

# Alabama Charter Application for a 2022 Opening

**New Charter Application #000699**

**Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy**

**Submitted To:**

Alabama Public Charter School Commission  
Alabama Charter School Commission

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**Submitted By:**

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# GENERAL

## A. School Information

Open Date: **August 21, 2023**  
 Proposed Name: **Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy**  
 School Type: **Middle / High**  
 Grade Levels: **[6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12]**  
 School District:  
 Neighborhood / Community:  
 Organization Type: **Non-profit Corporation**  
 Sponsoring Entity: **Non-profit Organization**  
 Address:  
 Phone:  
 Fax:  
 Web Site:  
 Calendar Type: **Standard - 180 instructional days**  
 Educational Service **(None)**  
 Provider:

## B. Primary Contact Person

Name: **Krista Williams**  
 Mailing Address: **1701 Princeton Woods Dr. W. Mobile, Alabama 36618**  
 Mobile Phone:  
 Alternate Phone: **251-654-3150**  
 Email: **ke6305@gmail.com**  
 Current Employer:

## C. Attendance Projections

Grade Level	2023-24 Enrollment		2024-25 Enrollment		2025-26 Enrollment		2026-27 Enrollment		2027-28 Enrollment		At Capacity 2027-28	
	Min.	Max.	Min.	Max.	Min.	Max.	Min.	Max.	Min.	Max.	Min.	Max.
6	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60
7	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60
8	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60
9	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60
10			60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60
11					60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60
12							60	60	60	60	60	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>420</b>	<b>420</b>	<b>420</b>	<b>420</b>	<b>420</b>	<b>420</b>

## D. Board Members

Name	Title	Contact Information	Current Employer
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Hart, Hannah	Board Director	P: M: E: dehehart@comcast.net	
Moore, Sandra	Board Director	P: M: E: sandra.moore705@comcast.net	
Morton, Benterah	Board Director	P: M: E: morton@southalabama.edu	
Ryanns, Dyann	Board Director	P: M: E: dyannryans@gmail.com	

## E. Start-up Team Members

Name	Title	Contact Information	Current Employer
Morris, Anthony	Director of Operations	P: M: E: dralmorris@gmail.com	
Williams, Krista	Founder and Chief Executive Officer	P: M: E: ke6305@gmail.com	

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## 1. Executive Summary

*1. Mission and Vision. State the mission and vision of the proposed school. The mission is a statement of the fundamental purpose of the school, describing why it exists. The vision statement outlines how the school will operate and what it will achieve in the long term. The mission and vision statement provide the foundation for the entire proposal.*

### *Mission and Vision*

The **mission** of the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy is to educate a diverse community of students through a rigorous, pre-college and pre-professional level curriculum that prepares students for post-secondary education and careers in the visual/performing arts. Our purpose is to nurture, inspire, and motivate a diverse body of talented students to develop and fulfill their artistic skills and educational goals. As leaders of this school, along with our partner organization, Sunny Side Theatre, we have dedicated our lives to impacting students in ways unimaginable—just like, Floretta P. Carson positively impacted the lives of disadvantaged students across the Mobile County area. Through experience and research, we have noted that minority and low-income students face many barriers in the process of acquiring pre-professional level arts training and quality academics during their secondary school years (National Endowment for the Arts, 2012). According to National Endowment for the Arts (2012), disadvantaged students have less than half of the access to a quality arts and academic education than their non-disadvantaged peers. In schools across the country, disadvantaged students are not provided with the same opportunities as students in more affluent neighborhoods and are less likely to attend a school that provides advanced and honors level courses (National Endowment for the Arts, 2012). In other words, socioeconomic differences have been a deciding factor in whether or not a student has access to quality arts and academic programs (Quinton et al., 2014). The educational model of Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy ensures that all students, regardless of socioeconomic status, ethnicity, or background, are provided with the necessary resources (e.g., instruments, technology devices, software programs) and support (e.g., college and career mentors, school-wide system of intervention) needed to be successful in the arts and academics. FPC VPAA is centered around equity, diversity, inclusion, access, opportunity, and the participation, representation, and advancement of all students, regardless of background, ethnicity, ability, or language. The **vision** of the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy is to not only become the leading and highest-quality visual and performing arts educational option for students, but to also close the achievement gap among disadvantaged students within Mobile County and surrounding areas. We believe that all students, regardless of background, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status should be provided with a quality education that cultivates their creative skills while preparing them to be successful within a global society. To achieve this vision, we are committed to providing all students with rigorous, equitable, and inclusive learning opportunities through the implementation of our pre-collegiate and career-focused, Advanced Placement and Honors level curriculum, college and career mentorship program, targeted intervention blocks, and arts intensive program.

*2. 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.*

### *Anticipated Student Population and Enrollment Priorities*

As a result of the identified need of a quality academic and arts school in the Mobile County area, the

Floretta P. Carson Visual Performing Arts Academy is open to all interested students across the city. Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy anticipates serving a diverse population of students in grades 6-12 across the Mobile County area, with approximately 60% of the student population eligible for free or reduced lunch. In the Mobile County area, approximately 20.7% of the population live at or below the poverty line (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). According to *Voices for Alabama's Children*, there are 79,369 children ages 5-19 living in the Mobile County, AL area. Of this number, 55,272 are enrolled in a school located in Mobile County, AL (Public School Review, 2022). This reveals a deficit of 24,097 school-aged children who are either enrolled in a school system outside of Mobile County or not enrolled in school for various other reasons. The establishment of a high-quality charter school within the Mobile County area provides parents and guardians with an educational option for improving their child's learning.

### ***Rationale for Selecting Student Body and Location***

The Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy is located in the heart of Mobile County, AL. The school's centralized location makes it easily accessible for disadvantaged students living across the Mobile County area. Many of the county's most impoverished neighborhoods are within a one-to-six-mile radius of the school's location. These impoverished neighborhoods include Trinity Gardens, Maysville, Thomasville, Birdsville, R. V. Taylor Plaza, Crichton, Mobile Terrace, Hillsdale, and Prichard. Many of the students in these areas live in low-rent public housing. Students in these areas attend schools that do not provide rigorous academic and arts intensive programs, which is necessary for their continuous success at the collegiate level and in the workforce (ALSDE, 2020). In these impoverished areas, 0% of the student population was offered or took an advanced placement or honors course, 0% of the student population earned college credit, and less than 10% of the student population scored proficient on all four areas of the ACT (ALSDE, 2020).

### ***Need for an Equitable, Inclusive, and Accessible Quality Arts and Academic Program***

Within the state of Alabama, there is only one arts public school that offers both high school and middle school student's rigorous arts and academic courses on a pre-professional or pre-collegiate level; however, students who may want to enroll must meet the school's rigorous academic entrance criteria. Restrictive entrance requirements function as a barrier for low-income and minority students (National Endowment for the Arts, 2012). Unlike traditional arts intensive schools which base their admissions on academic criteria, typically including performance on specialized entrance exams, with some additional consideration given to factors such as GPA or attendance, the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy is open to all students, regardless of academic or arts standing. Removing typical restrictive entrance requirements makes it possible for a higher proportion of low-income and minority students to benefit. Within Mobile County, AL, there are no specialized public middle and high schools that offer students rigorous arts courses on a pre-professional or pre-collegiate level for preparation to be accepted into a higher education institution or to be employed in a professional arts role. Traditional public schools within Mobile County and surrounding areas are much more generalized in their curriculum, and only offer basic, foundational courses for students at the middle or high school level. Many of the schools within Mobile County operate with traditional schedules that only allow students to take one arts course for the entire school year, which is not conducive for preparation to be accepted into a higher education institution or to be employed in a professional arts role after high school. Therefore, FPC VPAA offer students intensive classes in dance, theatre, music, and visual arts, which includes, but not limited to animation, ballet dance, music theory, music history, theatre history, art history, piano masterclass, woodwind quartet, and jazz orchestra to expand the range of students' knowledge in their focused areas of study. Our schedule allows students to take multiple arts intensive courses throughout the school day and during the arts specialized blocks. In addition to the dire need to offer students pre-professional and pre-collegiate level arts courses, there is also a need to provide a high-level education in academics. According to ALSDE (2021), only 10.2% of high school graduates in the Mobile County area are prepared for college. More specifically, only 4% of disadvantaged youth in the Mobile area received college credits while in high school; only 5.7% of disadvantaged students were offered or participated in an Advanced Placement (AP) course; and only 23.57% of disadvantaged high school students were able to perform proficiently on all four parts of the ACT, which is a national

college entrance exam. Based on scores from the 2020-2021 ACAP (Alabama Comprehensive Assessment Program) test, only 7.87% of high school students and 6.12% of middle school students were proficient in Math; only 10.8% of high school students and 11.49% of middle school students were proficient in ELA; and less than 15% of high school students and 22% of middle school students were proficient in science.

According to the National Endowment for the Arts (2012), minority and low-income students who participate in rigorous arts programs show more positive academic and social outcomes than low-SES or minorities who do not participate in these arts programs. Researchers have also found that students who engage in intensive arts programs in high school and middle school have higher overall GPA's, higher acceptance and attendance at competitive colleges, and are three times more likely to earn a college degree than students who do not participate in a rigorous arts school (National Endowment for the Arts, 2012). Even among students with a low socioeconomic status, those with a history of rich arts involvement, earned "mostly A's" at a higher rate in academic courses than did students without an arts-rich background (55 percent compared to 37 percent) (National Endowment for the Arts, 2012). Based on data from the College Board, students who took four years or more of rigorous arts courses while in high school scored an average of 92 points higher on the SAT than students who took only one-half year or less of arts specialized classes (Americans for the Arts, 2016). Further, students who had four or more years of specialized arts classes scored an average of 56 points higher than students with one-half year or less of arts specialized instruction.

Students need access to high-level courses with quality instruction to prepare them for the rigors of college and careers by increasing their content knowledge and cultivating their higher order thinking skills. Students who have access to college-level academics and arts courses in high school and middle school are more likely to seek and succeed in higher education (McGee, 2013; Roderick, Coca, & Nagaoka, 2011). However, far too many schools that serve disadvantaged students do not offer advanced, rigorous courses, making it impossible for students to garner the academic skills necessary to enter and succeed in college (Bryant, 2015). Because disadvantaged students are less likely to attend high schools or middle schools that offer advanced courses due to their socioeconomic status or location (Quinton et al., 2014), it became necessary to create a school model that promotes high expectations and challenges all students academically. Disadvantaged students who take AP and Honors level courses are more prepared for college than students who do not take such rigorous courses (Hargrove et al., 2008). Similar to the BASIS Charter approach, the Advanced Placement and Honors aligned curriculum at the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy is not a special set of courses for a select few well-prepared students, but as a comprehensive program to prepare all students, starting in the early grades, to be successful in college and pre-professional level careers. Therefore, all core academic and arts courses offered are Advanced Placement or Honors level courses. The middle school curriculum consists of pre-advanced placement and pre-honors aligned courses. All high school students take either Advanced Placement or Honors level courses in both the arts and academics. High school students also have the option to take college credit courses through our dual enrollment program with the University of South Alabama (USA), University of Alabama (UA), and Coastal Alabama Community Colleges. Through our unique college and career ready model, all students are eligible to receive an Advanced Alabama High School Diploma. At FPC VPAA, we believe that every student, regardless of background, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status, is capable of reaching their highest potential if greatness is expected at every step throughout their journey in school.

### ***Anticipated Non-Academic Needs***

Many disadvantaged students across the Mobile County area live in poverty. According to Williams (2015), children who grow up in poverty face many challenges, including health problems, cognitive issues, and emotional and behavioral issues. Children who experience health problems, cognitive issues, emotional and behavioral issues due to their impoverished living conditions and lifestyle can become aggressive and experience symptoms of anxiety and depression, which can lead to an increase in school absences, tardiness rates, and hinder successful development in peer relations, academic performance, and overall success in life (Jensen, 2009; Lier et al., 2012). Further, children raised in poverty are more likely to display defiant



behaviors, impatience and impulsivity, a limited range of behavioral responses, and inappropriate emotional responses (Jensen, 2009). Through experience and research, children in poverty often lack and need a caring, dependable adult in their lives to provide guidance and ongoing support (Jensen, 2009).

At the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy, our dedicated counselor, social worker, and community partner liaison provides the necessary resources, support, and guidance to any student who needs additional support services for their continuous success. The support provided includes connecting youth to mental health or social/emotional services such as AltaPointe (local service provider) or providing various forms of assistance to their families. In addition to the services provided by our dedicated counselor, social worker, and community partner liaison, students are also provided with guidance and support through the school's college and career mentorship program. FPC VPAA mentoring program goes beyond the paradigm of assisting students with course selection, college applications, internship applications, job searches, or college campus tours, mentors are able to provide youth with the confidence, resources, and ongoing support they need to achieve their potential, despite the challenges that they face daily. Mentors can increase the likelihood of a young person developing external and internal assets — structures, relationships, values, skills, and beliefs that promote healthy development and lead to future successes (DuBois et al., 2011). Mentors provide guidance, support, and encouragement that effectively build the social-emotional, cognitive, and positive identity of a young person (DuBois et al., 2011). In other words, mentoring can improve outcomes across behavioral, social, emotional, and academic spheres of a student's development. Mentors can be instrumental in helping students to understand that they can achieve academically regardless of their current circumstance or starting point — which has proven to be a successful strategy for improving outcomes for low-income and minority students (Aronson et al., 2002).

***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 demonstrates 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 achieve its goals.***

The Floretta P. Carson College and Career Readiness Arts Education model ensures equity and inclusion and student success across grade levels and subjects. FPC VPAA provides an opportunity for students to engage in one of the four arts specialty areas: visual arts, theatre arts, music, and dance. The FPC VPAA arts intensive program offers students unique experiences, such as one-on-one/group lessons, artistic collaboration, masterclasses, seminars, and performances in dance, drama, winds, piano, strings, and voice. Unlike traditional schools, students at FPC VPAA take multiple arts courses within their chosen field of study for higher education preparation and professional opportunities. In addition to the intensive arts program, the advanced academic curriculum at the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy is not a set of courses for a select few well-prepared students, but rather a comprehensive program to prepare all students, starting in the middle grades, to be successful in college and pre-professional level careers. To ensure student readiness for advanced level courses at the high school level, students at the middle school level learn above grade level standards. The advanced enriched curriculum at FPC VPAA is necessary for improving the academic achievement and graduation rates of all students (Handwerk et al., 2008). Through our advanced academic and arts specialty curriculum, all students will be prepared to graduate with an Advanced High School Diploma.

### ***College and Career Mentorship Program***

To ensure that students are provided with the support needed to succeed, all students will be assigned a mentor/advisor who will monitor their progress and provide them with college and career counseling throughout their journey at the school. Mentors at FPC VPAA not only assist students with college and career assistance, but also provide students with words of encouragement and support needed to overcome challenges and to achieve their highest potential. According to Herrera et al. (2007), students who are assigned to in-school mentors are 52% more likely to graduate and achieve their educational goals and

aspirations than students without mentors. Moreover, mentors at FPC VPAA are vital for the continuous improvement of student achievement and overall success within our ever-changing global society.

### ***High Quality Teachers***

FPC VPAA has also recognized that providing students with high quality teachers function as necessary component of increasing achievement among all student populations. High quality teachers hold students to high standards and believe that all children are capable of high levels of achievement, regardless of their socioeconomic status, background, or prior academic record, and build positive relationships with students (Flores, 2007). A high-quality teacher engages in high quality teaching when they implement sound teaching practices grounded in cultural proficiency (Love et al., 2008). Cultural proficient teaching practices not only involve a thorough understanding of the subject matter being taught, including understanding of ways to make content accessible and relevant to all students, but also an understanding and respect for students' cultures (Love et al., 2008). At FPC VPAA, we are committed to hiring teachers who engage in cultural proficient responses to the diverse nature of the school, students, and the communities that we serve.

### ***Effective Professional Development Opportunities***

It is well-documented that even high-quality educators must be provided with the opportunity to engage in the ongoing process of evidence-based inquiry, learning, strategic goal setting, planning, implementation, and evaluation that aligns with the continuous improvement of student learning. Providing students with not only high-quality teachers, but also educators who are effective has shown to be the most influential school-level factor in generating positive student outcomes (Darling-Hammond, 2000). A means to build educators capacity for improving instruction and teaching skills is through the implementation and development of meaningful and learner-centered professional development opportunities (Gregson & Sturko, 2007). Professional development opportunities that are learner-centered allows educators to learn from their experiences, integrate knowledge, think reflectively, and use feedback to create engaging and meaningful experiences for the students that they teach (Daley, 2003). Professional development opportunities that are learner-centered, rather than only content-centered fosters teachers' growth, which is necessary for the continuous improvement of the school and student achievement.

