers need a deep and sustaining belief in the importance and potential of the work being undertaken that fuels engagement and ensures it is prioritized.
- Clarity-FCS teachers have a comprehensive and crisp understanding of the work ahead that provides direction and a path forward.
- Capacity-FCS teachers receive the support of personnel, resources and time required to successfully design/implement the transformative school design that we are leading
- Coalition- FCS teachers represent and are supported by a committed group of stakeholders who are helping FCS become a sustained success.
- Culture- FCS has values, norms and practices that support innovation and learning in the improved opportunities for young people.

The capacity to deliver PD training effectively is complex and multifaceted. To meet these demands, FCS provides a supportive culture, professional learning communities, a well-defined curriculum and assessment system, a strong and visible team of instructional leaders, ongoing professional development programs, teacher autonomy, and a commitment to continuous improvement and accountability. By leveraging resources to address these factors, we provide effective PD training that improves teaching practices and student learning outcomes.

Lastly, during TSTI educators engage in the curriculum and practice delivery of classroom management, lessons, and key instructional methods with colleagues and leadership members. External curriculum experts help deliver and lead key components of curriculum training in collaboration with school leaders. Teachers will engage in activities focused on aligning instructional strategies with curriculum standards, creating new lesson plans, and integrating innovative teaching approaches into their practice. It is also our time to build relationships, and facilitate collaboration and networking among peers. As an innovative school model we are focused on creating a system of continuous reflection on the current conditions and the work to further strengthen these conditions.

Attach schedule example, if available

File name: THRIVE Summer Teacher Institute - THRIVE Summer Teacher Institute .pdf
Uploaded: 03/10/2026 10:53 PM
Uploaded by: On'draya Morris

d) Describe the expected number of days/hours for professional development throughout the school year, and explain how the school's calendar, daily schedule, and staffing structure accommodate this plan. Include time scheduled for common planning or collaboration and how such time will typically be used.

Floreecer Community School is committed to continuous professional growth to ensure that teachers effectively implement the school's bilingual instructional model and research-based practices. Professional development is embedded throughout the school year through a combination of dedicated professional development days, weekly collaboration time, instructional coaching, and professional learning communities (PLCs). FCS ensures teachers have the skills to deliver effective instruction by investing in teacher preparation and development. Throughout the summer and school year our PD programs, collaboration among educators, ongoing and continuous support and mentoring, and access to high-quality instructional resources, teachers are prepared to deliver instruction that meets all aspects of our curriculum. As uplifted in the previous section we believe our innovative model is only successful when we are consistently building capacity in our teachers and leaders with the 5C's for Research&Design (R&D) listed below:

- Conviction- FCS teachers need a deep and sustaining belief in the importance and potential of the work being undertaken that fuels engagement and ensures it is prioritized.
- Clarity-FCS teachers have a comprehensive and crisp understanding of the work ahead that provides direction and a path forward.
- Capacity-FCS teachers receive the support of personnel, resources and time required to successfully design/implement the transformative school design that we are leading
- Coalition- FCS teachers represent and are supported by a committed group of stakeholders who are helping FCS become a sustained success.
- Culture- FCS has values, norms and practices that support innovation and learning in the improved opportunities for young people.

Throughout the school year teachers are given ample opportunities and encouraged to develop themselves professionally by maintaining best practices in research based practices.

Professional Development Component	Frequency	Approximate Time	Purpose
Pre-Service Professional Development Institute	3 weeks before school opens	90 hours (15 days)	Training in bilingual instructional practices, biliterateacy framework model implementation, curriculum planning, classroom systems, and school culture and rooted in our community values
Full Professional Development Days	5-6 days during the school year	40-50 hours	Deepening instructional practices, bilingual literacy development, analyzing student data, refining curriculum, and strengthening instructional strategies
Weekly Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)/THRiVE Labs	Weekly	90 minutes per week (50 hours annually)	Collaborative lesson planning, data analysis, reviewing student work, and improving bilingual instructional practices
Daily Planning Time (collaboration is encouraged)	Daily	45–60 minutes per day (~150–180 hours annually)	Grade-level collaboration, unit planning, coordination of bilingual instruction, and preparation of instructional materials
Instructional Coaching & Feedback	Ongoing	Embedded throughout year	Classroom observations, feedback cycles, modeling bilingual instructional strategies, and individualized teacher support
Weekly Early Release Days	Monthly	2 hours per week	Extended collaboration, professional learning workshops, and bilingual instructional planning

Total Embedded Professional Learning Time:

Teachers participate in over 250 hours of professional learning and collaboration annually, combining formal professional development days with ongoing collaborative planning and instructional coaching. This structure ensures that professional learning is continuous, collaborative, and directly connected to classroom practice, enabling teachers to refine their bilingual instructional strategies and support students in developing strong academic and biliteracy skills.

Element Review

Reviews is not provided

11. Start-Up and Ongoing Operations

Reviewer Instructions

Please rate this section using the provided rubric.

Status: Completed

Form Result

Provide a timeline of the major tasks needed to open the school with an identification of the responsible individuals.

Overarching Standard/Criteria: Compelling evidence of an effective, high-quality start-up plan that specifies detailed tasks, timelines, and responsible individuals.

Evidence needed for addressing the overarching standard:

Start-up Plan	File name:	Updated Florecer Community School Start-up Plan 2025-2027.xlsx
	Uploaded:	03/13/2026 03:49 PM
	Uploaded by:	On'draya Morris

b) If the school will provide transportation, describe the transportation arrangements for prospective students. In addition to daily transportation needs, describe how the school plans to meet transportation needs for field trips and athletic events.

Florecer's Proposed Transportation Plan

Florecer Community School intends to create a transportation system that promotes equitable access within a reasonable distance (50 miles) of the school (as funding allows) and in accordance with Alabama Charter School Legislation. In the case that transportation is needed, and if the parent advises Florecer Community School staff that he/she is unable to secure transportation, Florecer Community School will provide transportation within a defined reasonable distance. In such cases, Florecer Community School will be responsible for transporting all students who reside within a reasonable distance of the school, as well as any student with disabilities whose IEP requires transportation and are entitled to transportation by law, to and from the school in a non-discriminatory manner. In these situations, Florecer Community School will provide transportation by contracting with an independent private transportation provider.

Floreecer Community School will consider options for student transportation, including engaging outside sources to provide those services. At the time a student enrolls in Floreecer Community School a transportation needs assessment will be conducted in order to determine the need and geographic concentration of families requiring transportation assistance. Our Executive Director and Director of School Operations will provide detailed transportation plans, bus routes, etc. developed as a result of the needs assessment within our proposed school community within the pre-opening/enrollment period. FCS intends to contract with STS (School Transportation Solutions) to provide buses to students who live in the community.

Floreecer Community School, at its discretion, may provide transportation for extracurricular activities including, but not limited to, transporting participants to and from extracurricular events via school bus. Floreecer Community School will utilize charter and contract busing services for field trips and extracurricular activities. Students who are provided transportation with school district transportation vehicles for extracurricular events, shall ride both to and from the event in the school vehicle, unless arrangements have been made with the school director or designee, requesting to transport the student home from a school-sponsored event to which the student traveled in a school vehicle.

c) Provide the school plan for safety and security for students, the facility, and property. Explain the types of security personnel, technology, equipment, and policies that the school will employ.

At Floreecer we believe that school safety is a very intentional practice. As a school rooted in belonging we utilize our community values to teach students safety from a preventative nature. As such students are reminded through our approach that we are here to provide a consistent, safe and inclusive learning environment that utilizes the necessary measures to create a flourishing learning environment. FCS's school safety procedures are rooted in prevention, preparation and processes/protocols.

Prevention: Creating a culture of belonging and support that is integral, excellent and rooted in seeing the best in each other, we work to mitigate threats to our learning environment. This also begins with parent meetings and setting clear expectations of all involved parties and having restorative practices and clearly defined channels of communication.

Preparation: We train students staff and parents in the processes, protocols and procedures for our school model. As a founding team we hold each other accountable and lean into the importance of having a strong level of preparedness through continuous training and development of our school safety procedures

Processes/Protocols: Although we do not want to invite outside danger or harm, we must recognize that there are viable threats that can encroach on our school environment. It is at this point that we need to ensure that all parties within our school community are prepared to respond to a breach in safety/security protocols. Research shows that people are prone to adhere to measures when they are consistent and outlined with clarity.