### ***High Performing Using Data Culture***

Educators at FPC VPAA not only engage in learner-centered professional development for improving student learning, but also apply data literacy and collaborative inquiry knowledge and skills to collect, accurately interpret, and analyze multiple data sources and research to identify student-learning problems, verify causes and generate solutions, and test hypotheses to make improvements in their teaching in response to data (Love et al., 2008). Engaging in ongoing investigation of data with the goal of improving student achievement fosters the development and continuation of a high performing *Using Data Culture*. A high performing Using Data Culture involves professional learning communities with many change agents, frequent and in-depth use of data as feedback for instructional practices, the alignment of learning goals and assessments, positive relationship building among staff and faculty throughout the school community, and culturally proficient responses to diversity, equity, and inclusion (Love et al., 2008). The implementation and development of a high performing Using Data Culture at FPC VPAA is necessary for closing the achievement gap between the highest- and lowest-performing students and to increase student proficiency across all grade levels and content areas (Love et al., 2008).

### ***Targeted Intervention***

At the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy, targeted and flexible instructional support blocks are implemented to ensure that there is dedicated time in the schedule for educators to meet students' individual needs. Educators and leaders at FPC VPAA utilize data from diagnostic, interim, formative, and performance assessments to flexibly group students during the schools targeted intervention block, which

function as a necessary step for maximizing student learning. The targeted and flexible intervention blocks at FPC VPAA allows educators to move students into different groups throughout the school year as their needs evolve. Creating effective targeted intervention blocks within the schedule has shown to close the achievement gap between at-risk and not-at-risk students (Deitrichson et al., 2020). Targeted intervention provides students with the additional support needed to learn, practice, and understand skills and content taught in class. It also well-documented that targeted intervention significantly increases students' enrollment and achievement in higher education institutions (Xu et al., 2020).

### ***Small Learning Community***

In addition to our targeted intervention blocks, the structure of the learning environment at FPC VPAA involves the development of smaller classes. Multiple researchers have noted that smaller classes are more beneficial for students from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds (Biddle & Berliner, 2002). Students who are taught in smaller classes have higher test scores as a result of receiving more individualized assistance from teachers (Anderson, 2000). Further, smaller classes present an opportunity for increased learning and less behavioral problems due to increased interaction between students and teachers (Anderson, 2000). Coupled with the smaller classes, the low student-to-teacher ratio helps yield positive outcomes and helps close the achievement gap for struggling students (Filges et al., 2018). Consistent with studies, the small class size and low student-to-teacher ratio at FPC VPAA allow for more individualized student attention and the ability to track student growth and progress on a personal level.

### ***Primary Research-Based Instructional Methods and Strategies***

Another effective component of the educational model at FPC VPAA involves the use of various research-based instructional methods and strategies to meet the varying needs of all students as well as established standards and academic goals set forth by the state and the school. The research-based instructional methods and strategies implemented at FPC VPAA to address students' varying educational needs include the following: *Project-Based Learning (PBL)* – an innovative approach to learning that promotes asking and refining questions to solve problems, debating ideas, making predictions, designing plans, collecting and analyzing data, drawing conclusions, communicating ideas, creating artifacts, and making completed projects public for constructive feedback (Mergendoller et al., 2006; Thomas, 2000); *Data-Driven Instruction* – a systematic approach to improving student learning through assessing students, examining assessment data thoroughly to determine students' strengths and weaknesses, and then taking the necessary steps to address their needs; *Differentiated Instruction* – a process of teaching and learning that allows teachers to proactively modify the curriculum, teaching methods, resources, learning activities, and assessments to address the needs of individual students and to maximize student growth and individual success (Hillier, 2011); and *Contextual Learning* – a method of instruction that enables students to apply new knowledge and skills to real-life situations (Davtyan, 2014).

Ensuring that students are college and career ready requires not only a differential approach to the delivery of instruction, but also the monitoring of student progress. Through assessments, educators are able to gain information about student's prior knowledge, misconceptions, understanding about content, and proficiency relative to content standards. Assessment of student learning also provides educators with information about their effectiveness and gives direction for future lessons and activities (Dejong et al., 2002). At FPC VPAA, educators use in-class formative assessments, summative assessments, predictive/diagnostic assessments, frequent interim assessments, and performance-based assessments to maximize student learning. Utilizing various assessment methods provides educators at FPC VPAA with information about student learning before, during, and at the conclusion of a lesson, unit, or instructional period. Effective teachers assess students throughout the learning process and adjust their instruction to address learners' needs (Gallo et al., 2006; Moon, 2010). More specifically, assessments at FPC VPAA summarize what students know about topics and content, which skills need practice, and provides educators with feedback on how to move students to the next level of proficiency (Gallo et al., 2006).

### ***4. Community Engagement. Describe the relationships that you have established to generate community***

***engagement in and support for the proposed school and how you have assessed demand and/or solicited support for the school. Briefly describe these activities and summarize their results.***

Along with our partner organization, Sunny Side Theatre, the leadership team and governing board of the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy engaged students, parents, families, and community members who have longed for a school with a quality arts and academic program. We have held in-person community information sessions about the school and its impact on the community. Through the information sessions and one-on-one sessions with families and our partner organizations, we learned that there is a great need for an intensive arts school where students can feel that they belong and are welcomed. Our leader, Dr. Krista Williams, who works with low-income and disadvantaged students on a daily basis in the Mobile area, found that schools with a higher proportion of low-income and minority students are not provided with the same resources as schools who serve a lower percentage of minority and low-income students. Therefore, a higher percentage of minority and low-income students in the area are not provided with the necessary resources or opportunities to succeed in life. Parents, students, and community members have articulated how they are frustrated with the continuous inequities that exist within the schools in Mobile, AL. Parents and community members also voiced that they want their children to feel like they belong within a school environment. Within traditional schools, many students with arts talents are not provided with any opportunities to cultivate their talents and aspirations in the arts, but rather seen as an outsider through little arts options. Throughout continuous engagement, more than 300 parents have shown interest in enrolling their child in the school. Therefore, our leader, Dr. Krista Williams, along with the leadership team, created the college and career readiness arts model to improve student success among minorities, disadvantaged, and low-income students. This model addresses educational inequity through advanced level coursework across the arts and academic curricula, ongoing college and career mentoring, school-wide interventions, and ongoing and continuous cultural competence professional development for faculty and staff. Along with our arts partners, we will continue to engage students, families, and the community through our ongoing community meetings, in-school and out-of-school staged student performances, recitals, concerts, exhibits, and other special events.

***5. Leadership and Governance. As Attachment 1, list the members of the school’s proposed leadership team and governing board, including their roles with the school and their current job title, employer, and full resumes (including contact information and professional biographies for each individual listed).***

See *Attachment 1* for a complete list of the school’s proposed leadership team and governing board.

***6. Enrollment Summary. Use the Student Enrollment Projections section to provide information about enrollment. Describe the rationale for the number of students and grade levels served in year one and the basis for the growth plan illustrated above.***

**Enrollment Summary:**

Number of Students Enrolled					
	Year 1 FY 2023	Year 2 FY 2024	Year 3 FY 2025	Year 4 FY 2026	Year 5 FY 2027
6 <sup>th</sup>	60	60	60	60	60
7 <sup>th</sup>	60	60	60	60	60
8 <sup>th</sup>	60	60	60	60	60
9 <sup>th</sup>	60	60	60	60	60
10 <sup>th</sup>	0	60	60	60	60
11 <sup>th</sup>	0	0	60	60	60
12 <sup>th</sup>	0	0	0	60	60
<b>Total Enrollment</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>420</b>	<b>420</b>

With more than 24,000 school-aged children who are either enrolled in a school system outside of Mobile County or not enrolled in school, we strive to be the alternative choice for parents and students who are

seeking a high-quality educational option (Alabama Kids Count Data, 2020). Therefore, the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy anticipates a diverse student body that is reflective of the demographics of Mobile County and the school's centralized location. Given the need and current interests of the community, the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy opens in August of 2023 with a 6<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> grade inaugural class of 240 students. Each year thereafter, we enroll 60 new students in each grade (10, 11 and 12) until we reach full enrollment in 2026 with 420 students in grades 6-12. Our moderate growth model allows us to build a strong positive school culture, to purchase the resources and instructional programs needed to improve learning among all students, and to strategically develop systems, instructional programs, and curricular materials critical for preparing students for success beyond high school.

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## Attachments

### Section 1: Executive Summary

1.1	<a href="#">Attachment 1 Leadership Team and Governing Board</a>	Williams, Krista, 2/22/22 5:44 PM	PDF / 997.557 KB
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# EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM DESIGN AND CAPACITY

## 1. Program Overview

### *Advanced Arts Program*

Researchers have found that students who engage in intensive arts programs in high school and middle school have higher overall GPA's, higher acceptance and attendance at competitive colleges, and are three times more likely to earn a college degree than students who do not participate in a rigorous arts school (National Endowment for the Arts, 2012). However, traditional public schools are much more generalized in their curriculum, and only offer basic, foundational courses for students at the middle or high school level (MCPSS, 2021; National Endowment for the Arts, 2012). Many schools operate with traditional schedules that only allow students to take one arts course for the entire school year, which is not conducive for preparation to be accepted into a higher education institution or to be employed in a professional arts role after high school (MCPSS, 2021; National Endowment for the Arts, 2012). Further, some students only receive arts instruction one semester during a school year (MCPSS, 2021). Traditional schools in the Mobile County area only have a handful of professional artists; however, these artists are typically assigned to schools with a higher proportion of high-income students (MCPSS, 2021). Therefore, disadvantaged students at the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy will be able to benefit from the knowledge, experience, and high caliber education of the faculty, consisting of art professionals, most of whom have a master's or doctorate degree in their arts specialty area and/or ten years or more of experience in the professional arts industry. World renowned guest artists, university faculty, and industry leaders will visit the school's campus to share their expertise and creativity through residencies, master classes, lectures, performances, presentations, and hands-on training. The school will offer a number of unique and exciting performance and exhibition opportunities, such as choir concerts, ensemble recitals, art walks, composer's night, opera production, solo recitals, and more. Every three years, students will have the opportunity to participate in an international competition or exhibition. Students will also have the opportunity every year to participate in national and regional visual and performing arts competitions. All students will take multiple intensive arts courses in their chosen discipline to ensure that they are well-prepared to compete in international and national competitions and for success at the higher education level and careers. For example, a 9th grade student who chooses the instrumental music, piano track will take courses such as Theory and Skills II, Music History II, Introduction to Alexander Technique, Piano Sight-Reading, Piano Musicianship IA, Piano Ensemble IA, Piano Seminar IA, and Piano Master Class. Beginning in the 9th grade, students will be offered AP Music Theory, AP Art History, AP Drawing, AP Art 2-D Art and Design, or AP 3-D Art and Design, depending on area of study.

### *Advanced Academic Program*

Research studies show that advanced placement and honors level courses in secondary school can significantly increase academic achievement and high school graduation rates among disadvantaged students (Handwerk et al., 2008). The college and career readiness arts education model at Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy is unique compared to traditional schools. Similar to the Basis Charter approach, which has proven successful by countless measures, including a 99% graduation rate across all campuses, a 90% pass rate on state assessments, and a 94% passing score of 3 or higher on AP exams (U.S. News, 2021), all high school courses at the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts academy will be Advanced Placement and Honors level courses. Beginning in 6th grade, students take pre-AP and pre-Honors level courses to be prepared to take Honors and AP level courses starting in 9th



grade and throughout high school. In addition to the College Board Advanced Placement curriculum, the Honors curriculum consists of MyPerspectives ELA (6-12) and LearnZillion Illustrative Mathematics (6-12), which both received perfect scores on EdReports. The high school honors science curriculum consists of Campbell Biology: Concepts and Connections, College Physics: A Strategic Approach, Introductory Chemistry 6e, and Earth Science 15th edition. The middle school science curriculum consists of Amplify Science (6-8), which met expectations on EdReports. Our rigorous curricula and strong support system ensures that all students have mastered the material they need to excel on a variety of state and national assessments as well as college entrance exams. Further, students will be provided with ACT Prep Elective courses beginning in 7th grade. These courses will provide students with challenging questions and proven techniques for success on the ACT. Students will be required to take the preACT test during their 10th grade year and the actual ACT test during their 11th grade year. Practice and actual ACT will be offered on-campus during after-school hours. High school students will also have the option to take college credit courses through our dual enrollment program with the University of South Alabama (USA), University of Alabama (UA), and Coastal Alabama Community Colleges. To ensure that students are on the Advanced Placement and Honors track by their 9th grade year, Geometry and Algebra I courses will be offered at the junior high school level (grades 7–8), respectively, for high school credit and to meet graduation requirements. This allows our students options for taking multiple advanced math courses during high school such as Honors Pre-Calculus, AP Statistics, AP Calculus AB, and multiple dual enrollment courses. Because of our rigorous model, all high school students are able to take higher level courses, regardless of their grade level. For example, a 9th grade student may choose to take a 10th grade course such as AP English or AP English Literature if they feel prepared. All high school students are required to take 4 AP exams before they graduate, at least one in English, Math, Science, Social Studies, and Arts, and score a 3 or higher on at least one exam in either subject. High school students will also have the option to participate in the AP Capstone Diploma Program. Further, all graduating seniors at the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy will be eligible to receive an Advanced Alabama High School Diploma. Therefore, students must satisfy specialty curriculum requirements and complete core academic courses specified by the State of Alabama and FPC VPAA. Those required core credit courses must be completed in grades 9-12 and include the following:

- **English:** 4 credits, 1 each, grades 9-12, 8 semesters
- **Social Studies:** 4 credits, 1 each, grades 9-12, 8 semesters
- **Mathematics:** 4 credits, 1 each, grades 7-12, 8 semesters
- **Science:** 4 credits, 1 each, grades 9-12, 8 semesters
- **Foreign Language:** 2 credits, consecutive in the same language, grades 9-12, 4 semesters
- **Arts Education:** 4 credits, grades 9-12, 8 semesters
- **Health Education:** 0.5 credits, grades 9-12, 1 semester
- **Physical Education:** 1 credit, grades 9-12, 2 semesters
- **Career Preparedness:** 1 credit, grades 9-12, 2 semesters
- **Electives:** 2.5 credits, grades 9-12, 5 semesters

### *High Quality Teachers*

Researchers have noted that the success of disadvantaged students in secondary school hinges primarily on effective teachers (Bryant, 2015). While disadvantaged students have struggles outside the school building, there are numerous examples of schools serving low-income youth where students are thriving academically and taking very challenging courses (Bryant, 2015). This demonstrates that students' background does not inherently prevent their achievement (Moore et al., 2010). Evidence suggests that the quality of teaching students receive is the most important in-school factor affecting their achievement (Thompson et al., 2008). However, many disadvantaged students, especially those in high poverty areas within Mobile County, AL, attend schools where these critical elements are not in place (Bryant, 2015; MCPSS, 2021). Therefore, there are three quality aspects that the FPC Visual and Performing Arts Academy will ensure that each teacher possesses in order for students to achieve at high levels and to be college and career ready – high-level instruction in challenging courses, high expectations for all students, regardless of background or socioeconomic status, and positive relationships with other teachers and school staff (Flores, 2007; Reid &

Moore, 2008). Further, we will hire highly qualified teachers who have mastered their particular field and are capable of conveying advanced concepts and content to all students. However, subject knowledge alone is not enough to make an effective teacher. Therefore, all new hires will take part in an intensive teacher-training course that will introduce research-based instructional methods (e.g., data-driven instruction, project-based learning), teaching techniques (No Opt Out, Cold Call, Call and Response), classroom management strategies, assessment creation, and character building for a successful classroom environment. To keep a low student-to-teacher ratio and to provide multiple advanced level course options to students, we will also hire adjunct professors from local colleges. These adjunct professors will teach courses in their field of study.