FCS School Safety Alignment

The safety and security of students, staff, families, and visitors are always a priority at Floreecer Community School. Maslow's hierarchy of needs is often cited in education to illustrate the point that if students' basic needs are met, they cannot reach higher levels of learning such as achievement, problem-solving, and creativity. School safety encompasses a wide range of topics, such as emergency preparedness, climate and culture, student behavior, safety infrastructure, training, and safety capacity to name a few. At the beginning of each year, mandatory safety training and a review of all safety policies will be conducted amongst students, staff and parents.

Staff will also complete all necessary OSHA and safety compliance training. During the beginning of Year teacher inservice days, and periodically throughout the year, all FCS staff will continue to participate in mandatory safety training. This training will also include crisis and emergency management, fire and inclement weather safety, and active shooter procedures. Additionally, FCS plans to align with local law enforcement to provide the necessary building plans, and safety and security training needed to

Alabama has a well outlined school safety system and individual school safety plans that will be utilized in the draft of the Floreecer Community School safety plan. FCS will use a fully executed

crisis and an emergency plan to handle situations that may arise. In partnership with local emergency responders, crisis and emergency plans and procedures are revised periodically. FCS will establish partnerships with the local police and fire departments to develop a plan for an active shooter, conduct campus walkthroughs, and participate in drills. Monthly fire and weather safety drills will be performed. A map of the school and evacuation routes for the drills will be posted in all classrooms. Student safety begins immediately; our first act is knowing our students' location. As required by Alabama law, teachers will have an electronic attendance count that must be submitted with each class and revised throughout the day. Morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up procedures will be developed and implemented by the Director of Operations with consultation from local law enforcement and the Head of Schools to ensure all traffic and other safety protocols are adhered to. As students prepare to receive technology devices, they will participate in Safe Surfing modules, sign a technology agreement and be made aware that GoGuardian is a part of our whole school safety procedure for technology use. Teachers will also receive training in safety procedures for technology use. The issue of cyberbullying and social media platforms will be addressed as it pertains to technology etiquette and policy. Bullying forms will be posted on our website, the counselor's office, and the main office for any student needing it. FCS is a bully free school; teachers will be trained to identify key characteristics, and parents will be trained to identify signs and report even the slightest concern.

School Safety Plan Development

Under AL Code 16-1-44 (2013) a comprehensive school safety plan will be developed. In the absence of a school safety committee before full staff is hired, a draft will be formulated with the current team consisting of the Executive Director, and Board Chair. FCS will also work with the local emergency responders to regularly develop and revise crisis and emergency plans and procedures throughout the school year. Additionally, FCS will work closely with the fire chief and build relations with the nearest fire station to schedule walk-throughs of the school, and participate in fire and weather-related drills. Drills and emergency plans will be kept up to date for emergency responders to access. In addition to the crisis and emergency plan, monthly fire and weather safety drills will be performed. After the completion of each drill, a review of the time and procedures will be conducted. Teachers will be familiar with the attendance procedure during drills and be responsible for daily attendance within 30 minutes of the instructional day.

The next step of the school safety plan development process will be to assess all hazards related to the school facility and site. A floor plan with a map of potential hazards and the location of utilities, emergency equipment, and supplies will be developed. This will be utilized as the foundation for creating evacuation routes, assembly areas, and procedures for emergency response activities. The surrounding area of the facility will be assessed for potential hazards. These could include pockets of criminal activity, gas and water storage facilities, facilities containing toxic or radioactive materials, or other infrastructure related issues that could impact the secured site.

As the school continues to evolve, the school safety committee will annually review the plan to update any new information. Prior safety plans will be archived in the central office. An annual hazard analysis will be conducted for the purposes of updating and redistributing plans. Each year, school staff will be trained on the school safety plan and procedures.

Training

Training and professional development is critical in safety preparedness. An efficient system for these training modules is essential in order to deploy the large amount of content. Some of the content can be done in an asynchronous manner, while other elements are best suited for in person instruction. Simulation is also a powerful learning tool as educators can physically walk through various scenarios that they may encounter.

The following trainings will be conducted by Leadership Team with staff annually:

1. Annalyn's Law
2. Jamari Terrell Williams Act
3. Erin's Law
4. Suicide Prevention

In addition to this training, staff will receive in person training on safety procedures and the full safety plan specific to each school site. In addition to formal training, staff and students will engage in simulation experiences that are the most powerful way to prepare for an emergency. FCS will conduct drills in cooperation with local emergency responders. Maps of the school evacuation routes and drill procedures will be posted in every classroom.

The following drills will be conducted on a regular cadence:

1. Fire Drills (1 per month)
2. Severe Weather (September, October, or November), and (January, February, or March)
3. Lockdown/Intruder Drills (1st 6 weeks of the 1st semester) and (1st 6 weeks of 2nd semester)

The school safety program also encompasses the medical needs of students, faculty, and staff. The school nurse will take the lead on training for first response protocols for a number of situations related to health. Training modules to support health and wellness safety include:

- Bloodborne pathogens
- Asthma Awareness
- Diabetes Awareness
- Life threatening allergies
- Seizures
- Child abuse: Mandatory reporting
- De-escalation strategies
- FERPA

Safety Facility and Tecnology Considerations

FCS will ensure that all safety measures and personnel are in place to create the safest environment available for our students and staff. The facility space occupied by FCS will include controlled-access entrances and cameras to monitor classrooms, hallways, and the facility perimeter. Cameras will be strategically placed throughout the school for maximum visibility, as well as on the outside in areas where students will be. School officials will have direct access to the camera system and will utilize this as needed.

Floreecer Community School will utilize a visitor management system such as (but not limited to) RAPTOR Visitor Management system for all non-students and non-staff members, including visitors who enter the school. This System screens all visitors, organizes volunteers, and communicates with FCS staff during emergencies. This system provides a rapid screening upon entry to ensure the safety of all FCS students and staff. Guests will receive a visitor pass when they enter, and return the visitor pass when they exit. All doors will remain locked from the outside, and all visitors will enter through the main door of the school.

At FCS our mission and community values are built around the whole child and whole family. As such, physical safety, emotional and mental safety are also of paramount importance. The FCS technology plan will encompass creating a safe technological environment as well as teaching students/staff and families to be responsible digital citizens. This technology safety plan will be developed in conjunction with our technology partners who will ensure all safety and security features are installed on FCS issued computers.

d) Provide, as an attachment, a list of the types of insurance coverage the school will secure, including a description of the levels of coverage. Types of insurance should include workers' compensation, general liability, commercial property, indemnity, directors and officers, commercial auto (if the school has buses), umbrella liability, and possibly others.

Insurance Coverage

File 1

File name: Will Serve Floreecer Community School-signed 11.9.2024.pdf
Uploaded: 03/10/2026 08:22 PM
Uploaded by: On'draya Morris

File 2

File name: Alabama Charter School Needs and Time Line.pdf
Uploaded: 03/10/2026 08:22 PM
Uploaded by: On'draya Morris

File 3

File name: Will Serve Floreecer Community School APCSC3.11.26.pdf
Uploaded: 03/13/2026 03:49 PM
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e) Provide, as attachment, the meal delivery plan including a wellness plan.

Meal Delivery Plan

File name: FCS Meal Delivery Plan .pdf
Uploaded: 03/10/2026 08:22 PM
Uploaded by: On'draya Morris

Wellness Plan

File name: FCS Wellness Plan.pdf
Uploaded: 03/10/2026 08:22 PM
Uploaded by: On'draya Morris

Other Operational or Ancillary Services

File name: Back Office Agreement - SAMPLE.docx
Uploaded: 03/13/2026 03:49 PM
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Element Review

Reviews is not provided

12. Operations Capacity

Reviewer Instructions

Please rate this section using the provided rubric.

Status: Completed

Form Result

Provide details on the implementation team and their expertise to successfully complete the tasks needed to open a high-quality charter school.

Overarching Standard/Criteria: Compelling evidence of an effective capacity to implement the school's operations plan in a quality and effective manner.

Evidence needed for addressing the overarching standard:

a) Describe the applicant team's individual and collective qualifications for implementing the Operations Plan successfully, including capacity in areas such as the following:

- i) Staffing;
- ii) Fund-raising;
- iii) Financial;
- iv) Marketing and Recruitment;
- v) General operations; and
- vi) Facilities management.

Operational Capacity

Floreecer Community School's applicant team includes a blend of local leaders dedicated to providing an additional education option in the Birmingham/Ensley area, as well as additional capacity from NSFA's best in class technical assistance and back office providers. The combination of a strong founding staff, a diverse board of directors, and key outsource support from NSFA and its partners gives FCS the depth and breadth required to successfully ensure strong operations capacity. A majority of the board of the school is already in place and is described in the governance section. It includes members with backgrounds in K-12 school experience, federal/non-profit management, marketing, fundraising, philanthropy, real-estate, property management, and community building.

Staffing

On'Draya Morris has served at various levels of the K-12 as a school leader and educator. Her experience in a new school system gives her experience with the large-scale staffing process that start-up schools experience. On'Draya Morris and the proposed leadership team are well-versed in personnel management. On'Draya Morris worked on a founding leadership team and led building-level staffing decisions, including career and technical education positions, classroom teachers, administrative hires, and classified positions (custodial/paraprofessionals/bus drivers, support staff). On'Draya Morris has a deep knowledge of strong instruction that she leverages to recruit the highest level of talent to develop our founding team and beyond.

On'Draya, Maria Elena, and Adriana deeply understand staffing development, recruitment, and retention strategies. In addition to this team and board members, we will continue to consult with TJ3 Consulting as an experienced operational leader in larger school systems with knowledge of labor laws and regulations to ensure compliance. They each have experience creating job descriptions, conducting interviews, and onboarding new employees. They will work closely with NSFA during the pre-planning year for consultation and support.

Professional Development & Performance Management

On'Draya Morris has facilitated professional development for the startup of a new school and new school system, similar to the work she will be doing at Floreecer Community School. Professional development for a new school differs from professional development for an existing school. On'Draya Morris has the innovative experience of preparing an entire new staff for the first year of school. On'Draya has a strong background in coaching and served as an instructional coach for Teach for America Pre-service teachers, and in two founding charter settings. Additionally, On'Draya Morris has been a part of the highly selective Relay Graduate School's National Principal Academy Fellowship and the New Schools for Alabama School Founders Fellowship where she was trained to coach and lead high quality instructional teams around Data Driven instruction and measurable outcomes. The capacity for professional development is vital for successfully implementing the Operations Plan. As an innovative dual language immersion school, FCS leaders will collaborate with local/national expertise in bilingual education PD to bring an additional level of expertise in creating and executing training programs to enhance the skills and knowledge of the workforce. Together, they can identify skill gaps and develop strategies to address them through training initiatives. They are also familiar with performance systems to assess training needs and measure the effectiveness of professional development efforts.

General Operations & Facilities Management

In addition to these leaders, FCS will partner with New Schools for Alabama for additional operations capacity. NSFA provides COO-level technical assistance and arranges other providers for essential services. FCS will be utilizing the New Schools for Alabama back-office services program that currently services five existing charter schools in Alabama. NSFA's skilled staff is well respected by the ALSDE. It brings 50+ years of experience managing accounting, financial compliance, food service federal programs, and budgeting and planning for both districts and charter schools. The accounting team includes a CSFO with experience leading Tuscaloosa, Cullman City, and Pike Road school districts, a full-time senior accountant, and a payroll/benefits accountant. The shared cost model from NSFA also ensures that our Operations leader will receive professional development and coaching from this skilled team and others at NSFA. Additionally, FCS intends to use NSFA's carefully selected and recommended food service and facilities providers to ensure capable startup and operations functions occur in critical areas. 22Beacon will serve as our facilities management and facilities funding support.

NSFA's CFO/COO support provides senior leadership and advisory support that small schools are rarely able to access on their own and works with the board and leadership on annual budgeting, startup and operations, facilities financing, and strategic planning. NSFA also has access to New Schools Facility Partners, a nonprofit service provider and fund that provides guidance and support to charter schools who are developing or renovating facilities, and supports schools with essential facilities related technical assistance such as architectural design, building codes, general contractor bidding processes, and owner's rep services, among others.

Additionally, the Floreecer Community Team has consulted with Troy Williams of TJ3 Consulting, LLC. His involvement in supporting the operational vision will translate in his support with recruiting a DSO. Troy is the former Chief Operations Officer with Birmingham City Schools, where he oversaw all district operations, including facilities, maintenance, food services, transportation, safety and security, technology and athletics. Troy is able to provide valuable support from his extensive operations experience with urban school districts, but also from his district and charter school startup work during his time as Senior Director of Operations and Chief Operations Officer with the Tennessee Achievement School district. Part of Troy's role with the Tennessee Achievement School District not only included overseeing day-to-day school operations with the direct-run schools, but also as coordinator and collaborator for Operations compliance and support services with the charter organizations that were authorized to operate the neighborhood schools. Troy has also provided consulting and coaching services to other Alabama charter schools Directors of School Operations. Upon approval Troy and NSFA will work to develop our proposed Director of School Operations Maria Elena Murrieta.

b) Describe the organization's capacity and experience in facilities acquisition and management, including managing build-out and/or renovations, as applicable.

FCS Support for Facilities Management

To support facility acquisition, FCS has established an initial partnership with 22Beacon & NSFP both are pioneering national non-profits that provides comprehensive financial and real estate solutions to emerging educational ecosystems. 22Beacon focuses on under-resourced communities, by embracing early-stage schools and related facilities to supporting successful schools to launch and sustain their facilities.

Facilities planning, development and feasibility is currently being provided pro bono by 22Beacon, a skilled facilities consultant that has decades of experience in charter facilities planning. New Schools For Alabama (NSFA) also has resources available to assist in the facilities preparation and lender evaluations necessary to cement a sustainable facilities plan. 22Beacon will provide comprehensive real estate development services such as: developing a project strategy, conducting a feasibility analysis of possible facility options, securing the site, assessing, and arranging financing, overseeing the project design, and managing the project from construction through occupancy. 22Beacon has also helped charter schools with essential facilities-related technical assistance, such as a lease or purchase negotiation, architectural design, building codes, general contractor bidding processes, and owner's representation services.

22Beacon, together with FCS Leadership, Board, and Director of School Operations demonstrates our capacity in facilities acquisition and management, as well as our ability to manage the build-out and/or renovation. 22Beacon has provided both an LOI of support and 300,000 in committed funds.

Element Review

Reviews is not provided

5. FINANCIAL PLAN AND CAPACITY

Founding a high-quality public charter school in the State of Alabama is complicated by the fact that state and federal funding sources are not available until after the school is open with students attending. Even at this point, certain funding sources require specific conditions to be met for access, meaning a potential delay in funding and/or not being eligible for funding through part of the opening year. This section evaluates the financial resources available to the applicant for successfully navigating the pre-opening period and launching a public charter school. By law, a draft budget for the first five years of operations is required. Act. Ala. Code § 16-6F-7(a)(8)bb (2023).

1. Pre-opening Phase Funding Sources

Status: Completed

Form Result

Provide evidence of revenue streams during the pre-opening period.

Overarching Standard/Criteria: Compelling evidence of revenue sources sufficient to carry the organization through the pre-opening phase until school opening when state and federal funding sources become available

Evidence needed for addressing the overarching standard:

a) Describe the fundraising goals and timeline for the pre-opening phase. Include funding raised for specific purposes (ongoing costs, facility, etc.)

Fundraising Goals and Timeline
Narrative

Secured Funds Narrative

FCS Secured Funds: Preparing to Bloom

At its core, Florecer Community School is not just another charter school; it is a promise to the families of the Birmingham metro area. Our vision is to cultivate a learning environment where linguistic diversity is celebrated as a superpower rather than a barrier. By implementing a high-quality dual-language model, Florecer aims to produce students who are biliterate, bicultural, and globally competitive. We believe that our innovative school program ignites the potential to lead and innovate. Our mission is to provide an academically rigorous, tuition-free public education that empowers students from all backgrounds. In a region where educational equity is the cornerstone of community growth, Florecer serves as a vital hub for community building/empowerment. We are building a school where the curriculum reflects the world our students will inherit—one that is interconnected, diverse, and rich with opportunity. Florecer has been able to secure \$300,000 in committed funds from 22Beacon to support pre-opening facilities costs. The total pre-opening committed funds include a total of

Financial Stewardship & Strategic Growth

Florecer Community School has secured \$225,000 grant from NSFA which serves as the bedrock of our pre-opening phase. It provides the "liquid runway" necessary to translate our vision into a physical reality.