### ***College and Career Mentorship Program***

Unlike traditional public schools across the Mobile County area, the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy will assign each student to a mentor. Mentors will hold youth to high standards, provide encouragement and support, and demand accountability for their academic performance. Studies have shown that mentored youth are 52% more likely to stay in school and graduate than youth without mentors (Herrera et al., 2007). Further, disadvantaged youth with mentors are 55% more likely to be enrolled in college than those who do not have a mentor (Bruce & Bridgeland, 2014). With this evidence, Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy will implement a college and career mentorship program for students in grades 7-12. During transition to 7th grade, all students will be assigned a college/career mentor. Students will be assigned a mentor based on college and career interests. The assigned mentor will provide assistance and guidance throughout their journey at the school. Mentors will monitor students' progress and provide career and college counseling. Further, mentors assist students with scholarship application and searches, course selection, college campus tours, workplace tours, college application, internship application and searches, resume assistance, interview preparation, and parent engagement and guidance. Through our college and career mentorship program, students are provided with the necessary support and assistance to succeed in the secondary school setting, post-secondary institutions, and their chosen careers. As youth transition toward school completion and adulthood while navigating complex decision making, mentors, along with our trained counselor, can be a bridge to external support that youth and their families may not know exists. This kind of networked approach to supporting a mentee will include academic supports, such as tutoring or academic/college counseling, or even non-academic supports such as connecting youth to mental health services, various forms of assistance to their families, and college planning services.

### ***Targeted Intervention***

Targeted intervention significantly reduces the likelihood of disadvantaged students enrolling in remedial courses in both 2- and 4-year postsecondary institutions (Xu et al., 2020). Evidence also shows that targeted intervention increases students' enrollment and achievement in college level courses (Xu et al., 2020). At the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy, targeted and flexible instructional support blocks will ensure that there is dedicated time in the schedule during which students are flexibly grouped to receive remediation or enrichment. Building targeted instructional support into the schedule helps ensure that students' individual needs are met during the school day, which helps to improve students' achievement across all subjects and grade levels (Dietrichson et al., 2020; National Center on Response to Intervention, 2011). Ongoing and continuous data collection, progress monitoring, and systematic monitoring of data will be used as an integral part of promoting student growth during targeted intervention blocks. Our targeted intervention allows students to be grouped based on need. Students will have regular opportunities throughout the school year to switch into different groups during the block depending on how their needs evolve over time. Data will drive student intervention placement and instruction. Instructional methods for intervention blocks include small group instruction, one-on-one tutoring, and peer-assisted instruction. At

the start of each school year, students will take a comprehensive diagnostic assessment for initial intervention placement. This allows teachers and department directors to map out areas that need attention among the student body. Further, students will take a pre-unit diagnostic at the start of each unit. These assessments will vary in length depending on the unit. Many of the pre-assessment questions will address prerequisite concepts and skills needed to successfully complete the unit. Teachers will utilize the pre-assessments to identify students with particular below-grade needs or topics to carefully address during the unit. Each unit will also include an end-of-unit assessment that is intended for students to complete individually to assess what they have learned at the conclusion of the unit and to identify any students who may need additional assistance in a particular area. The pre-assessment and end-of-unit assessments combined will be used to move students across intervention groups at regular intervals to meet their individualized learning needs. Grade-level and department teams will meet at least twice per week to review student data and determine action plans for struggling students during their dedicated collaborative planning periods. This review informs the type of support students receive intervention, and also determines how they are regrouped at each interval, typically at the middle and end of each quarter. These plans are closely aligned to the targeted support that takes place during intervention blocks (e.g., one-on-one tutoring, small group instruction, or peer-to-peer tutoring).

### ***Small Learning Community***

One component of the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy instructional design is the low student-teacher ratio. Smaller class size has been shown to be more beneficial for students from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds (Biddle & Berliner, 2002). The anticipated class size will be between 15-18 students. Studies have shown that students who were taught in smaller classes had higher test scores as a result of receiving more individualized assistance from teachers (Molnar et al., 2001). Further, smaller classes present an opportunity for increased learning and less behavioral problems due to increased interaction between students and teachers (Anderson, 2000). Coupled with the smaller classes, the low student-to-teacher ratio helps yield positive outcomes and helps close the achievement gap for struggling students (Filges et al., 2018). Consistent with studies, the small class size and low student-to-teacher ratio at FPC VPAA will allow for more individualized student attention and the ability to track student growth and progress on a personal level.

### ***Primary Research-Based Instructional Methods and Strategies***

Through the use of various research-based instructional methods and strategies, teachers can meet the varying needs of all students and help them to meet and exceed the established standards and academic goals set forth by the state and the school. Teachers at FPC VPAA will utilize various research-based instructional methods and strategies, including Project-Based Learning (PBL), Data-Driven Instruction, Differentiated Instruction, and Contextual Learning to address students' varying educational needs.

#### ***Project-Based Learning***

By design, project-based learning is an innovative approach to meaningful learning because it promotes the development of students critical thinking skills through engagement in more authentic learning that requires solving real-world problems, collaboration, extensive research, inquiry, writing, analysis, collaboration, and effective communication (Hemmings, 2012). Evidence shows that PBL students perform at a higher achievement level than non-PBL students across subjects and content areas (Cervantes et al., 2015). Research also shows that PBL significantly improves student performance on AP exams (Saavedra et al., 2021). In essence, PBL promotes positive student learning among all students. As shown in Figure 1.1, an effective Gold Standard PBL environment consists of seven components:

- *A Challenging Problem or Question* - the project is framed by a meaningful problem to be solved or a question to answer.
- *Sustained Inquiry* -students engage in a rigorous, extended process of posing questions, finding resources, and applying information.
- *Authenticity* - the project involves real-world contexts and problems or issues and interests in students' lives.
- *Student Voice and Choice* - students are able to make decisions about the project.
- *Reflection* - students and teachers reflect on the learning, the effectiveness of their inquiry and project activities, the quality of student work, and obstacles that arise and strategies for overcoming them.
- *Critique and Revision* - students give, receive, and apply feedback to improve their project.
- *Public Product* - students make their project work public by presenting it to people beyond the classroom (Buck Institute for Education).



Figure 1.1

Within the tenets of PBL, students pursue solutions to problems by asking and refining questions, debating ideas, making predictions, designing plans, collecting and analyzing data, drawing conclusions, communicating ideas, asking new questions, creating artifacts, and making their work public (Mergendoller et al., 2006; Thomas, 2000). Project-Based Learning involves the active engagement of students and places students in realistic, problem-solving environments that serve to make connections between the classroom and real-life experiences. The activities of PBL are designed to promote a deep level of understanding of the content (McGrath, 2004). To ensure meaningful learning and to promote academic success among all students at FPC VPAA, projects will be aligned to standards to ensure higher order thinking and academic rigor; well-managed with a focus on productivity and efficiency; encompass formative and summative assessments to ensure that students are mastering content skills and standards; and engaging throughout the process for optimal growth and learning (Boss & Larmer, 2018).

Data Driven Instruction

Teachers at FPC VPAA will engage in an inquiry cycle of data-driven instruction, which includes assessment, analysis, action, and culture. As the first building block of data-driven instruction, assessments are crucial in defining the types of instruction that should take place. Josey-Bass (2010) articulated four crucial elements of effective assessments:

- *Element 1: Assessments Must Be Common and Interim* - In effective data-driven instruction, analyzing pre-unit, post-unit, and interim assessments (tests usually taken every six-to-eight weeks) on a regular basis provides the feedback that teachers need to improve their instruction on a continuous basis, rather than waiting at the end of the semester. Pre-unit, post-unit, and interim assessments accurately measure students' performance on a continuous and ongoing basis.
- *Element 2: Assessments Must Be The Starting Point and Must Be Transparent* - Traditionally assessments are designed at the end of the quarter or semester and based on what is taught. In effective data-driven instruction, this process must be reversed such that assessments are created before the teaching begins. It is the rigor of the assessment that drives the rigor of what is taught.
- *Element 3: Assessments Must Be Aligned* - To help students succeed on state and national tests, assessments should be aligned to those tests and standards. Assessments should also help prepare students for college and therefore be aligned to college readiness standards as measured by ACT and AP exams. Assessments should also be aligned to the school's clearly defined grade level and content expectations so that teachers are teaching what will be assessed.
- *Element 4: Assessments Must Reassess Previously Taught Standards* - If interim assessments only assess what was taught during one period of time, they would serve more as unit-end tests than interim assessments. Including material that was previously taught helps ensure that students retain that material and also provides an opportunity for teachers to see if their instructional techniques or methods were successful.

Although assessment points to the ultimate goals of instruction, analysis helps teachers to reach those goals. Analysis involves examining assessment data thoroughly to determine students' strengths and weaknesses and then taking the necessary steps to address their needs. There are five core elements of successful analysis:

- *Element 1: Analysis Must Include User-Friendly Reports* - Interim assessments yield a tremendous amount of raw data, but unless it is put into a form that is teacher-friendly, the data may be rendered useless. Therefore, faculty at FPC VPAA will use realistic templates (the best ones are one page per class) that allow for analysis at four important levels: (a) question level, (b) individual student level, (c) standard level, and (d) whole class level.
- *Element 2: Analysis Must be Conducted With Test in Hand* - It is essential that analysis is done test-in-hand with teachers constantly referring to the completed data report template.

- *Element 3: Analysis Must Be Deep* - Good analysis means digging into the test results and moving beyond what students got wrong to answer why they got it wrong. This involves finding trends in student errors or trends among groups of students. Combined with the above strategies of using clear data reports and having the test in hand, performing deep analysis can quickly surface weaknesses that the teacher must address.
- *Element 4: Results From Analysis Must Be Addressed Immediately* - If assessment results are not addressed in a timely manner they will not be as effective. Therefore, FPC VPAA will design calendars so that assessments are analyzed within a timely manner. Teachers and staff will have ample amount of time each week to analyze data during their scheduled collaborative planning periods.
- *Element 5: Analysis Must Include Effective Analysis Meetings* - A key component of effective data analysis is the analysis meeting. These are meetings between teachers and instructional leaders that focus on the results of assessments to improve student achievement.

After implementing assessments and conducting deep analysis, teachers and faculty at FPC VPAA must address students' strengths and weaknesses. As with the other components of data-driven instruction, there are four core elements of an effective action plan:

- *Element 1: Action Must Involve a Plan* - Action plans describe how teachers will apply what they've learned from assessment results in the classroom. It is imperative that teachers drill down into assessment results, be open to utilizing new instructional strategies, and ensure that there are specified dates for the implementation to occur.
- *Element 2: Successful Implementation and Ongoing Assessment* - There are a number of strategies to ensure that the action plan will be implemented in the next cycle of lessons. Below are some examples of these strategies: Teachers can (a) use assessment results to focus the objectives of future lessons on the areas students need improvement, (b) constantly check for understanding (for example, having all students write an answer on the white board and hold it up to show if they understand) to see if the action plan is achieving results, or (c) re-design homework to target those areas that students need to review according to the action plan.
- *Element 3: Accountability Is Necessary for Successful Action* - School leaders play a vital role in ensuring that the action is taking place. Therefore, leaders at FPC VPAA can look for whether class lessons and units match the rigor of the assessments through continuous and ongoing classroom observations.
- *Element 4: Actions Must Engage Students* - To create an effective data-driven school, students must be engaged in improving their own learning. This can only happen when students know the goal, how

they are doing, and what they can do to improve their learning.

To ensure the success of data-driven instruction, leaders must create a data-driven culture. Below are additional structures to foster a data-driven culture:

- *Element 1: Data-Driven Schools Need an Implementation Calendar* - Time for assessment, analysis, and action should be prioritized on the school calendar. Without regular time set aside for these activities, they are likely to be overshadowed by other pressing commitments.
- *Element 2: Schools Must Identify and Adapt Best Practices* - A key component of a data-driven culture is the habit of identifying and adapting best practices.
- *Element 3: Effective Professional Development* - Professional development is necessary for preparing teachers and leaders to successfully implement the data-driven instructional framework.

Data driven instructional practices positively impacts students' achievement across grade levels and subjects when used school-wide (James, 2010). Although effective use of data improves student achievement, many school leaders and teachers are not accustomed to using data for instruction and school improvement (Dynarski, 2008-09; Murnane et al., 2005). The idea of data-driven instruction is to identify areas of weakness before students fall behind (Billen, 2009). Data-driven instruction is a key framework for school-wide support of student success. Therefore, teachers and administrators at FPC VPAA will analyze data for arts and academic courses. Further, teachers and administrators will rely heavily on data-driven instruction to address any student learning areas that need attention. Data from benchmark assessments, AP exams, pre-and post-unit diagnostics, and national and state assessments allows teachers to pinpoint areas of student weakness and devise an action plan to provide supplemental instruction to teach the course material. Benchmark assessments will be given four times a year at the end of each quarter. Each benchmark assessment is cumulative of course material covered since the beginning of the school year. In addition to benchmark assessments, teachers will utilize pre-and post-unit assessments to identify students' strengths and weaknesses, which is necessary for effective delivery of instruction. At the beginning of each school year, teachers will use AP assessments or team-created diagnostics to identify students' strengths and weaknesses in each subject area, including the arts. These assessments allow teachers to formulate an action plan for lessons and activities needed to ensure the success of all students. Diagnostic assessments before the start of the school year provides administrators and counselors with the necessary data to create effective intervention or enrichment schedules. Targeted intervention blocks allow students to be strategically grouped to receive remediation or enrichment during school hours. The school will also use a variety of performance-based assessment tools to measure teacher and student learning, including criteria-based checklists, peer reflection, self-evaluation, and annotated rubrics. Evidence of student learning is also collected in the form of artwork, performance/presentations, photographs and video.

### Differentiated Instruction

Students come to school with varying learning abilities, academic levels, learning styles, and learning preferences and need tailored instruction to meet their unique needs (Bender, 2012). Differentiated instruction is a process of teaching and learning that allows teachers to proactively modify the curriculum,

teaching methods, resources, learning activities, and assessments to address the needs of individual students and to maximize student growth and individual success (Hillier, 2011). There are three key elements of the curriculum that can be differentiated:

- *Content* - The content element involves key facts, concepts, generalizations, principles, or skills that students must master and learn.
- *Process* - The process element involves activities in which the student engages in during instruction to make sense of, to understand, or to master key facts, concepts, generalizations, or skills of the subject.
- *Product* - The product element involves students demonstrating what they understand, what they have learned, or able to do as a result of instruction. Therefore, initial and on-going assessment of student readiness and growth are essential in this process (Bender, 2012; Cox, 2008).

Effective characteristics of differentiated instruction must include clear learning goals, ongoing assessments, and tasks that fosters critical thinking and collaboration among all students (Chamberlin & Powers, 2010). Successful practice with the use of differentiated instruction produces students who have a higher sense of self-efficacy, engagement, and passion for learning (Hillier, 2011). There are several key guidelines that faculty and teachers at FPC will follow to ensure effective implementation of differentiated instruction in the classroom:

- *Clarify key concepts and generalizations to ensure that all learners have gained a powerful understanding of concepts and skills taught.* This guideline serves as a foundation for future learning.
- *Use assessment as a teaching tool to complement instruction, rather than only to measure the effectiveness of instruction.* Assessment should occur before, during, and following the instructional episode, and help to pose questions regarding student needs and optimal learning.
- *Emphasize critical and creative thinking as a goal in lesson design.* Tasks and activities should be used to maximize students' understanding and application of concepts, principles, and objectives (Hall et al., 2003).
- *Engage all learners throughout the process of differentiated instruction.* Teachers are encouraged to strive for development of lessons and activities that are engaging and motivating for a diverse group of students. To engage learners, teachers can modify instruction to draw on students' interests, which has proven to have greater results in areas of student engagement, intrinsic motivation, productivity, autonomy, achievement, and sense of self-competence.
- *Provide a balance between teacher-assigned and student-selected tasks.* Teachers should assure that students have opportunities to provide input and make decisions in their learning for optimal growth and achievement (Cox, 2008; Hall et al. 2003).

### Contextual Learning

Contextual teaching and learning involve connecting academic content to the real world (Davtyan, 2014). Contextual teaching situates learning activities in real-life contexts to which students can relate, incorporating not only the content of a unit or lesson, but the reasons why learning should occur. In essence, this approach inspires students to make connections between the content that they are learning in class and their lives. Davtyan (2014) articulated that instruction based on contextual learning strategies should be structured to encourage five essential forms of learning:

- *Relating* - In this stage, teachers help students to link their knowledge with new information. This process encourages students to relate daily events that they see with the lessons that they learn.
- *Experiencing* - Students are able to engage in exploration and practice actions that are connected to real-life work. In other words, students are able to learn by experiencing.
- *Applying* - Students learn concepts in a useful situation. In this stage, students are able to apply



- concepts to real world experiences.
- *Cooperation* - Students learn in the context of sharing, responding, and communicating with each other throughout the learning process.
- *Transfer* - This stage builds on students' prior knowledge. For example, teachers encourage students to apply what they have learned to new situations and contexts.