Florecer has been able to secure \$300,000 in committed funds from 22Beacon to support pre-opening facilities costs. The total pre-opening committed funds include a total of \$525,000 These funds are strategically utilized for:

- Deepening Community Engagement: Hosting bilingual town halls and family workshops to ensure the school is built with the community, not just for it.
- Expert Innovative Design: Refining a dual-language framework that meets rigorous state standards while maintaining cultural relevance.
-

Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham	Fall 2026 Grant Cycle	Strategic purpose grants for Jefferson County nonprofits and unique educational opportunities.
Charter School Growth Fund (CSGF) - Seed Cohort	250,000-750,000	Fall 2026 application seeking Seed Cohort Support including funding and coaching.
Walton Family Foundation	amounts vary	Applications are accepted on a rolling basis.

d) Describe all grants/loans applied for and/or awarded to fund the construction and/or renovation of the school building(s). Please attach evidence of any funds secured.

Construction Funding Narrative

FCS Construction Funding

Based on the current proposed facilities for the future home of Floreecer Community School, and through our relationship with 22Beacon and its commitment supporting underserved charter school populations. 22Beacon serves as the largest national nonprofit developer and Community Development Financial Institution (“CDFI”) focused exclusively on the financial and facility needs of charter schools. 22Beacon’s direct lending program finances the acquisition, site development, construction financing, leasehold improvements and mini-permanent loans for facilities primarily located in underserved areas in need of a high-quality educational choice. A primary vehicle for this funding is the 22Beacon Construction Loan or Catapult Fund. Below are the key details associated with this pre-opening funding and the broader funding strategy.

22Beacon Term Sheet: Construction/Renovation Funding

Floreecer Community School has provided the term sheet from 22Beacon, a leading Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) that specializes in facilities for under-resourced communities.

Term Item	Description
Funding Amount	Up to \$300,000 (prior to approval and exact facility selection with potential for more funding options upon approval)
Purpose	Construction, tenant improvements, and renovation of the school facility during the pre-opening phase
Provider	22Beacon (as a CDFI and partner of the Equitable Facilities Fund).
Mission Alignment	This funding specifically supports "high-impact" schools serving high-need populations, fitting Floreecer’s mission to serve the Birmingham community.
Usage	Pre-Opening costs of facilities construction, operations, and management.

Additionally, Upon approval FCS will have the ability to apply for the NSFA Pre-Development Loans for Facilities with amounts that vary based on the cost of renovations, and facility viability. FCS is working diligently to create a lean-startup model that focuses on the evolving realities of the char-

ter landscape and is conducive to ensuring longstanding financial stewardship and sustainability.

Evidence of Construction Funding

File name:	Florecer Term Sheet_3.11.26.pdf
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Uploaded by:	On'draya Morris

e) Describe the fund-raising capacity of the organization during the pre-opening phase. Include information on the personnel involved.

Fund-raising Personnel Narrative

FCS's Fundraising Capacity

On'Draya Morris serves as the Founder of Florecer Community School and has worked to identify applicable grants, funding and support through active community engagement and relationship building. To date Florecer has secured a total of 525,000 in committed funds to support our pre-opening phase. Additionally, we are an active finalist for or NSVF Innovative Public Schools Grant where the initial awards begin at 215,000 and can increase up to approximately 600,000. On'Draya works to actively identify and apply for grants and fundraising opportunities.

- Dr. Samantha Briggs serves over 30 years of experience in the education and nonprofit sectors. She has a proven track record in grant development and has managed high-stakes federal programs, such as serving as the project director for a GEAR UP Alabama grant (a multi-year, multi-million dollar federal award).
- Gilberto Herrera serves as the Board President for Florecer Community School. His fundraising capacity and financial oversight experience are characterized by his background in business development, finance, and active involvement with other community boards.
- Jody Trautwein is the current co-chair of the Mayor's Prayer Breakfast and Youth Director at First Priority Alabama and has the capacity to raise funds for our pre-opening phase.
- Jenn Saliba has significant financial capacity securing multi-million dollar real estate deals.

As a collective team Florecer is confident that our fundraising capacity will support our need to identify, develop and secure funds to support our funding needs.

f) What relationships have been established with local entities who may be able to fund special needs or programs? Describe and provide evidence of any pledges made to the school by community members / businesses / organizations. Include in-kind contributions that may reduce costs.

Local Pledges Narrative

FCS Key Community Relationships

FCS has worked diligently to establish relationships that are intentional and support the ongoing actualization of our school community. As we move forward in the approval process we are confident that our school model will live out our mission of being a point of community connection and collaboration

- The Chalker Group- The Chalker Group functions as a community partner and liaison to top recruits in the Birmingham and Huntsville regions. Their support has provided us with an abundance of resources to develop our board and business and community support. Additionally, they have highlighted the immense need for dual language immersion school models in the Birmingham metro region for diverse talent looking to relocate in Birmingham.
- Jefferson State Community College- Through our partnership with Jefferson State Community College, we will continue to support ESL classes and connect our families to Adult Education and GED Completion courses. Additionally, Jefferson State provides a wide variety of supports to uplift and empower adult education.
-

Ensley Development Corporation- Met with Ensley Development Corporation developers to share our vision about creating a community space for families that would entail a strong vision for a community school in the heart of Ensley

- Cohill Foundation- The Cohill Foundation, led by LaKisha Cohill, will provide support as another touchpoint to address the inherent traumas our children experience. The Cohill Foundation provides art therapy through their approach using the creative and expressive arts to develop coping skills, and confidence in students K-12.
- Latino News-Latino News is another community supporter that serves the Latino community through media coverage and community engagement. Latino News has provided Florecer with on-going marketing support and future communication support.
- New Schools for Alabama (NSFA)- As an alumni for New Schools for Alabama School Founder's Fellowship NSFA has committed to provide ongoing support that has included: branding support, technical assistance and charter application assistance.
- BuildUp Community School- BuildUp Birmingham will serve our community by providing physical space for community events as well as supporting our students/families beyond the K-8 pipeline. We envision being able to provide families holistic support in serving students in all grade bands with options that support their unique and specific needs.
- DC Bilingual- as a national front-runner in the movement for high quality bilingual education we are DC Bilingual is set to ensure that our students are able to receive the very best in a well-rounded bilingual education
- MoDiv-working to support our school model in developing high quality micro-credentials for our professional learning and development tracks.
- Rooted Impact Consulting- Rooted Impact has been pivotal in providing vocal community support for our unique model and providing opportunities for strategic alignment in getting our story out in the community.
- Magic Box Conversation Club - pairing our families/community members with bilingual education curriculum and tools for family engagement. Helped to launch the Ready to Bloom Community Cohort.
- TheFlourish AL- will serve as our arts integrated learning partner and neighbor in Ensley
- Attorney Antonio Spurling Jr. serves as the owner of The Spurling Law Firm in Ensley and owns the Ensley Health Club and Tuxedo Ballroom among other businesses and has offered his expertise along our journey.

State/National Organization Narrative

FCS's State and National Partners

NewSchools for Alabama (NSFA)

As a back-office client and supported partner of NewSchools for Alabama, FCS receives ongoing support with financial planning, startup operations, and facility planning, including access to construction management guidance and facility development expertise at nominal cost.

NewSchools for Alabama has already awarded startup grant funding to FCS and provides ongoing access to additional grant opportunities and pre-development loan financing specifically designed to support charter school startup and facility readiness. In addition to direct financial support, NewSchools for Alabama provides significant in-kind contributions, including financial modeling, budget development, compliance guidance, operational coaching, and facility planning assistance. These services substantially reduce startup costs and ensure that the school's financial and operational systems are established in alignment with state requirements and best practices.

New Schools Venture Fund (NSVF) Florecer is in the selection process for startup grant funding from NewSchools Venture Fund, one of the nation's leading nonprofit venture philanthropies supporting innovative public charter schools. In addition to direct startup funding, NSVF provides leadership coaching, fundraising support, and access to national philanthropic networks that support charter school development. Through this partnership, FCS seeks to receive ongoing support in fundraising strategy, financial planning, and grant access, significantly strengthening the school's ability to

secure additional startup and implementation funding. NSVF also connects school founders to national funders and provides access to future grant opportunities and philanthropic partnerships.

Donation Narrative

Floreecer Community Schools has not received private donations at this time from any foreign entities.

Element Review

Reviews is not provided

2. Pre-opening Phase Cost Estimates

Status: Completed

Form Result

Give details of the anticipated costs during the pre-opening phase.

Overarching Standard/Criteria: Compelling evidence of financial consideration of all major start-up expenses occurring during the pre-opening phase.

Evidence needed for addressing the overarching standard:

a) Provide a cost estimate and supporting documentation for leasing/buying a facility to house the school. Attach any contingent agreement if available.

Facility Narrative

FCS Proposed Facility Options

As noted in the charter landscape facilities acquisition at the pre-approval phase can pose several challenges. As such FCS's Founder and proposed board has worked diligently to engage with two facility options that are located within the Ensley community and provide a viable and creative option for usage.

Option 1: 1809 Avenue E Building (operating Regions Bank that will cease operations within the year it has over 13,000 sq ft of space and would meet the storm shelter requirement as it houses a nuclear fallout shelter)

- Partnership with the Ensley Development Corporation a longstanding partner of the City of Birmingham and a recent receipt of over \$2million dollars in State funding via the SEEDS Act
- Ensley Development Corporation is interested in providing Floreecer Community School with the facilities in an effort to contribute to the positive revitalization of Ensley.
- LOI is attached and estimated costs associated with the building are geared toward partitioning the building for classrooms, assuring ADA compliance, and providing cosmetic and aesthetic updates to the building.
- Exact cost estimations for an annual leasing are approxiamately 100,000-130,000.

Option 2: St. Joseph's Catholic Church (school building and annex covers approximately 30,000 sq ft and adequate green space) located in Ensley connected to a bilingual Catholic Church and served as a former school building is currently vacant.

- Charter Schools in Birmingham have successful lease agreements with the Birmingham Diocese
- Initial talks have begun with the Diocese and are awaiting charter approval to continue forward.
- Notable renovations that have occured already (updated roofing, and security system)
- Larger scale renovations are estimated based on initial conversations with New Schools Facilities Partners.
- Exact cost estimations for the annual leasing (based on historical leasing agreements with the Diocese) are approximately 100,000-170,000 annually.

HVAC & Ventilation	High-capacity units to meet higher CO2/ventilation codes for 200+ occupants.	\$720,000
Plumbing	Expansion of restrooms to meet E-Occupancy fixture counts (approx. 10–12 toilets).	\$100,000
Electrical & Tech	LED lighting, smart boards, Wi-Fi 7 networking, and security/access control.	\$150,000
Life Safety	Fire suppression (sprinklers) and interconnected alarm systems.	\$100,000
Acoustics & Finishes	Acoustic ceiling clouds/tiles and heavy-duty LVP/Carpet tile flooring.	\$150,000
Soft Costs (12%)	Architecture, Engineering, AL DCM Plan Review fees.	\$200,000
Contingency (10%)	Emergency fund for historic building surprises.	\$250,000
TOTAL ESTIMATE		\$2,570,000

Timelines:

- For either option continue evaluating feasibility assessments/renovation costs and development of tentative timelines alongside 22Beacon NSFP.

Evidence of Renovation Estimates

File name: Option 1_ St. Joseph's Renovation Estimates.xlsx
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c) Describe the staff positions and estimated salaries and benefits of personnel hired during the pre-opening phase to assist in opening the school.

Pre-opening Staff Narrative

FCS Pre-Opening Staff

During Floreecer's pre-opening phase we plan to start with a lean but highly specialized team. Traditionally, this phase is funded by a Charter School Program (CSP) planning grant with a focus on student recruitment, curriculum development, facility readiness, and community engagement. Additionally, any grant funds received from NSVF, or other planning/Seed grants will better support the planning year salaries. Based on standard charter school startup models and regional salary data for Birmingham (adjusted for 2026), here are the key personnel typically hired during this phase:

Executive Leadership & Operations

Floreecer Community school is consistently looking to support the successful launch of Floreecer Community School by creating a pre-opening staff that is lean and attuned to nimble nature of the startup charter school culture.

Position	Primary Responsibilities	Estimated Salary
School Founder / Executive Director	Oversight of charter compliance, fundraising, and community partnerships.	\$90,000 – \$100,000 (mandatory role)
Co-Director (School Leader)	Designing the dual-language curriculum, hiring teachers, and establishing school culture.	\$65,000 – \$70,000/Can be contracted and consulted for during transitional phase between pre-opening/opening w/ offer letter for hiring
Director of School Operations	Managing facility renovations, IT setup, vendor contracts, and student enrollment systems.	\$65,000 – \$75,000 (mandatory role that can be consulted and revisited on a monthly basis as the funding allows)

School Founder

Co-Director

Director of School Operations

Administrative & Community Support (hired full time if funds allow/however this can be contracted with intent to hire)

Because Floreecer is a community school these roles are critical for building the necessary trust and infrastructure before Day 1 and can be contracted on a monthly or project basis in order to work within the confines of a lean startup budget.

- Community Liaison / Parent Coordinator (\$45,000 – \$60,000): Focuses on "boots on the ground" recruitment, hosting town halls, and assisting families with the registration process in both English and Spanish.
- Office Manager / Registrar (\$40,000 – \$55,000): Sets up the Powerschool/Designated Student Information Systems manages pre-opening office logistics, and processes initial enrollment paperwork.

Instructional Planning (Short-term/Stipend)

While most teachers are not hired until shortly before opening, Lead Teachers or consultants may be brought in 1–3 months early. Floreecer anticipates this being an essential part of our model as we will navigate the nuance of implementing our bilingual school model.

- Curriculum Specialists (Stipend/Contract): Often paid \$3,000 – \$7,000 for the summer/pre-opening period to translate materials or align the dual-language curriculum with Alabama state standards.

Estimated Benefits Packages are valued at 25% to 35% of the base salary.(Floreecer has decided to partake in the RSA/PEEHIP Benefits package in order to recruit and retain high quality staff/ we anticipate this beginning in the first year of enrollment). Common offerings include:

- Health Insurance: Medical, dental, and vision coverage (often with the school covering 70–90% of the premium).
- Retirement: Most Alabama charter schools participate in the Teachers' Retirement System (TRS) of Alabama or offer a 403(b) match (typically 3–5%).
- Paid Time Off (PTO): Leadership roles usually receive 15–20 days of vacation plus standard school holidays.
- Professional Development: A specific stipend (e.g., \$1,000–\$2,000/year) for training in dual-language immersion and community school models.

d) Estimate the start-up costs of the following

i) Curriculum

ii) Furnishings

iii) Instructional Technology

iv) Insurance

v) Community Outreach Programs

vi) Student Recruitment

vii) School Safety Requirements (i.e. nSides, storm shelter, if applicable)

viii) Student Information System (PowerSchool)

ix) School Compliance Platforms (Cognia, Anvilar)

x) Child Nutrition Requirements

xi) Transportation, if applicable

xii) All other applicable costs

Start-up Costs Narrative

FCS's Estimated Startup Costs

Floreecer Community School's FY26 pre-opening budget includes \$825,438 in startup expenses to support the development and launch of the school prior to opening to students. These investments ensure the school has the leadership, facilities, instructional resources, and operational systems necessary to begin serving students successfully. Personnel and benefits represent \$341,939 of the startup budget and support key leadership and operational staff responsible for school design,

enrollment and community engagement, curriculum development, and operational readiness. Facilities preparation accounts for \$230,600, including \$200,000 in leasehold improvements to prepare approximately 28,000 square feet of learning space, as well as utilities, custodial services, and other essential building costs. To build a strong instructional foundation, Florecer will invest \$192,799 in instructional supports, including technology infrastructure, computers for staff and students, classroom furniture, curriculum materials, and professional development. These funds also support transportation planning, food service setup, student recruitment, and community engagement prior to opening. Finally, \$60,100 is allocated to administrative and operational infrastructure, including financial back-office services, legal support, insurance, and technology services needed to ensure strong fiscal management and regulatory compliance. Together, these investments will position Florecer Community School to open with the systems, staff, and learning environment necessary to provide a high-quality educational experience for students and families.

Evidence of Start-up Costs	File name:	Estimated Start-up Costs.pdf
	Uploaded:	03/13/2026 12:17 PM
	Uploaded by:	On'draya Morris

Element Review

Reviews is not provided

3. Pre-opening Financial Management

Status: Completed

Form Result

Provide guidance on how the revenue sources are sufficient to meet the anticipated costs including verification of timeliness and financial safeguards.