### ***Primary Research-Based Assessment Strategies***

Ensuring that students are college and career ready requires not only an alignment of curriculum and instruction in the arts and academics with college and career standards, but also a differential approach to monitoring student progress with in-class formative assessments, summative assessments, predictive/diagnostic assessments, frequent interim assessments, and performance-based assessments. In this section, we provide an overview of the primary assessment strategies that will be implemented at the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy.

#### **Formative Assessment**

The primary goal of a formative assessment is to provide students and teachers with immediate, contextualized feedback about students' strengths and weaknesses (Starkman, 2006). Formative assessments are considered part of the instructional process and are intended to provide teachers with the information needed to modify instruction for maximizing student learning. (Myers, 2021). Although a formative assessment is not typically graded, it should occur on a regular basis for informing students about their progress and areas that they need improvement (Myers, 2021). Providing students with feedback about their strengths and weaknesses can motivate them to become more actively engaged in the learning process (Myers, 2021). Formative assessment is an intentional learning process that allows teachers and students to collaborate for purposes of gathering evidence of learning to improve student achievement (Moss & Brookhart, 2009). As Moss and Brookhart (2009) noted, formative assessments should involve various effective strategies for engaging and increasing student learning: (a) sharing learning targets and criteria for success, (b) feedback to improve student progress, (c) student goal setting, (d), student self-assessment, (e) teacher use of strategic questions, and (f) engaging students in asking effective questions. Examples of formative assessments include draft portfolios, ungraded quizzes, draft essays, and instructor questioning and observations (McTighe & O' Conner, 2005). Other examples of formative assessments may include reviewing homework and classwork for errors or misunderstandings, observing students as they solve problems or read. Instructors may also give students a pretest before the start of a new unit or chapter to determine students' existing knowledge and domains that the instructor may need to focus on more during instruction.

#### **Summative Assessment**

Summative assessments are intended to evaluate student knowledge, proficiency, and learning at the conclusion of an instructional program (Lissitz, 2013; Myers, 2021). Summative assessments are used to assess student proficiency relative to a full set of content standards in a grade or score format (Lissitz, 2013; Myers, 2021). These assessments are designed to support inferences about student growth and mastery of all content domains (Lissitz, 2013). Summative reports also provide teachers with information for developing a targeted plan for addressing topics that tend to be more challenging for students and to evaluate their own teaching practices for continuous improvement (Lissitz, 2013). Summative reports can be used to compare student scores and progress across subject areas or domains, which is beneficial when evaluating the effectiveness of curricula. The data from summative assessments can also be used to determine grade

promotion, graduation eligibility, awards, honors, and student rank (Myers, 2021). Examples of summative assessments include graded projects, art portfolios, AP exams, ACT exams, and senior recitals.

### Predictive/Diagnostic Assessment

Often predictive/diagnostic assessments, also known as pre-assessments, are designed to provide instructors with information about student's prior knowledge and misconceptions before beginning a learning activity (Myers, 2021). Because diagnostic reports can show specific student errors and level of understanding about various concepts, teachers are able to modify instruction to focus on those learning domains that may need more attention, which is necessary for improving student achievement (Myers, 2021). They can also help instructors plan their instruction and develop curricula by helping to determine whether or not classroom instruction is closely aligned with objectives, content standards, and federal and/or state high-stakes tests (Myers, 2021).

### Interim Assessment

Interim assessments, also known as benchmark or periodic tests, are given every four to nine weeks to check on students' progress (Marshall, 2008). Interim assessments are focused on student achievement and growth and require students to apply what they have learned over the course of several weeks (Marshall, 2008). Interim assessments can be more wide-ranging and rigorous and take the form of performance tasks and essays scored by rubrics, which can foster creativity and critical thinking among students (Marshall, 2008). Because reports of interim assessment data contain specific areas in which students are having difficulty with understanding, they can be used to identify students for systematic follow-up, including small group tutoring and focused interventions (Marshall, 2008). Teachers should also use the results to make instructional decisions about how they should plan for instruction to meet the needs of the entire cohort of students (Lissitz, 2013). Similarly, parents are able to use the results from interim assessments to track their child's academic growth throughout the school year (Lissitz, 2013).

### Performance-Based Assessment

Performance-based assessments are designed for observing students' demonstration of a skill, competency in creating a product, constructing a response, or making a presentation (McMillan, 2001). Performance-based assessments place emphasis on students' ability to apply what they have learned in the performance of a task or in the production of their work (McMillan, 2001). In other words, performance-based assessments require students to demonstrate their depth of knowledge and skill-set (Myers, 2021). This is accomplished in many ways, including writing exercises, completing mathematical computations, conducting experiments, or performing a complex musical piece. According to Myers (2021), there are five key categories of performance-based assessments that can be utilized for student learning:

- *Portfolios*: a collection of student work that represents a student's progress. This collection can also include drafts of student work to show the evolution of the project.
- *On-Demand Tasks*: this particular category requires students to answer an instructor's prompt or respond to a problem in a group setting.
- *Projects*: usually lasts longer than on-demand tasks and requires students to work in a group or individually.
- *Exhibitions*: presentations of student work are shared with the public or community.
- *Instructor Observations*: occur primarily to rate student performance and determine students' strengths and weaknesses.

A well-constructed performance-based assessment directly integrates assessment with instruction – the skills and concepts taught in class reflect the assessment and the assessment guides instruction (Scott, 2004). This approach allows opportunities for teachers to observe the processes that students use when responding to the task in the assessment. The development of performance-based assessments relies on the following procedures:

- Identification of the goals and objectives of instruction to form a basis for the assessment.
- Identification of a performance-based task in which students must demonstrate proficiency of content relevant to goals and objectives.
- Development of a rubric that outlines the aspects of the performance being assessed and levels of proficiency.
- Completion of the tasks by students.
- Application of the rubric to assess student’s performance.
- Revision of the objectives and goals referenced to the assessment, task, and rubric based on the results of the assessment (Scott, 2004).

### ***High Performing Using Data Culture***

To increase achievement among disadvantaged students, teachers and faculty must engage in data practices to build a high performing Using Data Culture. However, many schools across the U.S. do not properly engage in data-driven inquiry because they work in isolation, there is no time or structure provided for collaboration among staff, and they believe that only the “brightest” students can achieve at high levels (Love et al., 2008). To shift away from traditional data practices and toward those that build a high performing Using Data Culture, we will place emphasis on the following areas:

- *Leadership and Capacity* - create professional learning communities with many change agents; widespread data literacy among all staff.
- *Collaboration* - shared norms and values among faculty and staff; ongoing data-driven dialogue and collaborative inquiry; time and structure for collaboration.
- *Data Use* - data used as feedback for continuous improvement and to serve students; frequent and in-depth use by the entire school community.
- *Instructional Improvement* -align learning goals, instruction, and assessment; widespread application of research and best practice.
- *Culture* - internal responsibility as a driving force and focus on opportunities to learn for all.
- *Equity* - belief that all children are capable of high levels of achievement; culturally proficient responses to diversity
- *Trust* - relationships among faculty and staff will be based on trust, candid talk, and openness (Love et al., 2008).

The Using Data Process of Collaborative Inquiry at the Floretta P. Carson and Visual and Performing Arts Academy offers faculty and staff a structured process for ongoing investigation of data with the goal of improving student achievement (Love et al., 2008). Schools that implemented the Using Data Process narrowed the achievement gap between students with exceptional needs and general education students in all content areas and grade levels and tripled the percentage of disadvantaged students’ proficiency in core academic courses (Love et al., 2008).

### ***Effective Professional Development Opportunities***

The professional development opportunities provided at FPC VPAA will be ongoing and continuous

throughout the school year. These professional development opportunities, ranging from strategies of effective classroom management, project-based learning in AP classrooms, data driven instruction, character education, and mentoring youth, allows teachers and staff to engage in curricular and planning decisions before students step into the classroom. The leaders and faculty of Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy will engage in the ongoing process of evidence-based inquiry, learning, strategic goal setting, planning, implementation, and evaluation that aligns with the continuous improvement of student learning. To engage teachers in the aforementioned ongoing processes, it is necessary to engage in meaningful professional development opportunities where teachers and staff are considered as learners. Although state, local, and federal educational agencies mandate professional development opportunities to improve student achievement, they fail to recognize that professional development must also address the learning needs of teachers (Gregson & Sturko, 2007). In other words, professional development experiences for teachers are mostly content-centered rather than learner-centered (Gregson & Sturko, 2007). Through experience, teachers often complain about professional development content that is too theoretical and not usable in the classroom. It is necessary to create and implement practical strategies and ideas that teachers and faculty can immediately apply in their practice. Consequently, the professional development experience should be a venue for teachers to collectively articulate and address issues, problems, innovations, and/or reforms as they relate to classroom practice (Gregson & Sturko, 2007). Creating professional development opportunities that are learner-centered allows teachers to learn from their experiences, integrate knowledge, think reflectively, and use feedback for purposes of improving teaching skills and practices (Daley, 2003). When teachers are able to have learner-centered experiences in their professional development, they are more likely to engage in actions to develop learner-centered experiences for the students that they teach (Daley, 2003). When leaders view teachers through the lens as adult learners, they are able to shift the focus of professional development to the needs of teachers and the different contexts in which they learn and teach (Gregson & Sturko, 2007). This level of focus allows leaders to effectively plan, deliver, and evaluate professional development processes for optimal learning among teachers, which functions as a necessary component for the continuous improvement of the school and student achievement. Therefore, six principles will be used to guide our professional development planning for faculty and staff at FPC VPAA: Professional development should (a) create a climate in which participants feel respected; (b) encourage their active participation; (c) build on their experiences; (d) employ collaborative inquiry; (e) guide learning for immediate application; and (f) empower the participants through reflection and action based on their learning (Lawler & King, 2000, as cited in Lawler, 2003). Therefore, key components of an effective professional development at FPC VPAA will include the following tasks:

- (1) *Activity* – design activities which provide a learning experience (such as case studies, video clips, and role-plays) so participants can come to the right conclusions.
- (2) *Reflection* – facilitate reflection through individual, small group, or large group to allow participants to draw conclusions from the activity.
- (3) *Framing* – use the vocabulary of the new principles to frame the participants’ conclusions so they can share one common language.
- (4) *Applying* – provide opportunities for participants to apply the learning in simulated and real-world experiences (Jossey-Bass, 2010).

In addition to ensuring that processes are in place to support teachers' continuous learning, professional developers must also consider reflecting on their role in this endeavor. For example, at Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy, we will provide evaluation/reflection forms for teachers and staff to complete at the conclusion of a professional development experience. Leaders and facilitators will take on the task to review the evaluations/reflections for purposes of obtaining valuable feedback from attendees. Feedback provides the leadership team and professional developers with an understanding about what needs to be changed or kept for future events and how to plan for similar professional development opportunities. In other words, professional developers not only learn about the attendees’ strengths and weaknesses as it pertains to their delivery and implementation of instruction, but also the level/type of support needed as they incorporate the information and skills gained during the professional development experience into their daily teaching practices.

## Summary: Measurable Goals

Leaders, faculty, and staff at the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy are committed to ensuring that every student, regardless of background, language, or socioeconomic status are provided with the resources and supports needed to become successful throughout their journey at school and beyond. The implementation and development of an advanced arts program, advanced academic program, high quality teachers, college and career mentorship program, targeted intervention, small learning community, research-based instructional methods and strategies, and effective professional development are all vital components of the educational model at FPC VPAA for ensuring that students are successful for the rigors of higher education institutions and careers in the arts. Through the implementation of our unique/innovative college and career readiness arts education model, leaders, faculty, and staff at FPC VPAA are confident that we can meet our goals, which consists of a 100% graduation rate, 100% acceptance rate into two-year and four-year colleges and universities, and 100% of student populations scoring at proficient or above on the Alabama Comprehensive Assessment Program (ACAP) summative test. In addition, we are confident that we can close the achievement gap found between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students within the Mobile County area.

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## Attachments

### Section 1: Program Overview

– No Attachments –

## 2. Curriculum and Instructional Design

***1. Describe the basic learning environment (e.g., classroom-based, independent study), including class size and structure. Demonstrate alignment to the school's mission and vision.***

The mission of the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy is to educate a diverse community of students through a rigorous, pre-college and pre-professional level curriculum that will prepare them for post-secondary education and careers in the visual/performing arts. Our goal is to provide an equitable, safe, and creative learning environment where students are nurtured, inspired, and motivated to develop and fulfill their artistic skills and educational goals. Our vision is to close the achievement gap among disadvantaged students across Mobile County. The faculty and staff at FPC VPAA are committed to providing all students with rigorous, equitable, and inclusive learning opportunities through the implementation of our pre-collegiate and career-focused, Advanced Placement and Honors level curriculum, college and career mentorship program, targeted intervention blocks, and arts intensive program.

To achieve this vision, the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy learning environment will consist of small classes coupled with a low student-to-teacher ratio of 15:1. The small class size and low student-to-teacher ratio is possible with the inclusion of long-term adjunct instructors. With smaller class sizes and a low student-to-teacher ratio, students receive more individualized assistance from teachers, which is important for improving student achievement (Molnar et al., 2001). In addition to small class sizes and a low student-to-teacher ratio, all core academic and arts classes will be in a block format to provide students with more time for in-depth study, research, projects, and real-world transfer of learning. For example, students at FPC VPAA will have opportunities during class instruction to engage in face-to-face and virtual (e.g., ExploreLearning Gizmos) interactive math/science labs and simulations. For the arts intensive specialty program, students engage in pre-professional arts courses, which vary in content and day of the week. These courses are offered in the format of seminars, masterclasses, small-group, large-group, and labs, depending on students chosen arts specialty track. In addition, students also engage in small group or one-on-one tutoring, college and career mentoring, independent study/rehearsal hall, or other electives, depending on need and student goals during the school-wide intervention/enrichment block.

***2. Provide evidence of the proven methods used for the framework of instructional design and the planning of curriculum.***

To ensure that students are college and career ready, curriculum and instruction must be designed to engage students in higher-order thinking, promote transfer of learning, and provide a conceptual framework for helping students to make sense of discrete facts and skills. A highly effective curriculum provides teachers with a planning process and structure for the implementation of instruction that promotes equity, inclusiveness, and creativity, which is necessary for improving student achievement across grade levels and subject areas. To maximize growth among all learners, faculty and staff at the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy will utilize the *Understanding by Design* (UbD) curriculum and instructional framework. McTighe and Wiggins' (2005) UbD framework that will be utilized for instructional design and curriculum planning at FPC VPAA consists of seven key tenets for improving student achievement:

*Learning is enhanced when teachers think about curricula planning in a more in-depth and purposeful manner. Teachers must have a clear goal to help focus planning and to engage in purposeful action toward intended results. One way to engage in purposeful action is to ask*



thought-provoking questions about the intended results: (a) What must learners master in order to perform tasks effectively? (b) How can learners' capacities be developed through application and feedback? (c) What can count as effective evidence for the tasks performed? As a note, choices about teaching methods, learning activities, and resource materials can only be successfully implemented after the desired results and assessments have been specified.

*Curriculum and teaching must be focused on the development of student understanding and transfer of learning.* Students who learn with an understanding about tasks and concepts are more likely to apply and transfer their learning to solve real-world problems and a variety of challenging tasks than students who only memorize information from a text or a lecture. Thus, assessment for understanding must be grounded in authentic performance-based tasks. Authentic performance-based tasks are:

- *Realistically contextualized* – the task replicates or simulates the ways in which students' knowledge are tested in real-world settings
- *Requires judgement and innovation* – students use their knowledge and skills to address challenges and to solve problems.
- *Asks the student to “do” the subject* – instead of reciting through demonstration, students must explore and work in the field.
- *Replicates key challenging situations in which adults are truly “tested” in the workplace, in civic life, and in personal life* – students experience what it is like to perform tasks in the workplace and other real-life contexts.
- *Assesses students' ability to efficiently and effectively use a repertoire of knowledge and skill to negotiate a complex and multistage task.*
- *Allows opportunities to rehearse, practice, consult resources, and get feedback on and refine performances and products.*

*Understanding is developed and deepened when students can transfer their learning through authentic performance.* There are six facets that serve as indicators of understanding:

- *Explanation:* Students should be able to reveal a coherent grasp of a subject, show their work, and explain their reasoning about their views about a topic of discussion with credible evidence.
- *Interpretation:* Students should be able to effectively interpret art works, texts, musical repertoire, data, stories, or claims.
- *Application:* Students are able to employ their knowledge and skills in diverse, authentic, and realistic settings.
- *Perspective:* Students are able to place facts and theories in context, critique and take a critical stance about their position, and recognize underlying assumptions about an idea or theory.
- *Empathy:* The goal of this facet is for students to develop the capacity of understanding, appreciation, and consideration of other students' differences, similarities, perspectives, experiences, and ways of life. In this manner, students can avoid stereotyping and gain cultural competence.
- *Self-Knowledge:* In this facet, students are required to self-assess their past as well as their present work. That is, they are able to reflect on the meaning of their own learning and experiences. According to McTighe and Wiggins (2005), self-assessment allows teachers to gain the most complete insight into how accurate and sophisticated students' views are about the tasks, standards, and criteria that they must master

*Effective curriculum is planned backward from long-term, desired results through the following three-stage process:*

- *Stage 1: Identify Desired Results* - In this stage, teachers and instructional leaders consider goals (desired results), examine content standards (national, state, and district), and review curriculum expectations.
- *Stage 2: Determine Acceptable Evidence* – This stage requires teachers and instructional leaders

to collaborate and critically think about the types of evidence appropriate for validating student understanding and proficiency. More specifically, the backward design encourages teachers to utilize effective assessments as evidence to validate that the desired learning has been achieved.