Overarching Standard/Criteria: Compelling evidence that the revenue streams are sufficient to meet the necessary outlays during the pre-opening phase. Compelling evidence of financial systems and processes with strong internal controls used during the pre-opening phase.

Evidence needed for addressing the overarching standard:

a) Given the funding streams and estimated costs described above, rectify and balance the funding streams and cost estimates to ensure that the school enters opening day with a positive balance sheet. Please attach supporting calculations.

Rectifying Income to Costs in Preopening Phase Narrative

FCS's Pre-Opening Financial Plan

Florecer Community School has developed a pre-opening financial plan that aligns projected startup costs with available and anticipated funding streams to ensure the school begins operations with a positive balance sheet and adequate operating reserves. The school projects total pre-opening revenue of \$1,111,464 to support startup activities during FY26. These funds will support facility preparation, staffing, instructional infrastructure, and operational systems required prior to the first day of school. Total estimated startup expenses are \$825,438, resulting in a projected net positive balance of \$286,026 prior to opening. This surplus provides an important financial cushion to address unforeseen startup costs and ensures the school begins operations with sufficient working capital. Personnel and benefits represent the largest operational investment during the planning year, totaling \$341,939, which supports key leadership and operational staff responsible for school design, enrollment efforts, community engagement, and operational readiness.

Facilities preparation represents \$230,600 of startup costs, including \$200,000 in leasehold improvements required to prepare approximately 28,000 square feet of instructional space for student use. Additional costs include utilities, custodial services, and basic building operations necessary to prepare the facility for occupancy. Floreecer will also invest \$192,799 in instructional infrastructure and student support systems, including technology equipment, networking infrastructure, classroom furniture, curriculum materials, transportation planning, and professional development. These investments ensure the school opens with the instructional tools and systems necessary to support high-quality teaching and learning.

Administrative and operational infrastructure totals \$60,100, covering financial back-office services, legal services, insurance, technology support, and communications systems required for compliance and fiscal management.

Because projected revenues exceed startup expenses, Floreecer Community School anticipates entering opening day with a positive net position of approximately \$286,026, strengthening the school's financial stability and providing reserves to support early operational needs.

FCS has attached the specific calculations from our budget to highlight a positive budget sheet.

Supporting Calculations	File name:	Screenshot 2026-03-13 at 12.24.42 PM.png
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	Uploaded by:	On'draya Morris

Names

Authorized individuals who may enter into financial agreements, approve expenditures, and receive funds on behalf of Floreecer Community School include On'Draya Morris, Founder, and Gilberto Herrera, Board President. Both individuals are authorized agents of the school and are permitted to execute contracts, approve expenditures, and receive funds in accordance with board-approved financial policies and internal controls. On'Draya Morris, will serve as the primary authorized agent responsible for executing contracts, managing grant funds, and approving expenditures within board-approved limits. The Board President, Gilberto will have authority to execute financial agreements and provide fiduciary oversight to ensure financial decisions align with the school's approved budget, policies, and mission. Additional board-designated officers, such as the Board Treasurer, Dr. Samantha Briggs may also be authorized by formal board action to execute financial agreements or oversee financial transactions as necessary. The Founder/ED may also designate a qualified financial administrator, such as a Director of Finance and Operations, to support financial management and reporting functions under the authority and oversight of the Executive Director and Board of Directors. All financial transactions and agreements will follow established internal control procedures, approval thresholds, and segregation of duties to ensure transparency, accountability, and responsible stewardship of public funds. Floreecer Leadership and Board are serving as agents for the public, as such we do not support financial misuse of funds or mishandling by anyone in the the organization.

c) Describe the internal controls used to ensure no unauthorized use of funds. This may include surety bonds, two signature rule, etc.

Financial Controls Narrative

FCS's Internal Controls & Processes

Floreecer plans to execute full financial transparency and alignment with our community values which are rooted in integral responses. As such we are actively working with our outside advisors to adopt a sound financial policy manual that is clear, transparent and exudes financial best practices. Floreecer Community School will implement strong internal controls and financial management practices to safeguard school funds and prevent unauthorized use. These controls are designed to ensure transparency, accountability, and compliance with all applicable financial and regulatory requirements. The school will utilize a segregation of duties structure to ensure that no single individual has sole control over financial transactions. Responsibilities for authorization, processing, recording, and reconciliation of financial transactions will be separated among school leadership

and financial service providers. The school will also partner with a professional back-office financial services provider to manage accounting, payroll, accounts payable, and financial reporting, ensuring proper documentation and oversight of all expenditures. To prevent unauthorized spending, the school will implement a two-signature requirement for checks and other financial disbursements above a defined threshold. All expenditures will require prior approval through an established purchasing process, and purchases must align with the board-approved annual budget. The school leader will authorize routine expenditures within approved limits, while larger expenses will require board approval. Floreecer Community School will maintain separate bank accounts for operating funds, and monthly bank reconciliations will be completed by the financial services provider and reviewed by school leadership. Financial reports, including budget-to-actual statements, will be presented to the Board of Directors on a regular basis to ensure ongoing fiscal oversight. In addition, the school will maintain appropriate insurance coverage and surety bonds, where applicable, for individuals responsible for handling school funds. The school will also undergo an independent annual financial audit conducted by a licensed external auditor. Audit results will be presented to the Board of Directors and submitted to the authorizer and state agencies as required. Together, these financial management practices—including segregation of duties, dual authorization procedures, independent accounting services, board oversight, and annual external audits—will ensure that Floreecer Community School maintains strong financial controls and protects public and private funds from misuse.

Element Review

Reviews is not provided

4. Pre-Opening Financial Capacity

Status: Completed

Form Result

Provide evidence that the individuals tasked with opening the school have the relevant financial expertise and no conflict of interest.

Overarching Standard/Criteria: Compelling evidence of individual and collective qualifications and capacity for implementing all aspects of the financial plan successfully.

Evidence needed for addressing the overarching standard:

a) Identify organizational members with expertise in financial management, fundraising and development, and/or accounting and internal controls and describe the level of knowledge.

Organization Members

Floreecer Community School is supported by a leadership team and governing board with expertise in financial management, nonprofit governance, fundraising, and internal financial controls. The school has established a governance and financial management structure designed to ensure responsible stewardship of public funds, transparency, and long-term fiscal sustainability. FCS's School Founder On'Draya Morris has provided initial oversight for the development and implementation of the school's financial plan, including budget preparation, expenditure monitoring, and compliance with financial policies and regulatory requirements. On'Draya Morris will work closely with the Board of Directors and the school's financial services provider NSFA to ensure that financial decisions align with the approved budget and the school's strategic priorities. Thus far her expertise has been developed in the creating the annual operating budget, Monitoring In previous roles compliance with financial policies and procurement procedures, coordinating with financial service providers and auditors,

and reporting when appropriate financial performance to the governing board. On'Draya Morris as the Founder/ED will maintain active oversight of day-to-day financial operations while maintaining accountability to the governing board. Mrs. Morris will continue to develop the leadership team's and board's financial capacity by recruiting financial experts in the local and national cahrter landscape to provide additional support. The Florecer Community School Board of Directors includes individuals with experience in financial management, nonprofit leadership, business operations, and fundraising. The board is responsible for ensuring strong financial governance and oversight of the school's fiscal health.Key board responsibilities include: approving the annual operating budget, reviewing monthly financial reports and cash flow statements, monitoring enrollment and revenue projections, approving major contracts and expenditures, and ensuring the school maintains adequate financial reserves. Board members bring expertise in areas such as financial analysis, strategic planning, nonprofit management, and development. This diverse expertise supports strong decision-making and fiscal oversight. Dr. Briggs (Board Member//Treasurer) possesses high-level expertise in fundraising and development, specifically in grant writing, technical assistance, and grant evaluation for multi-million dollar foundational grants. Looking ahead during the pre-opening phase FCS has access to the expertise of NSFA Back Office COO Russell Rainey, Chris Reynolds and Troy Williams. All of which have decades of experience in financial management and internal financial controls. FCS is confident that we our primed to navigate the initial expertise needed to develop a sound financial reference point.

b) Disclose any relevant conflict of interest. Consult the Alabama Ethics Law. Ala Code § 36-25-1 through 36-25-30 (1975) and Ala Code § 16-6F-4(16)b.