- *Stage 3: Plan Learning Experiences and Instruction* – Once teachers and instructional staff have clearly identified the desired results and evidence needed to validate students understanding of content, they can begin to critically think about highly effective instructional activities for achieving the desired results. Several questions must be considered at this stage of the backward design: (a) What knowledge and skills will students need to possess in order to achieve the desired results? (b) What activities will help students to gain the needed knowledge and skills? (c) What will need to be taught and how should it be taught? (d) What materials and resources are needed to accomplish the identified goals?

*Teachers are coaches of understanding.* Through the UbD process, teachers must focus on ensuring that learning happens, not just teaching. Teachers must consistently check for student understanding and successful transfer of learning.

*Teachers review units and curriculum alongside the design standards on a regular basis to enhance curricular quality and effectiveness.* As shown in *Figure 1.3*, the UbD design standards corresponds with each stage of the backward design process. The UbD design standards offer criteria to use during the development and quality control of unit designs. As McTighe and Wiggins noted (2005), the quality of a curriculum or instructional design is invariably enhanced when educators collaborate to share feedback and provide suggestions for improvement. At the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy, educators will be provided with multiple planning periods throughout each week to collaborate for purposes of reviewing, sharing feedback, and evaluating the effectiveness of instructional and curricula designs.

## UbD Design Standards

### **Stage 1—To what extent does the design focus on the big ideas of targeted content?**

*Consider: Are . . .*

- The targeted understandings enduring, based on transferable, big ideas at the heart of the discipline and in need of uncoverage?
- The targeted understandings framed by questions that spark meaningful connections, provoke genuine inquiry and deep thought, and encourage transfer?
- The essential questions provocative, arguable, and likely to generate inquiry around the central ideas (rather than a “pat” answer)?
- Appropriate goals (e.g., content standards, benchmarks, curriculum objectives) identified?
- Valid and unit-relevant knowledge and skills identified?

### **Stage 2—To what extent do the assessments provide fair, valid, reliable, and sufficient measures of the desired results?**

*Consider: Are . . .*

- Students asked to exhibit their understanding through authentic performance tasks?
- Appropriate criterion-based scoring tools used to evaluate student products and performances?
- Various appropriate assessment formats used to provide additional evidence of learning?
- The assessments used as feedback for students and teachers, as well as for evaluation?
- Students encouraged to self-assess?

### **Stage 3—To what extent is the learning plan effective and engaging?**

*Consider: Will the students . . .*

- Know where they're going (the learning goals), why the material is important (reason for learning the content), and what is required of them (unit goal, performance requirements, and evaluative criteria)?
- Be hooked—engaged in digging into the big ideas (e.g., through inquiry, research, problem solving, and experimentation)?
- Have adequate opportunities to explore and experience big ideas and receive instruction to equip them for the required performances?
- Have sufficient opportunities to rethink, rehearse, revise, and refine their work based upon timely feedback?
- Have an opportunity to evaluate their work, reflect on their learning, and set goals?

*Consider: Is the learning plan . . .*

- Tailored and flexible to address the interests and learning styles of all students?
- Organized and sequenced to maximize engagement and effectiveness?

### **Overall Design—To what extent is the entire unit coherent, with the elements of all three stages aligned?**

*Figure 1.3*

*The UbD framework reflects a continual improvement approach to student achievement and teacher effectiveness.* The results of the design process inform curricular decisions and instruction for maximizing student achievement. At FPC VPAA, educators will engage in continuous ongoing professional development and collaborative planning to refine, reflect, and share feedback about curricula and instructional designs and practices for the continuous improvement of student achievement.

The UbD framework challenges teachers and instructional leaders to focus on the desired learning at the start of the instructional and curriculum designing process. Through the UbD process, the curriculum is more than a traditional guide for educators; instead, it specifies the most effective assessments, assignments, and activities that can be used for achieving the desired learning goals. Curricula created with a focus on the desired results clarifies what students should achieve upon completing a unit or program, what students need

do to achieve, and what educators need to do to achieve the results sought. To improve student achievement, lessons, units, and courses at the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy will be inferred from the desired results sought, rather than being derived only from preexisting curricula, books, activities, or methods. The UbD process of backward designing helps avoid common problems of treating textbooks and instructional programs as the curriculum rather than as a resource. As McTighe and Wiggins (2005) noted, educators must specify the desired results in order to focus on the content, methods, and activities most likely to achieve those results. The UbD backward design process also helps teachers to create concrete and specific assessments that align with goals and standards during the planning of a unit or course, rather than at the conclusion of a unit of study.

**3. Provide an overview of the planned curriculum, including, as Attachment 2, 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.**

The Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy offers a rigorous college and career readiness curriculum that provides students with the skills necessary to succeed at higher education institutions and to be successful in their chosen arts field of study. To ensure that all students are prepared for college and careers in the arts, all core academic and arts courses are taught at an advanced and honors level. ***Recent research indicates that providing an advanced enriched curriculum and scaffolding for higher-level thinking and questioning skills—a gifted curriculum rather than remediation—has shown to be more successful in raising the academic achievement of learners of varying ability and socioeconomic levels (Gavin et al., 2009).*** To provide all students at FPC VPAA with an advanced and honors level start in middle grades, students learn more than grade level standards each year to be prepared for Advanced and Honors courses at the high school level. In other words, 6<sup>th</sup> grade students at FPC not only master the content required in the state’s 6<sup>th</sup> grade standards, but they also master much of what a typical 7<sup>th</sup> grade student learns. By starting at a modest 6<sup>th</sup> grade level and requiring students to learn more than a year’s worth of standards every year, we prepare our students to take either Honors or AP level courses beginning in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. At many schools across the U.S., AP and Honors level courses are reserved only for the highest performing students – usually juniors and seniors, but at FPC VPAA all students take their first AP or Honors level course in 9<sup>th</sup> grade, a full three years before most of their peers. With our accelerated academic program, students are not only able to take AP and Honors level courses beginning in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, but also dual enrollment courses with the University of South Alabama (USA), University of Alabama (UA), and Coastal Alabama Community Colleges to receive college credit. Because of our rigorous model, all high school students are able to take higher level courses, regardless of their grade level. For example, a 9<sup>th</sup> grade student may choose to take a 10<sup>th</sup> grade course such as AP English Language and Composition or AP English Literature and Composition if they have met all prerequisite requirements. All high school students are required to take 4 AP exams before they graduate, at least one in English, Math, Science, and Social Sciences, and score a 3 or higher on at least one exam in either subject. High school students also have the option to participate in the AP Capstone™ Diploma Program, which is based on two yearlong courses (AP Seminar and AP Research) to develop students’ skills in research, analysis, writing, presenting, and evidence-based arguments. To qualify for the Advanced Placement Capstone Diploma, students must take and pass at least one of four (4) Advanced Placement tests with a score of 3 or higher and pass AP Seminar and AP Research. Beginning in 7<sup>th</sup> grade, students will be offered ACT Prep courses to learn about test-taking strategies and skills necessary for obtaining a high score on the ACT test. Students will be required to take the preACT test during their 10<sup>th</sup> grade year and the actual ACT test during their 11<sup>th</sup> grade year. Practice and actual ACT will be offered on-campus during after-school hours.

The college and career readiness curriculum not only accelerates mastery in academic and arts content areas, but also remediates student’s learning gaps. Students with academic needs upon entering the school are provided with a strong support system, which includes one-on-one tutoring, small group intervention, and mentors. Teachers also use the *iLit ELL* program to support ELL students with their transition to English language proficiency, which is necessary for optimal learning and achievement across all subject areas. The *iLit ELL* program contains lessons and modules to support newly arrived students with extremely limited

English ability. The lessons focus on various skills such as how to introduce themselves to other students or vocabulary for names of common classroom objects. In addition to a strong support system to accelerate mastery of content and to remediate learning gaps, teachers create standards-based assessments using the UbD framework. Educators meet for five days in July to analyze diagnostic data gathered from the *Stanford 10* online achievement test that students take after enrollment. During summer training, teachers use the UbD framework templates to align curricula, lessons, activities, and assessments with state standards and SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time bound) goals to meet the needs of all students enrolled. Educators will utilize the data to drive instruction, to determine student course placement, refine curricula and teaching practices—which functions as necessary components of the data-driven process. At the middle school level, interim assessments, pre-comprehensive exams, comprehensive exams, Stanford 10 exams, and ACAP (Alabama Comprehensive Assessment Program) are used to establish specific, rigorous, and measurable school standards. At the high school level, interim assessments, pre-comprehensive assessments, Stanford 10, ACT, ACAP, and Advanced Placement exams are used to inform our college preparatory curriculum.

### **Learners Exploring Advanced Possibilities (LEAP)**

Although FPC VPAA provides a rigorous and accelerated program for all students, we acknowledge the fact that some students may be ready to take higher level courses in certain disciplines at the middle school and high school level. In order to provide students with options to be challenged and to excel at a faster pace in the academic and arts, FPC VPAA offers LEAP courses in all disciplines. To be eligible for the LEAP program, students must apply for entry into the course and the application must be accepted by the LEAP course teacher. Students may apply for the LEAP program at the end of 6<sup>th</sup> grade to be eligible to start the program in 7<sup>th</sup> grade or at the end of 7<sup>th</sup> grade to be eligible to start in 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Teachers may also recommend students with Advanced Learning Plans (ALP) for the LEAP program. Students who enter the school at any point after the 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> grade year can still apply; however, they must take a comprehensive exam for the selected course to ensure that they understand the concepts needed to pass the chosen LEAP course. To continue in the LEAP program, students must maintain an acceptable overall GPA throughout all subjects (a minimum of C in all subjects on first semester and second semester grade reports).

### **Math Curriculum**

To ensure that students are on the Advanced Placement and Honors track by their 9<sup>th</sup> grade year, Algebra I and Geometry (LEAP program) courses are offered at the junior high school level (grades 7–8), respectively, for high school credit and to meet graduation requirements. This is possible because 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade students take accelerated math courses. In this pathway, students meet the standards for Grade 6, Grade 7, and Grade 8 within the Grade 6 Accelerated and Grade 7 Accelerated courses, thus merging all the standards from three years of mathematics into two years. In *Grade 6* accelerated, the content is organized into seven content areas: Ratios, Rates, and Proportions; Areas; Fractions and Decimals; Equations and Expressions; Proportional Relationships; Rational Numbers; and Data Sets and Distributions. In *Grade 7* accelerated, the content is organized into eight content areas: Rigid Transformations and Congruence; Scale Drawings, Similarity, and Slope; Writing and Solving Equations; Inequalities, Expressions, and Equations; Linear Relationships; Functions and Volume; Exponents and Scientific Notation; and Pythagorean Theorem and Irrational Numbers. This accelerated approach allows our students to take Algebra I in 8<sup>th</sup> grade and options for taking multiple advanced math courses during high school such as Honors Algebra II, AP Statistics, AP Calculus AB, AP Calculus BC, AP Computer Science Principles, and multiple dual enrollment math courses.

### **English Curriculum**

Middle grades educators use the pre-AP English framework to create course units and lessons to align with the AP English Language and AP English Literature courses offered at the high school level. Course alignment at the middle school level is necessary for students' success at the high school level. In the middle

grades accelerated English courses, students learn to correctly use common, proper, and possessive nouns in writing and presentations; develop voice or style of writing with word choice and sentence structure to convey meaning; and engage in collaborative discussions to build upon the ideas of others and to express their own ideas; students read and analyze how authors express point of view in nonfiction narrative; expand knowledge and use of academic and thematic vocabulary; write nonfiction narratives; collaborate with team to develop or build on ideas; conduct research projects of various lengths to explore a topic and clarify meaning; and integrate audio, visuals, and text in presentations; read and analyze how authors discuss a cause, event, or condition that produces a specific result, write argumentative essays with the incorporation of key elements of an argument; demonstrate command of the conventions of English grammar and usage, including correct usage of nouns, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, clauses, and sentence structure; read short fiction; compose analytical sentences and paragraphs; and explore the work of poets, performers, and dramatists. The content areas and topics exceeds Alabama's English course standards for both middle and high school.

### **Science Curriculum**

Our middle grades science curriculum prepares our students to be successful in advanced courses at the high school level. In *Grade 6* accelerated, the content is organized into seven content areas: Microbiome; Metabolism; Traits and Reproduction; Thermal Energy; Ocean, Atmosphere, and Climate; Weather Patterns; and Earth's Changing Climate. In *Grade 7* accelerated, the content is organized into the following key areas with a focus on Life Sciences (1<sup>st</sup> semester) and Biology (2<sup>nd</sup> semester): Geology on Mars; Plate Motion; Rock Transformations; Phase Change; Chemical Reactions; Populations and Resources; Matter and Energy in Ecosystems; Cellular Systems; and Genetics. In the *Grade 8* accelerated science course, the content is organized into the following areas with a focus on Physical Science (1<sup>st</sup> semester) and Chemistry (2<sup>nd</sup> semester): Harnessing Human Energy; Force and Motion; Magnetic Fields; Light Waves; Earth, Moon, and Sun; Natural Selection; Evolutionary History; Structure and Properties of Matter; Chemical Bonding and Interactions; Chemical Quantities; and Chemical Transformations. Each of the content areas deepen and expand students' knowledge with relevance to high school advanced science courses. Because our 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade accelerated science courses integrate key concepts of biology and chemistry, students are able to follow an advanced curriculum path at the high school level that consists of course offerings such as AP Biology, AP Environmental Science, and AP Chemistry. In this pathway, high school students are also able to take AP Physics 1: Algebra-Based, AP Physics 2: Algebra-Based, and AP Physics C: Electricity and Magnetism.

### **Social Studies Curriculum**

The ultimate goal of the middle grades program is to ensure that students are prepared to take multiple advanced courses such as AP World History, AP United States History, AP Human Geography, AP Microeconomics, and AP Macroeconomics at the high school level. In order to prepare students for advanced level high school courses, students must be familiar with key content areas of these subjects at the middle school level. Therefore, the *Grade 6* accelerated social studies content is organized with a focus on the following key areas: Industrial and Economic Growth (1865–1914); The Progressive Era (1865–1920); Imperialism and World War I (1853–1919); Prosperity and Depression (1919–1939); World War II (1935–1945); Postwar America (1945–1975); A Global Superpower Facing Change (1975–2000); and Meeting New Challenges (1975–present). In *Grade 7* accelerated, the following content is organized with a focus on World Geography (1<sup>st</sup> semester) and Civics (2<sup>nd</sup> semester): The United States and Canada; Middle America; South America; Europe; Northern Eurasia; Africa; Southwest Asia; South Asia; East Asia; Southeast Asia; Australia and the Pacific; Foundations of Citizenship; Creating a Lasting Government; The Federal Government; State and Local Government; Foundations of Economics; Government and the Economy; and The American Legal System. In *Grade 8* accelerated, the content is organized in the following key areas: Origins of Civilization (Prehistory–4000 BCE); Civilizations and Peoples of the Fertile Crescent (3400 BCE–70 CE); Ancient Egypt and Kush (3000 BCE–600 BCE); Early Civilizations of India (3100 BCE–540 CE); Early Civilizations of China (1700 BCE–220 CE); Ancient Greece (2000 BCE–300

BCE); The Roman Republic (800 BCE–30 BCE); The Roman and Byzantine Empires (30 BCE–1453 CE); Life in Medieval Christendom (486–1300); Struggle in Medieval Europe (962–1492); The Islamic World and South Asia (610–1550); Civilizations of East Asia and Southeast Asia (250 BCE–1644 CE); Civilizations of the Americas (Prehistory–1533 CE); African Civilizations (300–1591); The Renaissance and Reformation (1300–1648); Global Convergence (1415–1763); Absolutism and Enlightenment (1516–1796); A Revolutionary Era (1770–1914); The Modern World (1914–Present).

### **Arts Intensive Curriculum**

Our intensive, college and career ready visual and performing arts program allows students to cultivate their skills and creative talents in art, dance, theatre, and music. The arts programs at FPC VPAA provides students with collegiate level experiences such as small group/one-on-one lessons, artistic collaboration, masterclasses, seminars, and performances. Our innovative arts program allows students to take multiple intensive arts courses during the school day to develop and sharpen their artistic skills for preparation for early careers in the arts and higher education institutions. Unlike traditional schools, the FPC VPAA arts education program higher-level courses are equivalent to first-year college courses, which exceeds Alabama's Arts Education Course Standards. The arts education curriculum at FPC VPAA not only cultivates students' unique creative skills, but also provides students with opportunities to collaborate across disciplines, to study with well-known professional artists in their field of study, and to perform, publish, or exhibit their artwork.

***4. If the curriculum is fully developed, summarize curricular choices, such as textbook selection, by subject, and the rationale for each. Describe the evidence that these curricula will be appropriate and effective for the targeted students.***

Following the UbD process of backward designing, educators use preexisting curricula as a resource to complement their learning units and lessons with a focus on the desired results. In selecting curricula, we have identified programs that have been rated all-green on EdReports and can be easily adapted for ELL students and those with special needs. We also use the Advanced Placement curriculum at the high school level to provide all students with the opportunity to take college-level courses and to earn college credit. The Advanced Placement curricula at the high school level exceeds Alabama's standards for math, science, English, and social studies. Multiple researchers have shown that Advanced Placement courses not only exceeds state standards, but also have a positive impact on the achievement of disadvantaged students (Burton, 2002; Heinrich, 2004). More specifically, students who take AP courses and exams have higher college GPA's, earn more college credits, and higher four-year graduation rates than non-AP students (Hargrove, Godin, & Dodd, 2008). Therefore, beginning in 6th grade, students take pre-AP and pre-Honors level courses to be prepared to take Honors and AP level courses starting in 9th grade and throughout high school. For science, middle grades educators use the Amplify Science (6-8) curriculum, which met EdReports expectations in areas of usability, standards, coherence and scope, and NGSS design. The Amplify Science curriculum is designed with literacy-rich activities, hands-on activities, and digital tools to promote student success. At the high school level, educators use the Advanced Placement (9-12) Biology, Environmental Science, Chemistry, Physics 1: Algebra-Based, Physics 2: Algebra-Based, and Physics C: Electricity and Magnetism curricula. For math, middle grades educators use the Learn Zillion Illustrative Mathematics curriculum, which received a perfect score on EdReports in the areas of usability, rigor, standards, and coherence. At the high school level, educators use the LearnZillion Illustrative Mathematics curriculum for Geometry and Algebra II courses and the Advanced Placement curriculum for Statistics, Calculus AB, Calculus BC, and Computer Science Principles courses. For English, middle grades educators use the MyPerspectives ELA curriculum, which also received a perfect score by EdReports in areas of rigor, usability, and coherence. At the high school level, educators use the MyPerspectives curriculum and the Advanced Placement English Literature and English Language curricula. For social studies, middle grades educators use the *Savvas Civic: Government and Economics in Action* and *Savvas MyWorld Interactive World History, American History, and World Geography* curricula. The *Savvas* curriculum meets Alabama's social studies standards for grades 6-8. At the high school level, educators use the Advanced Placement World History, United States History, Human Geography, Microeconomics, and

Macroeconomics curricula. The rigorous academic curricula at FPC VPAA ensures that students are prepared to succeed at higher education institutions.

In addition to the academic curriculum, the arts intensive curriculum consists of multiple course offerings for each discipline. The curricular choices for the arts programming exceeds Alabama’s middle and high school standards for music, dance, theatre, and visual arts. Below find an outline of arts course offerings and rationale for curricular choices:

Major Course Offerings	Curricular Choices/Rationale
<b><i>School of Music</i></b>	
<b><i>Music Theory and Skills</i></b>	<p><b><i>Tonal Harmony</i></b> (Kostka, 8<sup>th</sup> ed.) provides students with the knowledge and skills necessary for <i>success in AP Music Theory</i>. Further, <i>Tonal Harmony exceeds Alabama’s advanced music: composition and theory standards for grades 9-12 and is equivalent to an introductory college-level music theory course</i>. Through this curriculum, students learn about the elements of pitch, elements of rhythm, triads and seventh chords, diatonic chords in major and minor keys, principles of voice leading, root position part writing, harmonic progression, triads in first inversion, triads in second inversion, cadences, phrases, and sentences, two-part tonal counterpoint, nonchord tones, diatonic seventh chords, secondary functions, modulations using diatonic chords, modulatory techniques, binary and ternary forms, mode mixture and the neopolitan, augmented sixth chords, enharmonic spellings and modulations, and post-tonal theory.</p> <p><b><i>Music for Sight Singing</i></b> (Nancy Rogers, 10<sup>th</sup> ed.) provides students with exercises for ear training and to practice sight singing. Topics range from the introduction of minor keys to chromaticism. <i>Music for Sight Singing exceeds Alabama’s music: composition and theory standards for grades 9-12 and is also equivalent to an introductory college level music theory course</i>.</p>
<b><i>AP Music Theory</i></b>	<p><b>The AP Music Theory curriculum provides students with a comprehensive approach to aural analysis, score analysis, sight-singing, dictation, and composition. AP Music Theory</b></p>



	<p><i>exceeds Alabama’s music: composition and theory standards for grades 9-12 and is equivalent to a first-year college level music theory course.</i></p>
<p><b>Trumpet Masterclass</b></p>	<p><i>Jean-Baptiste Arban Complete Conservatory Method for Trumpet</i> provides students with a comprehensive approach to slurring or legato playing, ornaments, scales, tonguing, and the art of phrasing. This curriculum helps students to develop a deeper understanding of the idiosyncrasies of the trumpet for improving performance. Further, the <i>curriculum exceeds Alabama’s Music: Traditional and Emerging Ensembles standards for grades 6-12.</i></p>
<p><b>French Horn Masterclass</b></p>	<p><i>Daily Routines for the Student Horn Player (Marian Hesse)</i> provides beginner to advanced level players with a comprehensive approach to long tones, buzzing, lip slurs, accuracy and dynamics changes, articulation, and high and low playing. <i>This curriculum exceeds Alabama’s Music: Traditional and Emerging Ensembles standards for grades 6-12.</i></p>
<p><b>Trombone Masterclass</b></p>	<p><i>Jean-Baptiste Arban Method for Trombone</i> provides students with a comprehensive approach to slurring or legato playing, ornaments, scales, double and triple tonguing, and the art of phrasing. This curriculum helps students to develop a deeper understanding of the idiosyncrasies of the trombone and baritone for improving performance. Further, the <i>curriculum exceeds Alabama’s Music: Traditional and Emerging Ensembles standards for grades 6-12.</i></p>
<p><b>Baritone/Euphonium Masterclass</b></p>	<p><i>Jean-Baptiste Arban Method for Baritone</i> provides students with a comprehensive approach to slurring or legato playing, ornaments, scales, double and triple tonguing, and the art of phrasing. This curriculum helps students to develop a deeper understanding of the idiosyncrasies of the trombone and baritone for improving performance. Further, the <i>curriculum exceeds Alabama’s Music: Traditional and Emerging Ensembles standards for grades 6-12.</i></p>
	<p><i>Jean-Baptiste Arban Complete Method for Tuba</i> provides students with a comprehensive approach to embouchure, articulation, intonation, slurring or legato playing, ornaments, scales, double and triple tonguing, and the art of phrasing. This</p>

<p><b><i>Tuba Masterclass</i></b></p>	<p>curriculum helps students to develop a deeper understanding of the idiosyncrasies of the tuba for improving performance. Further, the <i>curriculum exceeds Alabama’s Music: Traditional and Emerging Ensembles standards for grades 6-12.</i></p>
<p><b><i>Flute Masterclass</i></b></p>	<p><b><i>Trevor Wye’s Practice Book for the Flute</i></b> provides students with a comprehensive approach to Tone, Technique, Articulation, Intonation and Vibrato, Breathing and Scales, and Advanced Practice. <i>This curriculum exceeds Alabama’s Music: Traditional and Emerging Ensembles standards for grades 6-12.</i></p>
<p><b><i>Clarinet Masterclass</i></b></p>	<p><b><i>C. Baerman Complete Method for Clarinet</i></b> provides students with a comprehensive approach to trill rules, embellishments and ornaments, breathing, technique, scales, and slurs. <i>This curriculum exceeds Alabama’s Music: Traditional and Emerging Ensembles standards for grades 6-12.</i></p>
<p><b><i>Piano Masterclass</i></b></p>	<p><b><i>Oscar Beringer Daily Technical Studies for Piano</i></b> provides students with a comprehensive approach to finger studies with progressive movements, scale passages, chord passages, crossing and changing hands, and scales and arpeggios. <i>This curriculum exceeds Alabama’s Music: Traditional and Emerging Ensembles standards for grades 6-12.</i></p>
<p><b><i>Saxophone Masterclass</i></b></p>	<p><b><i>Modern Saxophone Techniques (Frank Catalano)</i></b> provides students with a comprehensive approach to embouchure formation, reed placement and strength, air stream, neck position, mouthpiece position and tuning, cross tonguing, altissimo fingering, vowel throat positions, split tones, sub-tones, intervals, melodies, chord progressions, and bass lines. <i>This curriculum exceeds Alabama’s Music: Traditional and Emerging Ensembles standards for grades 6-12.</i></p>
<p><b><i>Percussion Masterclass</i></b></p>	<p><b><i>Alfred’s Drum Method Complete (Sandy Feldstein and Dave Black)</i></b> provides students with a comprehensive approach to various playing techniques and drum rudiments for the cymbals, bass drum, and snare drum.</p> <p><b><i>Primary Handbook for Timpani (Garwood Whaley)</i></b> provides students with a comprehensive approach to tuning studies and technical studies to develop rolls, staccato, muffling, and cross-sticking.</p>

	<p><i>The Alfred's Drum Method Complete and Primary Handbook for Timpani</i> curricula exceeds Alabama's Music: Traditional and Emerging Ensembles standards for grades 6-12.</p>
<p><i>Strings Masterclass</i></p>	<p><i>Habits of a Successful String Musician (Christopher Selby)</i> is a comprehensive curriculum that contains carefully sequenced warm-ups, sight-reading etudes, rhythm vocabulary builders, and chorales for development of tone quality and musicianship. <i>This curriculum exceeds Alabama's Music: Traditional and Emerging Ensembles standards for grades 6-12.</i></p>
<p><i>Vocal Technique - Diction</i></p>	<p><i>Alfred's IPA Made Easy</i> guidebook helps students to develop and become familiar with the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), through attaching IPA symbols to spoken and sung phonemes in English, Italian, and German (three of the primary languages in classical vocal literature).</p> <p><i>The Gateway to Italian Diction, Gateway to French Diction, and Gateway to German Diction</i> curricula goes deeper than diction concepts with the inclusion of phonetic concepts, orthography, oral and nasal vowels, vowel harmonization, diphthongs, semivowels, consonants, and syllables.</p> <p><i>American Diction for Singers (Geoffrey Forward)</i> provides singers with a comprehensive approach to gain control by eliminating vocal tension and poor diction.</p> <p><i>The Alfred's IPA Made Easy, Gateway to Italian Diction, Gateway to French Diction, Gateway to German Diction, and</i></p>

	<p><i>American Diction for Singers</i> curricula exceeds Alabama's <i>Music: Traditional and Emerging Ensembles – Advanced standards for grades 6-12.</i></p>
<p><b>Vocal Technique – Contemporary Voice</b></p>	<p><b><i>The Contemporary Singer: Elements of Vocal Technique</i></b> provides students with a comprehensive approach to breath management, the larynx, enhancing tone quality, vocal registers and blending, diction, vocal health, and performing. <i>This curriculum exceeds Alabama's Music: Traditional and Emerging Ensembles – Advanced standards for grades 6-12.</i></p> <p><b><i>Vocal Workouts for the Contemporary Singer</i></b> (Anne Peckham) provides students with a comprehensive approach to vibrato, vocal registers, belting, breathing, posture, and vocal care.</p> <p>The <i>Contemporary Singer: Elements of Vocal Technique</i> and <i>Vocal Workouts for the Contemporary Singer</i> curricula exceeds Alabama's <i>Music: Traditional and Emerging Ensembles – Advanced standards for grades 6-12.</i></p>
<p><b>Vocal Technique – Jazz Voice</b></p>	<p><b>Jazz Vocal Improvisation: An Instrumental Approach</b> ( <i>Mili Bermejo</i>) provides students with a comprehensive approach to jazz vocal sounds and syllables, improving over a 12-bar blues form, functional harmony, melodic embellishments, tensions and chord scales, analyzing chord progressions, and improvising on non-diatonic chords and tensions. <i>This course exceeds Alabama's Music: Harmonizing Instruments and Composition and Theory standards for grades 6-12.</i></p>
	<p>The <i>Exploring Jazz Piano</i> (Tim Richard) curriculum covers topics such as chord/scale relationships, modes, broken chords and scale patterns, pentatonic and blues scales, walking bass lines, Latin rhythms and bass lines, the diatonic cycle, secondary dominants, horizontal and vertical improvisation,</p>

***Jazz Piano***

tritone substitution, rootless voicings, technical exercises and fingering, and ear-training. This curriculum provides an intermediate pianist with the skills needed to be a successful jazz player.

***The Standards Real Book*** provides students with a pedagogical approach to 20<sup>th</sup> century jazz standard songs, jazz ornaments and symbols, abbreviations, and chord symbols.

***The Exploring Jazz Piano and Standards Real Book curricula exceeds Alabama’s Music: Harmonizing Instruments – Advanced standards for grades 6-12.***

***Jazz Composition and Improvisation***

***Jazz Arranging and Composing: A Linear Approach (Bill Dobins)*** provides students with a comprehensive approach to intervals, substitution and function, voicing and connecting chords, pentatonic and blues scale, developing improvisational skills, transcribing solos. ***This curriculum exceeds Alabama’s music: composition and theory standards for grades 6-12.***

***Symphonic Band***

***Foundation for Superior Performance (Jeff King and Richard Williams)*** is a comprehensive curriculum of warm-ups, scales, technical patterns, chord studies, and tuning chorales for concert band.

***Habits of a Successful Musician (Rich Moon and Scott Rush)*** provides students with a comprehensive approach to sequenced warm-ups, sight-reading etudes, and rhythm vocabulary builders.

The ***Foundation for Superior Performance*** and ***Habits of a Successful Musician*** curricula exceeds Alabama’s Music: Traditional and Emerging Ensembles standards for grades 6-12.

***Habits of a Successful String Musician (Christopher Selby)*** is a comprehensive curriculum that contains carefully

***String Orchestra***

sequenced warm-ups, sight-reading etudes, rhythm vocabulary builders, and chorales for development of tone quality and musicianship.

*This course exceeds Alabama's Music: Traditional and Emerging Ensembles standards for grades 6-12.*

***Concert Choir***

*Habits of a Successful Choral Musician* (Scott Rush and Eric Wilkinson) provides students with a pedagogical approach to warm-ups, chorales, tonal patterns, tuning, sight-reading, rhythm work, theory exercises, and suggestions for improving vocal techniques. *This curriculum exceeds Alabama's Music: Traditional and Emerging Ensembles standards for grades 6-12.*

***Music Technology***

*Foundations of Music Technology with accompanying FMT software* (V. J. Manzo) introduces students to core concepts of music technology its uses as a mechanism to facilitate musicianship. The text uses a customized software application to demonstrate fundamental concepts of music technology for all professional applications like recording, synthesis, digital notation, MIDI, automating effects, and acoustics. *This curriculum exceeds Alabama's Music: Technology standards for grades 6-12.*

***School of Theatre***

***Acting Fundamentals***

*Acting in Musical Theatre: A Comprehensive Course* (Joe Deer and Rocco Dal Vera) covers topics such as fundamentals of acting in musical theatre, acting basics, score and libretto analysis and structure, discovering phrasing, staging your song, rehearsal into performance, and styles in musical theatre.

***Theatre: Art in Action (Robert Strickland and Robert Taylor)*** provides students with hands-on performance-based exercises for the roles of actor, director, designers, technician, producer, stage crew, and publicist to gain a comprehensive understanding of theatre as an art form.

*Acting in Musical Theatre: A Comprehensive Course and Theatre: Art in Action* curricula exceeds Alabama's Theatre standards for grades 6-12.