Conflict of Interest Narrative

Florecer Community School and its governing board are committed to full compliance with the Alabama Ethics Law (Ala. Code § 36-25-1 through § 36-25-30) and Alabama Charter School Law (Ala. Code § 16-6F-4(16)b). At this time, no board member, school leader, or employee has identified any financial, business, or personal interest that would constitute a conflict of interest or improperly influence school decision-making.FCS will adopt a formal Conflict of Interest Policy upon charter approval, that will be actively being implemented to ensure transparency and compliance.

Element Review

Reviews is not provided

5. Financial Management Upon Opening

Status: Completed

Form Result

The financial policies and procedures must adhere to those followed by traditional public schools once the school is receiving state and/or federal funds. Please provide evidence of the preparation for this known change in expectations.

Overarching Standard/Criteria: Compelling evidence of effective, high-quality systems, policies and processes for financial planning, accounting, purchasing, and payroll, including establishment and maintenance of strong internal controls and competence for complying with all financial reporting requirements.

Evidence needed for addressing the overarching standard:

Financial Management Narrative

Financial Systems, Processes, and Controls

Florencer has selected NSFA's back-office program to ensure strong financial planning, accounting, purchasing, and payroll function for the school. Outsourcing to a skilled provider ensures proper accounting procedures, state reporting, and compliance are in place, as well as appropriate levels of internal control and cloud-based software and reporting functionality. Responsibility for accounts payable, payroll, benefits, taxes, purchasing, monthly financial statements, and bank reconciliations are provided by New Schools for Alabama's back office team.

The Director of School Operations, a key leadership role, is hired during the planning year and will be the primary financial liaison working directly with NSFA and ensuring strong site based procedures and internal controls. This role reports to the ED and is responsible for approvals of major expenses, working with NSFA and the board to create an annual budget, financial forecasts, and related analyses to support the accounting and finance function of the school. Critical systems (payroll, benefits, bank reconciliations, etc.) are outsourced to NSFA and include recurring financial and compliance reporting to the ALSDE. All financial-related items, such as the annual budget, executive compensation, and vendor contracts, are approved at regularly scheduled board meetings.

Financial Oversight Roles Narrative

Once approved, Florencer's Board of Directors will adopt policies in compliance with the Alabama Code and ensure effective procedures are implemented for vendor approval, purchasing, payables, cash management, bank authorizations, and other financial management systems. Florencer's Board reviews interim financial statements and approves a budget annually. The ED and Director of School Operations are responsible for working with NSFA and preparing and adhering to an annual budget approved by the Board. NSFA supports budget production by maintaining careful monthly financials and reporting and analytical support through budget development. Each year, the board will conduct at least two open meetings to review and eventually approve the annual budget.

The Board has the responsibility of ensuring strong financial administration. It does this by approving the annual budget, audit, and approving leadership and other compensation, and reviewing regularly prepared financial statements. The ED and Director of School Operations through an outsource agreement with NSFA are responsible for reporting to the board and implementing the financial function timely and accurately, with appropriate transparency, as required by law. NSFA's support allows the school to ensure a strong financial function while reducing the cost of hiring, training, and retaining multiple staff members. This partnership is a major advantage to smaller charter schools and allows them to avoid turnover risk faced and to direct leadership capacity to teaching and learning.

Audit Narrative

Each year, the board engages with an independent CPA firm to conduct an audit of the school's books. The board then approves the audit and provides it and the IRS 990 to the public. This audit is submitted to the ALSDE and posted on the school's website along with the annual financial reports, budgets, and other related ALSDE required documents.

Transparency Narrative

Florencer Community School is committed to maintaining high levels of financial transparency and accountability to its authorizer, stakeholders, and the broader public. The school will implement clear reporting practices, public governance procedures, and open access to financial information

to ensure responsible stewardship of public funds. Each year, school leadership will develop a proposed annual operating budget based on projected enrollment, anticipated revenue, and planned expenditures. The proposed budget will be reviewed by the Board of Directors' Finance Committee before being presented to the full board for consideration. The governing board will publicly review and formally adopt the annual budget during an open board meeting in accordance with applicable open meeting laws and governance policies. Meeting agendas and supporting financial documents will be made available in advance so stakeholders and members of the public can review the proposed budget.

Floreecer Community School will also maintain transparent financial reporting throughout the year. School leadership and the school's financial services provider will prepare monthly financial statements, including budget-to-actual comparisons and cash flow reports, which will be presented during regularly scheduled public board meetings. These financial reports will also be submitted to the authorizer in accordance with required reporting timelines, including periodic financial updates, enrollment reports, and any other compliance documentation required by the charter contract or state regulations.

At the end of each fiscal year, Floreecer Community School will undergo an independent financial audit conducted by a licensed certified public accounting firm. The audit will evaluate the school's financial statements, internal controls, and compliance with applicable laws and accounting standards. The completed audit will be presented to and reviewed by the Board of Directors during a public meeting, submitted to the authorizer and state education agencies as required, and made publicly available to ensure transparency for families, community members, and stakeholders. In addition to the independent audit, the school will prepare an annual financial report summarizing the school's financial performance, including revenues, expenditures, and key financial indicators. This report will provide stakeholders with a clear overview of how school funds are used to support educational programming and operations and will be shared through public board meetings, the school's website, and communications with families and community stakeholders. Through these practices—public budget adoption, regular financial reporting, independent auditing, and open access to financial documents—Floreecer Community School will ensure that the authorizer, families, and the community have clear visibility into the school's financial operations.

Financial Services Narrative

Floreecer is strategically focused on the implementation of an innovative and academically sound school model, as such our leadership will be focused on supporting teaching and learning alongside our staff. As such FCS will outsource key operational and financial functions and join the shared cost program provided by New Schools for Alabama. NSFA currently provides back office support for ten Alabama charters and has the most experienced back office team in the state. Accounting, payroll, transportation, foodservice, clinical support, and custodial services will all be outsourced as it is the most cost effective strategy for a small organization. The Harris/NextGen accounting and payroll system in use by nearly all schools and districts in Alabama and is the system used by NSFA. Back office services are anticipated to cost approximately \$100,000 growing to \$140,000 annually, including the accounting software, and will decrease on a per student basis over time. Such fees are a fraction of what it would cost to hire a CSFO, bookkeeper, a payroll accountant, and federal programs director. It also removes the risk of employee turnover and time and energy spent by the leader and board to recruit, hire, and train such individuals as well as the associated benefits costs of adding additional staff who are non-instructional. The back office fee also includes access to the foodservice consortium and application and approval to become a NSLP site. Annual audit fees for existing charter schools range from \$12,000 to \$20,000 and FCS expects to select a firm with charter school auditing experience. As a moderately sized school audit fees are not expected to grow significantly until later years.

The ED and the Director of School Operations will collaborate with NSFA to evaluate bids, provider capacity, etc. and will submit recommendations to the board for approval at regularly scheduled meetings. As required by the ALSDE, certain contracts, construction, for example, are required to be reviewed by the Dept. of Construction Management and bid appropriately. The Board will comply with these standard processes and will ensure the necessary RFPs are issued in such instances.

Insurance Narrative

Upon approval, Floreecer will secure directors' and officers' insurance, employment practices liability insurance, and general liability insurance to protect the school, staff, and students per Alabama law. In addition, an umbrella policy increasing liability levels will be part of the insurance package. Coverages will be scaled appropriately during the planning year and expand as the facility becomes occupied. Specifics of the coverage will be aligned with the insurance requirements of public charter schools in Alabama.

Element Review

Reviews is not provided

6. Budgeting in Opening Year and Beyond

Status: Completed

Form Result

By law, a start-up and five-year budget plan with clearly stated assumptions is required. Act. Ala. Code § 16-6F-7(a)(8)bb (2023)

Overarching Standard/Criteria: Compelling evidence of balanced revenue streams and cost estimates during the first year of operation with projections into the first five years of operations

Evidence needed for addressing the overarching standard:

a) Submit the Comprehensive Five-Year Budget Summaries for minimum, target, and maximum enrollment levels included in the attached Budget Workbook. In developing the budget, please use the per-student revenue projections provided by ALSDE and include the anticipated carryover from the pre-opening year. Applicants may substitute another budgeting spreadsheet in place of the one provided here as long as all information is included.