***Musical Theatre History***

***Musical Theatre: A History (John Kenrick)*** provides students with a comprehensive history of stage musicals from the 1840s all the way up to Andrew Lloyd Webber and Broadway.

***Introduction to Theatre Arts Student Handbook: A 36-Week Action Handbook (Suzi Zimmerman)*** introduces students to all the basics of theatre history, play production, performing, and finding a career in theatre.

*Acting in Musical Theatre: A History and Introduction to Theatre Arts Handbook* curricula exceeds Alabama's Theatre standards for grades 6-12.

All Musical Theatre majors are expected to enroll in one or more of the following dance courses each year:

- ***Musical Theatre***

The ***Beginning Musical Theatre Dance: Interactive Dance Series (Gayle Kassing)*** introduces students enrolled in their first musical theatre dance course to techniques, steps, and practices to prepare them for a future of on-stage performances.

- ***Ballet***

The ***Beginning Ballet Interactive Dance Series (Gayle Kassing)*** curriculum details etiquette, class

***Musical Theatre Dance***

expectations, health and injury prevention and explores ballet's history, major artists, styles, and aesthetics.

○ ***Hip Hop***

***Beginning Hip-Hop Dance (E. Moncell Durdan)*** introduces students to hip-hop technique and assists students in cultivating an appreciation of hip-hop dance as a performing art.

○ ***Jazz***

The ***Beginning Jazz Dance: Interactive Dance Series (Gayle Kassing)*** introduces students to jazz technique and assists students in cultivating an appreciation of jazz dance as a performing art. This curriculum provides students with a comprehensive approach to etiquette, class expectations, health and injury prevention for dancers, history, major artists, styles, and aesthetics.

○ ***Tap***

The ***Beginning Tap Dance: Interactive Dance Series (Gayle Kassing)*** introduces students to tap dance technique and assists students in cultivating an appreciation of tap dance as a performing art. This curriculum provides students with a comprehensive approach to etiquette, class expectations, health and injury prevention for dancers, history, major artists, styles, and aesthetics.

*The Beginning Musical Theatre Dance, Beginning Ballet, Beginning Hip-Hop, Beginning Jazz Dance, and Beginning Tap Dance curricula exceeds Alabama's Theatre and Dance standards for grades 6-12.*

***Production and Design***

***Theatrical Design and Production: An Introduction to Scene Design and Construction, Lighting, Sound, Costume, and Makeup (Gillette and Dionne, 8<sup>th</sup> ed.)*** provides students with a comprehensive approach to technical and design aspects of play production, including scene design and construction, lighting, sound, costume, and makeup. *This curriculum exceeds Alabama's Theatre standards for grades 6-12.*

***The Singer's Musical Theatre Anthology (Walters)*** provides a comprehensive selection of theatre literature for singing actors.



<p><i>Musical Theatre Voice</i></p>	<p><i>American Diction for Singers</i> (Geoffrey Forward) provides singers with a comprehensive approach to gain control by eliminating vocal tension and poor diction.</p> <p><i>The Singer’s Musical Theatre Anthology and American Diction for Singers</i> curricula exceeds Alabama’s Music: <i>Harmonizing Instruments and Theatre</i> standards for grades 6-12.</p>
<p><i>Stagecraft</i></p>	<p><i>Exploring Theatre</i> (McGraw Hill) explores aspects of performance skills and techniques, production process, directing and producing, technical production, and set construction.</p> <p><i>Stagecraft 1: A Complete Guide to Backstage Work</i> (Williams Lord) provides students with a comprehensive approach to production facilities, operations, methods, and techniques used in a school theatre.</p> <p><i>The Exploring Theatre and Stagecraft 1: A Complete Guide to Backstage Work</i> curricula exceeds Alabama’s Theatre standards for grades 6-12.</p>
<p><i>School of Dance</i></p>	
<p><i>Dance and the Alexander Technique</i></p>	<p><i>Dance and the Alexander Technique</i> (Nettl-Fiol and Vanier) provides students with a subset of principles called Dart Procedures proven effective for enhancing performance and improving health and well-being. <i>This curriculum exceeds Alabama’s Dance standards for grades 6-12.</i></p>
<p><i>Dance History</i></p>	<p><i>History of Dance</i> (Gayle Kassing, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) offers students a panoramic view of dance from prehistory to the present. The text covers dance forms, designs, artists, costumes, performing spaces, and accompaniments throughout the centuries and around the globe. <i>This curriculum exceeds Alabama’s Dance standards for grades 6-12.</i></p>
	<p><i>Beginning Modern Dance</i> (Miriam Giguere) introduces students to tap dance technique and assists students in cultivating an appreciation of tap dance as a performing art. This curriculum provides students with a comprehensive</p>

***Modern Dance Technique***

approach to etiquette, class expectations, health and injury prevention for dancers, history, major artists, styles, and aesthetics. *This curriculum exceeds Alabama's Dance standards for grades 6-12.*

***Ballet Dance Technique***

***Building Ballet Technique: 110 Progressive Teaching Combinations for Center Floor (Marilyn Gaston)*** provides students with a comprehensive approach to various areas of center floor work, including Center Floor Barre, Adagios, Warm-up Jumps, Petit Allegro, En Diagonale (across-the-floor), and Grand Allegro.

The ***Beginning Ballet Interactive Dance Series (Gayle Kassing)*** curriculum details etiquette, class expectations, health and injury prevention and explores ballet's history, major artists, styles, and aesthetics.

*Building Ballet Technique and Beginning Ballet Interactive Dance Series* curricula exceeds Alabama's Dance standards for grades 6-12.

***Tap Dance Technique***

***The Beginning Tap Dance: Interactive Dance Series (Gayle Kassing)*** introduces students to tap dance technique and assists students in cultivating an appreciation of tap dance as a performing art. This curriculum provides students with a comprehensive approach to etiquette, class expectations, health and injury prevention for dancers, history, major artists, styles, and aesthetics. *This curriculum exceeds Alabama's Dance standards for grades 6-12.*

***Hip-Hop Dance Technique***

***Beginning Hip-Hop Dance*** (E. Moncell Durdan) introduces students to hip-hop technique and assists students in cultivating an appreciation of hip-hop dance as a performing art. *This curriculum exceeds Alabama’s Dance standards for grades 6-12.*

***Jazz Dance Technique***

The ***Beginning Jazz Dance: Interactive Dance Series*** (Gayle Kassing) introduces students to jazz technique and assists students in cultivating an appreciation of jazz dance as a performing art. This curriculum provides students with a comprehensive approach to etiquette, class expectations, health and injury prevention for dancers, history, major artists, styles, and aesthetics. *This curriculum exceeds Alabama’s Dance standards for grades 6-12.*

***School of Visual Arts***

***AP 2D Art and Design***

***AP 2D Art and Design*** provides students with the opportunity to create a portfolio of work to demonstrate inquiry through art and design and development of materials, processes, and ideas. Portfolios include works of art and design, process documentation, and written information about the work presented. *This curriculum exceeds Alabama’s Visual Arts standards for grades 6-12 and is equivalent to a college-level art and design course.*

***AP 3D Art and Design***

***AP 3D Art and Design*** provides students with the opportunity to create a portfolio of work to demonstrate inquiry through art and design and development of materials, processes, and ideas. Portfolios include works of art and design, process documentation, and written information about the work presented. *This curriculum exceeds Alabama’s Visual Arts standards for grades 6-12 and is equivalent to a college-level art and design course.*

***AP Drawing***

***AP Drawing*** provides students with the opportunity to create a portfolio of work to demonstrate inquiry through art and development of materials, processes, and ideas. Portfolios include works of art, process documentation, and written information about the work presented. *This curriculum exceeds Alabama’s Visual Arts standards for grades 6-12 and is equivalent to a college-level art and design course.*

Students use *Adobe Photoshop, Flash* and *TVPaint* programs to create the illusion of movement and subsequently utilize

***2-D Animation***

that knowledge to tell stories. Students learn user interface, working methodologies, and clean modeling techniques geared for building a short original animated sequence. *This curriculum exceeds Alabama’s Media Arts standards for grades 6-12.*

***3-D Animation***

Students use the *Autodesk 3ds Max, Adobe Photoshop* and *Premiere* programs to learn the basic techniques of modeling and animating in 3D. Students learn user interface, working methodologies, and clean modeling techniques geared for building character models, lighting, camera, and exporting to Adobe Premiere and 3D objects, with scheduled pitches, proposals, critiques, and lectures. *This curriculum exceeds Alabama’s Media Arts standards for grades 6-12.*

***Character Design***

***Fundamentals of Character Design: How to Create Engaging Characters for Illustration, Animation & Visual Development*** provides students with a comprehensive approach to key design principles with a focus on shape language, balance and contrast, repetition, construction and basic shape, constructing the face and head, expressions, pose, movement, gesture and working with multiple characters. *This curriculum exceeds Alabama’s Visual Arts standards for grades 6-12.*

***Basic Drawing***

***Artist’s Drawing Techniques (DK)*** provides a detailed step-by-step guide for beginner to advanced student artists. This comprehensive guide covers techniques for drawing with pen and ink, colored pencil, and pastels. *This curriculum exceeds Alabama’s Visual Arts standards for grades 6-12.*

***Figure and Still Life Drawing***

*The Fundamentals of Drawing: A Complete Professional Course for Artists (Barrington Barber)* provides students with techniques and a step-by-step guide to object drawing, still life composition, and figure drawing and portraiture. *This curriculum exceeds Alabama's Visual Arts standards for grades 6-12.*

***Animal Drawing***

*How To Draw Animals: Your Step-By-Step Guide to Drawing Animals (Therese Barletta)* provides students with step-by-step procedures and techniques to use for drawing animals. *This curriculum exceeds Alabama's Visual Arts standards for grades 6-12.*

***3D Drawing***

*Draw 3-D: A step-by-step guide to perspective drawing (Doug DuBosque)* provides students with a comprehensive approach to techniques to create 3-dimensional figures. *This curriculum exceeds Alabama's Visual Arts standards for grades 6-12.*

***Watercolor Painting***

*Watercolour Techniques for Artists and Illustrators: Discover how to paint landscapes, people, still lifes, and more (DK)* provides a comprehensive approach to selecting the right brushes, dimensions, color mixes, and the elements of color theory and its effect to watercolor painting. *This curriculum exceeds Alabama's Visual Arts standards for grades 6-12.*

*Oil Painting Step by Step: Artist's Library (Anita Hampton)* provides students with a comprehensive approach to oil

<p><i>Oil Painting</i></p>	<p>painting techniques such as underpainting, composition, plein air, and special effects. <i>This curriculum exceeds Alabama's Visual Arts standards for grades 6-12.</i></p>
<p><i>Digital Painting</i></p>	<p>In this course, students learn digital drawing and painting using a drawing tablet and computer. Students use the <i>Adobe Photoshop</i> software program to create an animated short. Further, the <i>Digital Painting in Photoshop: Industry Techniques for Beginners (3DTotal)</i> text for this course provides students with comprehensive step-by-step tutorials for key processes and techniques of digital painting using the Adobe Photoshop software. <i>This curriculum exceeds Alabama's Visual Arts standards for grades 6-12.</i></p>
<p><i>PLEIN AIR Landscape Painting</i></p>	<p>In this course, students paint in the plein air style at local outdoor Mobile sites and neighborhoods. <i>En Plein Air: Acrylic (Mark Mehaffey)</i> provides students with techniques and simple step-by-step projects for creating dynamic landscapes in the open air. <i>This curriculum exceeds Alabama's Visual Arts standards for grades 6-12.</i></p>

**5. If the curriculum is not already developed, provide, as Attachment 3 , a plan 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.**

Although the curriculum is fully developed, educators at FPC VPAA use the *Understanding by Design (UbD)* instructional framework to modify and develop assessments, units, lessons, and activities that focus on the desired results of student achievement. Along with instructional leaders, educators spend five days before the start of the school year to analyze the *Stanford 10* diagnostic assessment for newly enrolled

students, and end-of-year state, nationally normed, and summative assessments to make strategic decisions about curricular choices and the designing of units, lessons, activities, and assessments for optimal student growth and learning. Educators along with instructional leaders also spend two days at the middle and end of each quarter to analyze interim and formative assessments to modify instruction throughout the school year to ensure that students are on the path to achieving the desired results and goals set for the school year. Data analysis at the beginning and throughout the school year not only provides educators with feedback and information about student strengths and weaknesses for purposes of modifying and developing weekly lessons, units, and activities for optimal student growth, but also provides instructional leaders with feedback on how to create and conduct professional development to optimize educators' effectiveness in the classroom.

**6. 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.**

At FPC VPAA, teachers are expected to use a variety of instructional methods and strategies for ensuring academic growth among all learners. Using differential methods and strategies are necessary for meeting the individual learning needs of the student body. At FPC VPAA, we use the following research-based instructional methods and strategies that have proven successful for the school's anticipated student population:

**Project-Based Learning** - is a dynamic approach to teaching in which students explore real-world problems and challenges. In PBL, teachers blend content mastery, personal connection, and meaningful tasks to create powerful and engaging learning experiences for students. The teacher plays the role as the facilitator by working with students to frame meaningful questions, structuring meaningful tasks, coaching both knowledge development and social skills, and carefully assessing what students have learned from the experience. In PBL, students are able to think critically, communicate, and engage in collaborative inquiry to investigate and respond to authentic problems, complex questions, or challenges that exist outside of the classroom (Buck Institute for Education, n.d.).

**Data-Driven Instruction** – When teachers use data to drive their instructional plans and decisions, they are able to effectively respond to identifying student areas of need. Through identification of student areas of need, teachers can then determine appropriate teaching methods and strategies that can be used to improve student learning. More specifically, data-driven instruction involves 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. The four fundamental building blocks for effective data-driven instruction includes: (a) *assessment* – Creating rigorous interim assessments that provide meaningful data; (b) *analysis* - Examining the results of assessments to identify the causes of both strengths and shortcomings; (c) *action* – Teaching effectively what students most need to learn based on assessment results; and (d) *culture* – Creating an environment in which data-driven instruction can survive and thrive (Jossey-Bass, 2010).

**Differentiated Instruction** – The goal of differentiated education is to ensure that all students in learning environment have equitable access to educational opportunities and resources that meets their specific needs. Teachers who differentiate effectively utilize data from a range of assessments to pinpoint specific learning gaps among student populations, which is helpful for making decisions about appropriate interventions, lessons, teaching techniques, and activities needed to improve learning. The use of data in differentiated instruction allows educators to plan well-scaffolded learning pathways to meet the needs of all students. Differentiation requires teachers to use a variety of strategies to engage students in the learning process and to help them to take ownership of their learning. Teachers can differentiate instruction by adjusting the following four elements: (a) *content* - The knowledge, understanding, and skills we want students to learn; (b) *process* - How students come to understand or make sense of the content; (c) *product* -

How students demonstrate what they have come to know, understand, and are able to do after an extended period of learning; and (d) *affect* - How students' emotions and feelings impact their learning (Tomlinson & Imbeau, 2010).

**Modeling** - Modeling describes the process of learning or acquiring new information, skills, or behavior through observation, rather than through direct experience or trial-and-error efforts (Salisu & Ransom, 2014). Modeling is an effective instructional strategy that allows the learner to observe the teacher’s thought processes and efforts that lead to the desired outcome. There are several types of modeling techniques for improving student learning: (a) *disposition modeling* – teachers convey thought processes or ways of thinking such as through acting with integrity to set high expectations; (b) *task and performance modeling* - Task modeling involves demonstrating what is expected so that students feel comfortable about engaging in the task on their own; (c) *meta-cognitive modeling* – demonstrates how to think in lessons that focus on interpreting information and data, analyzing statements, and making conclusion about the concepts learned; (d) *modeling through scaffolding* – In this process, teachers first model the task for students, and then students work through the task on their own pace; (e) *student-centered modeling* – teachers engage students who have mastered a concept or skills to model for their peers (Salisu & Ransom, 2010).

**Flexible Grouping** - Flexible grouping is an effective strategy for creating an inclusive classroom culture that cultivates learners’ differing skills and knowledge (National Center for Learning Disabilities, 2021). Flexible grouping provides teachers with the opportunity to group students based on their strength and abilities to improve effectiveness of instruction, which is necessary for maximizing student learning. Flexible grouping can be utilized to help students who need more support during the instructional process (McKeen, 2019). In teacher-led grouping, the teacher groups students based on ability, interest, and level of skill or mastery. In student-led grouping, students are able to further group each other into subgroups such as pairs, collaborative groups, and performance-based groups (Conklin, 2007). Flexible grouping methods involves both teacher-led and student-led grouping. Through flexible grouping, the teacher and students within the classroom environment are able to take control of the learning process, making it easier to improve student performance.