Budget Workbook	File name:	FCS 2026 School Budget Workbook.xlsx
	Uploaded:	03/13/2026 02:04 PM
	Uploaded by:	On'draya Morris

b) As an attachment, present a clearly stated budget narrative of assumptions and revenue estimates. Include the basis for revenue projections, staffing levels, and costs. The narrative should specifically address the degree to which the school budget will rely on variable income (e.g., grants, donations, fundraising). The narrative should include, but is not limited to, the following sections:

i) Anticipated Governmental Funding Sources: Use the figures provided by ALSDE in developing your assumptions for per-student revenue. Include any governmental grants. Include site-based/fixed governmental funds.

ii) Anticipated Non-governmental Funding Sources: Indicate the amount and sources of funds, property or other resources expected upon opening to be available through banks, lending institutions, corporations, foundations, grants, etc. Note which are secured and which are anticipated, and include evidence of commitment for any funds on which the school's core operation depends.

iii) Anticipated Major Expenses: Describe the expected major expenses, which should include facility costs and personnel, and how to limit these expenses if revenue does not meet projections.

iv) Debt Service: If any loans are anticipated during the pre-opening phase or the first few years of operations, describe the plans for repaying this debt including a description of the payment schedule.

v) Contingency Plan: Discuss the school's contingency plan to meet financial needs if anticipated revenues are not received or are lower than estimated.

Budget Narrative

File name: Final 2026 Commission Floreecer Budget Narrative .docx.pdf
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Cashflow Plan

Please describe the school's five year cash flow plan. The school's five year cashflow plan includes a multi-year surplus budget and careful planning of expenses to ensure annual operating surpluses. By year one the school produces a \$355,000 working capital balance that grows to nearly \$930,000 in year 8. These funds provide adequate working capital for the school and also will allow for a moderate amount of unplanned expenses or even a shortfall in fundraising. As part of normal cash management activities, the school will work with its back office provider (NSFA) to monitor cash on a daily and weekly basis and plan for future receipts and payment. NSFA reconciles all bank accounts monthly and uses electronic deposits and payments for large revenue and expense items. NSFA's expertise in Alabama fund accounting, cash management and ability to project cash into the future is a key part of our ongoing cash management strategy. The Executive Director is responsible for reviewing current and projected cashflow projections as provided by the Director of School Operations through NSFA. Through the regular monthly financial statement cycle the Director of School Operations is able to communicate cash balances, anticipated receivables, timing, and cash projections to the board on a regular basis. At the Board level, the board treasurer and the finance committee provide additional oversight and review the cash flow and financial projections during regular board meetings and advise on organizational steps that may be necessary. The multi-year financial model is updated regularly and evaluated by both leadership and NSFA at a regular meeting cadence.

Element Review

Reviews is not provided

7. Financial Management Capacity Upon Opening

Status: Completed

Form Result

Provide evidence that the individuals, if known, tasked with handling the financial aspects of an open school have the relevant expertise.

Overarching Standard/Criteria: Compelling evidence of individual and collective qualifications and capacity for implementing all aspects of the financial plan successfully.

Evidence needed for addressing the overarching standard:

School Financial Leadership Capacity Narrative

FCS Financial Management Capacity

Floreecer's proposed founding team includes a blend of local leaders dedicated to providing an additional educational option in the Ensley community and additional capacity from NSFA's best-in-class

technical assistance and back-office service team. The strong founding staff, a diverse Board of Directors, and critical outsourced support from NSFA and its partners gives Floreecer the depth and breadth required to ensure strong financial management capacity. Floreecer's Board includes members with backgrounds in finance, federal programs, fundraising & development, philanthropy, K-12 school experience, non-profit management, and community organizing.

Floreecer partners with New Schools for Alabama for technical assistance and full scope back office services. New Schools for Alabama is a skilled provider and currently supports seven charter schools and provides a cost effective solution for financial services that are difficult for single schools to obtain or afford. Floreecer will utilize NSFA's ALSDE approved food service consortium, its back-office accounting and payroll services, federal programs support, and advisory services.

Financial statements and bank reconciliations will be prepared monthly, payroll and payroll tax payments will be made with each payroll, and healthcare and retirement payments will occur automatically via the Harris payroll system in the same fashion as other schools supported by NSFA. NSFA also provides direct support to Floreecer through its Founders fellowship program that assists leaders in developing quality applications, identifying key leadership staff, and securing philanthropic resources. Floreecer has been invited to apply for over \$2 million in startup philanthropy that if approved is highly likely to be awarded.

Floreecer's back office partnership with NSFA provides senior leadership and expertise rarely available to small, startup charter schools and ensures the board and leadership has expert guidance on annual budgeting, startup and operations, facilities financing, and strategic planning. In addition, with skilled back office services Floreecer will have access to existing internal control procedures used at both district and charter schools, from contract evaluation to purchase order approval, payment, and monthly financial statement preparation and ALSDE submission. Included in this process are systems for credit card approval, dual signatures above certain thresholds, and key separation of duties that are often difficult for small entities to ensure. Floreecer will utilize the Harris/NextGen accounting system recommended by the ALSDE and which is structured to directly import to the state retirement system.

Key partners that bring financial management capacity include NSFA's technical assistance team led by Chris Reynolds, a former charter leader, CPA, and school founder with experience completing numerous facilities projects, Anthony Oliver, founder of Empower Community Schools, and Russell Raney, current CFO for NSFA and Former CFO of Pike Road Schools, Cullman City Schools, and Alabama Association of School Boards. In addition to this leadership NSFA has staff that are skilled in foodservice, federal programs, payroll, and state compliance.

Floreecer's Board of Directors has a combined 50+ years of experience in non-profit management, financial management, fundraising/organizational development, and marketing. Their backgrounds provide our school with strong functional expertise as well as direct experience in managing millions in educational and non-profit spending-including accounting for federal and state funds and securing a range of vendors necessary to our unique high quality bilingual school model.

Board Financial Leadership Capacity Narrative

With the combined board membership, non profit management, and fundraising expertise FCS Board Members have financial management capacity demonstrated in the following levels of knowledge:

- The Finance Committee will serve as an ongoing advisory body, providing the ED with strategic input on budget forecasts, grant applications, and cost-saving measures.
- Board members with banking, accounting, or fundraising expertise will mentor the ED in financial best practices.
- The board will engage in quarterly financial deep dives to review trends, potential risks, and opportunities.
- The board will assist with fundraising strategies and leverage community connections to expand financial resources.

Element Review

Reviews is not provided

6. EXISTING OPERATORS

By law, additional expectations and evidence are required for those applicants who are existing operators, defined as representing a nonprofit organization which currently:

- Have one or more schools in operation nationwide which have been in operation for more than one full school year; or
- Intend to employ an educational service provider with one or more schools in operation for more than one full school year.

For applicants meeting this definition please provide the following supplementary information regarding the performance of the existing schools in the portfolio. Ala. Code § 16-6F-7(a)(10) and Ala. Code § 16-6F-7(a)(11).

All Charter Management Organizations (CMOs) and Educational Management Organizations (EMOs) are considered existing operators.

1. Growth Plans

Status: Completed

Form Result

Growth Plans Narrative

Floreecer Community School is not an existing operator and does not currently have any growth plans to as an existing operator.

Changes for Alabama Narrative

Floreecer Community School is not an existing operator.

Element Review

Reviews is not provided

2. Portfolio Summary

Status: Completed

Form Result

Provide details on the organization's portfolio of schools and history of proven success.

Overarching Standard/Criteria: Compelling evidence of how the organization's past performance will translate to success in Alabama.

Evidence needed for addressing the overarching standard:

a) Provide, as an attachment, evidence of a track record of success serving similar student populations through a summary of academic, financial and organizational success for the organization's portfolio of schools. Discuss portfolio performance on the whole, relative to performance on the relevant authorizer, district, or state accountability plan(s) and/or state assessments. Performance on State Test or ACT/SAT is also acceptable. Include all currently open and operating schools in the portfolio.

Element Review

Reviews is not provided

3. Revocation History

Status: Completed

Form Result

Provide details on the organization's history of which have closed.

Overarching Standard/Criteria: Compelling evidence of how the organization's past performance will translate to success in Alabama.

Evidence needed for addressing the overarching standard:

a) Disclose information on any of the organization's portfolio of schools that have been closed or non-renewed or have had charters that were revoked.

Text

Floreecer Community School does not currently function as an existing operator and therefore does not have a revocation history.

Element Review

Reviews is not provided