## Attachments

### Section 2: Curriculum and Instructional Design

2.1	<a href="#">Attachment 4 Sample Course Scope and Sequence</a>	Williams, Krista, 3/14/22 1:40 AM	PDF / 2.028 MB
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## 3.Student Performance Standards

### *1. Describe the student performance standards for the school as a whole.*

FPC VPAA performance standards for the school as a whole are based on the Alabama Standards for grades 6-12. These standards are aligned to Common Core State Standards, Alabama Career/Technical Standards, and the National Arts Standards. Instructional leaders use the Alabama Course of Study to develop courses for all subject areas. Educators also use the Alabama Course of Study to develop units, lessons, and activities for optimal student learning.

*2. Provide, in Attachment 4, a complete set of the school’s proposed learning standards for one grade for each division the school will serve. Address the skills and knowledge each student will be expected to attain by the end of that grade. If the school will serve only one division, the exit standards provided in response to question 5 in this section will suffice. (Approved schools will be required to submit a full set of learning standards for all grades in the school before opening.)*



FPC VPAA proposed learning standards for each division that the school serves are based on the Alabama Course of Study and the Alabama Career/Technical Education for the Arts (see *Attachment 4* for Learning Standards).

***3. If you plan to adopt or develop additional academic standards beyond Alabama standards, explain the types of standards (content areas, grade levels). Describe the adoption or development process that has taken place or will take place. Select one grade level and subject area as an example, and explain how these additional standards exceed the Alabama State standards.***

Although students learn more than grade level standards in grades 6-8 to meet the rigors of the high school curriculum, instructional leaders at FPC VPAA will fully implement the Alabama Standards for Arts Education, English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Foreign Languages, Physical Education, and Career/Technical Education. Therefore, instructional leaders at FPC VPAA will not create additional standards, but rather incorporate above grade level standards into each course for grades 6-8 and Advanced Alabama Standards for high school courses.

***4. Explain the policies and standards for promoting students from one grade to the next. Discuss how and when promotion and graduation criteria will be communicated to parents and students.***

The mission of the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy is to educate a diverse community of students through a rigorous, pre-college and pre-professional level curriculum that prepares them for post-secondary education and careers in the visual/performing arts. To achieve this mission, students must be prepared for the rigorous coursework of the next grade; therefore, students are not promoted to the next grade until they demonstrate proficiency in core academic areas as outlined in the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy curriculum guidelines. Students who are flagged for possible failure of one or more academic or arts courses at the end of first semester are required to attend the two-week long January Early Intervention Program, which consists of two consecutive weeks of one-on-one instruction or tutoring in areas that students need more assistance. Parents also receive the possible failure alert via certified mail, text, email, and conference call/meeting. The January Early Intervention Program provides students with intensive supports needed to prevent possible retention. Educators analyze data from interim and formative assessments to determine specific areas of improvement and supports needed for each student flagged for possible failure. Irrespective of the January Early Intervention Program, a student who does not receive a cumulative passing grade of 70% or greater in one of more core academic (Math, Science, English, and Social Studies) or arts courses at the end of fourth quarter is required to attend the FPC VPAA intervention component of the Summer Academic Academy. A student who is absent for more than 6% of the school year (11 out of 185 school days), including both excused and unexcused absences may be retained or dismissed from the school as outlined in the student and parent handbook. Parents are notified via certified mail, text, email, and conference call/meeting about their child's promotion or required attendance for the intervention component of the Summer Academic Academy after the end-of-quarter summative assessment. The intervention component of the Summer Academic Academy is held for three weeks during the summer and provides students with small group or one-on-one instruction, depending on the severity of the student's skill gaps and need for special education or ELL services. At the completion of the summer intervention program, a student who demonstrates mastery (scored a 70% or greater) on the summer competency exam for each subject enrolled will be promoted to the next grade; however, a student who does not score a 70% or greater needs more practice and individualized assistance with grasping content and will not be promoted to the next grade. Parents of students enrolled in the intervention component of the Summer Academic Academy program are notified via certified mail, text, email, and conference call/meeting about promotion or non-promotion after the completion of the program.

To graduate, students at FPC VPAA must earn a 70% or greater in all classes, meet attendance requirements (absent no more than 6% of each school year), score a 3 or higher on at least one AP exam in either English, Math, Science, Social Studies, or Arts, receive at least 3 hours of dual enrollment credit, and complete a

minimum of 26 units of high school credit. Those required core credit courses must be completed in grades 9-12 (with exception of math) and include the following:

- **English:** 4 credits, 1 each, grades 9-12, 8 semesters
- **Social Studies:** 4 credits, 1 each, grades 9-12, 8 semesters
- **Mathematics:** 4 credits, 1 each, grades 7-12, 8 semesters
- **Science:** 4 credits, 1 each, grades 9-12, 8 semesters
- **Foreign Language:** 2 credits, consecutive in the same language, grades 9-12, 4 semesters
- **Arts Education:** 4 credits, grades 9-12, 8 semesters
- **Health Education:** 0.5 credits, grades 9-12, 1 semester
- **Physical Education:** 1 credit, grades 9-12, 2 semesters
- **Career Preparedness:** 1 credit, grades 9-12, 2 semesters
- **Electives:** 2.5 credits, grades 9-12, 5 semesters

Parents and students receive a handbook with graduation requirements upon enrollment at the school and during our yearly parent and community engagement seminars, which outlines all programs, graduation requirements, and goals for each school year. Each year, high school parents also receive a Graduation Information Letter via certified mail with an outline of courses taken, passed, and needed. Students who meet graduation requirements in either 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grade automatically receive a Graduation Approval Letter. Graduation Approval Letters are used to confirm that the student has met all program and degree requirements for graduation. Students who do not meet graduation requirements automatically receive a Graduation Insufficient Letter via certified mail. The Graduation Insufficient Letters are sent at the beginning of the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade year to confirm that the student has not met all program requirements and outlines the deficiencies and corrective actions that must be taken to meet requirements. Through our college and career readiness program, all students who graduate receives an Advanced High School Diploma. The graduation requirements at FPC VPAA exceeds Alabama's minimum diploma requirements. Our academic program is crafted to thoroughly prepare our students to gain access to high quality colleges and universities and opportunities as professional musicians and artists. With our College and Career Mentorship Program, our high school students are supported throughout their journey by mentors who assist them with selecting appropriate courses based on their chosen path of study, college applications, scholarship application and searches, college campus tours, workplace tours, internship application and searches, resume assistance, interview preparation, and non-academic supports for their success.

English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities must meet all graduation requirements outlined at FPC VPAA. ELLs are provided with an EL teacher who determines the necessary accommodations and supports that the student needs throughout their journey at the school. At FPC VPAA, we use a home language survey at the time of enrollment to gather information about the student's language background and to identify students whose primary language is other than English. Through this approach, we are able to provide students with the supports needed to become proficient in English as they move through each grade. In addition, students with disabilities are also provided with appropriate accommodations and curricular modification as determined by their Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

***5. Provide, in Attachment 5, the school's exit standards for graduating students. These should clearly set forth what students in the last grade served will know and be able to do.***

The Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy exit standards exceeds the **State of Alabama's graduation requirements**. At FPC VPAA, students are required to earn a 70% or greater in all classes, meet attendance requirements (absent no more than 6% of each school year), take 4 AP exams before they graduate, at least one in English, Math, Science, Social Studies, and Arts, and score a 3 or higher on at least one AP exam, receive at least 3 hours of dual enrollment credit, and complete a minimum of 27 units of high school credit.

## Attachments

### Section 3: Student Performance Standards

3.1	<a href="#">Attachment 5 Graduation Exit Standards</a>	Williams, Krista, 3/13/22 12:49 PM	DOCX / 16.74 KB
3.2	<a href="#">Attachment 4 Learning Standards</a>	Williams, Krista, 3/13/22 9:17 AM	PDF / 1.776 MB

## 4.High School Graduation Requirements (High Schools Only)

*1. Describe how students will earn credits, what the schools course offerings will consist of, and what electives will be offered. Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) has guidelines for official transcripts for all schools; describe any changes or differences you are proposing. If graduation requirements for the school will exceed Alabama State Standards, explain the additional requirements.*

Students at the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy earn course credit by demonstrating mastery in each course. The table below outlines our grading system with comparison of letter, percentage, and rubric, and how these grades translate to a student's mastery of the **State of Alabama** course standards for earning course credit:

Letter	Percentage	Rubric	Meaning
A	90-100%	4	A student earning an A in a course is consistently demonstrating advanced levels of mastery with the content standards.
B	80-89%	3	A student earning a B in a course is consistently demonstrating proficiency with the content standards.
C	70-79%	2	A student earning a C in a course is consistently demonstrating basic competency with the content standards.
F	Below 70%	0 or 1	A student earning less than 70% in a course is not yet demonstrating a basic level of mastery with the content standards and needs to demonstrate mastery of the standard before credit will be earned.

As outlined in the above table, a student demonstrates mastery in a course by earning a final course grade of 70% or greater. The final grade for each course will be an average of the scores from quarter one, two, three, and four. Prior to the course credit recognition process, students are provided with differentiated instruction and multiple opportunities through our daily intervention block and January Early Intervention Program during the school year to practice skills necessary to improve learning and overall success in each course. In addition to demonstrating mastery in each course to receive credit, students must meet attendance requirements (absent no more than 6% of each school year), take 4 AP exams in either English, Math, Science, Social Studies, or Arts, and score a 3 or higher on at least one AP exam, receive at least 6 hours of dual enrollment credit, earn 4 credits in their chosen arts discipline, and complete a minimum of 27 units of high school credit to graduate. The Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy graduation requirements exceeds **Alabama State Standards**. In addition to high school graduation requirements, students at the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy are prepared for the rigors of higher education institutions and careers in the visual and performing arts through our developmentally appropriate course offerings. See *Attachment 5.5* for high school course offerings and electives.

As a necessary component of acknowledging student accomplishments and completion of graduation requirements, the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy registrar's office personnel follows all guidelines determined by the Alabama State Department of Education for official transcripts. As outlined by the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE), transcripts for students consist of the term within the academic session for which the courses were completed, the student's grade level at the time the term was completed, state identified course and section number of the completed course, the course name, the number of credits the student earned for completing the course work, the number of weighted quality points the student earned, the number of quality points the student earned, the final grade for each course, and the students cumulative GPA. Further, the registrar's office personnel at FPC VPAA uses the state's guide for setting up students' transcripts in the *InformationNow* (INow) portal.

**2. Explain how the graduation requirements will ensure student readiness.**

Multiple researchers have noted that students with **four or more years of specialized arts instruction** score higher on state and national standardized achievement tests and earn "mostly A's" in academic courses than students with one-half year or less of arts specialized instruction (Deasy, 2002; National Endowment for the Arts, 2012; Ruppert, 2006). It is also well-documented that students who take more than two AP/Honors level courses and dual enrollment courses while in high school have higher overall GPAs in college than students who do not take more than two advanced level courses at the high school level (Community College Research Center, 2012; Hargrove et al., 2008). Following documented research, students are required to take four AP courses and exams in either English, Math, Science, Social Studies, or Arts, and receive a minimum score of 3 on at least one of the exams, earn 6 dual enrollment credits, earn a 70% or greater in all classes to receive credit, and earn at least 4 arts credits to graduate. Further, students are required to earn a minimum of 27 credits to meet FPC VPAA and Alabama's Advanced Diploma requirements. The graduation requirements at the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy provides students with a realistic idea of college-level work and ensures that all students, regardless of socioeconomic status or background, can succeed at higher education institutions.

**3. Explain what systems and structures the school will implement for students at risk of dropping out and/or not meeting the proposed graduation requirements.**

Although poor academic performance as measured by failing courses or low grades is significantly linked to student dropout at the middle and high school level (Hammond et al., 2007), multiple researchers have articulated that dropping out can be described as a process, rather than only a single event (Hammond et al., 2007; Jimerson et al., 2000). Academic challenges, grade retention, disengagement from school, and problems with behaviors and attendance frequently begin in elementary school, compound over time, and are linked with dropping out of school during the middle and high school years (Dockery, 2012). Implementing research-based intervention strategies, including longitudinal tracking systems and school-wide targeted programs are necessary for meeting the needs of potential dropouts and to prevent students from dropping out of school at the middle and high school level. Educators and leaders at the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy plan to implement the following six research-based strategies to prevent student dropout and to ensure that graduation requirements are met:

- **Consistently monitor the progress of all students** – At FPC VPAA, educators and leaders monitor the progress of all students, including attendance, behavior, and academics. Through PowerSchool, educators and faculty are provided with real-time alerts for students at risk of failure, attendance data trends, discipline reports, and areas for improvement. PowerSchool also provides parents with access to student performance, including grades and attendance. Through real-time alerts and consistent monitoring of student progress in areas of behavior, attendance, and academics, leaders and educators at FPC VPAA are able to take proactive steps to prevent dropouts among at-risk student populations.

- ***Engage parents and families*** – According to the National Dropout Prevention Center (2022), students whose parents are involved in their lives have higher graduation rates and greater enrollment rate in postsecondary institutions. At the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy, leaders and educators strive to involve parents and families in every step of their child’s journey at school. Parent and family engagement activities include, performances, concerts, recitals, art walks, weekly conferences for progress monitoring, PowerSchool alerts, school messaging, parent and student study information sessions, parent and student college and career counseling sessions, and parent and family volunteering. At the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy, parents and families are incorporated into the learning process, which is necessary for students’ success.
  
- ***Provide interventions for students falling behind*** – According to the Institute of Education Sciences (2017), it is necessary to provide intensive support to students who have fallen behind to prevent course failure and potential dropout. As outlined below, students at FPC VPAA are provided with multiple support systems to prevent course failure and retention, which are leading predictors of student drop out:
  - ***January Early Intervention Program*** - Multiple researchers have articulated that early intervention is necessary for preventing course failure and ensuring that students remain on track for graduation (Institute of Education Sciences, 2017). Without early intervention, the challenges students face can compound, requiring more intensive support. At the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy, students who are flagged for possible failure of one or more courses are required to attend our two-week January Early Intervention Program to receive one-on-one or small group instruction for maximum learning growth. In addition to the January Early Intervention program, educators provide students with continuous academic support throughout the school year to improve student performance and to prevent failure of a course. Providing supports to students during class and throughout the school year allows educators to engage in immediate intervention responses to solve the problem, rather than waiting until the problem compounds.
  
  - ***College and Career Mentorship Program*** - Mentors function as a vital part of students’ overall success in school, life, and beyond. Students with in-school mentors have significantly fewer unexcused absences (with moderate effect size), discipline referrals (with large effect size), and significantly higher scores across content areas than students without a mentor (Gordon et al., 2013). At the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy, all students are assigned a mentor. The assigned mentors provide students with critical assistance throughout their journey at school, including encouragement, tutoring and academic assistance, college assistance, career assistance, and guidance about course offerings that prepares them for college and careers in their chosen field of study. More specifically, mentors at FPC VPAA help to make sure that students stay on track for graduation. Mentors at FPC VPAA not only assist students with meeting graduation requirements, but also serve in the capacity as a role model. Mentors as role models can help youth to recognize opportunities and their worth, to expand their horizon of opportunities, and discuss how to overcome challenges that they may be facing within their lives that the mentor may have experienced as a youth (Kearney & Levine, 2020). Helping students to understand their worth and to overcome challenges positively affects their behaviors while at school and outside of school (Gordon et al., 2013; Kearney & Levine, 2020).

- ***Credit Recovery Program*** – Researchers have noted that students at the middle and high school level who have failed a course are at risk for dropping out of school (Hammond et al., 2007). At the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy, students who have fallen behind or failed a course in middle or high school are able to enroll in the credit recovery program. The credit recovery program at the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy provides students with the opportunity to retake a course or to recover a single unit or module before completing a course. The credit recovery program at FPC VPAA ensures that students are able to earn the academic credit needed to meet graduation requirements. Using the Edgenuity Courseware program, students are provided with digital content that engages and motivates them to take ownership of their learning. Teachers are provided with real-time data to monitor students' progress and to assist students in areas of need. For the credit recovery program, students take a pretest for each learning module to determine level of mastery. If the student scores 70% or better, he/she continues to the next module. With a score of less than 70%, the student must complete coursework for that module and must complete a posttest to advance to the next module. The goal of the credit recovery program is to allow students to spend more time in areas of need, rather than areas that they have already mastered. Students are able to take credit recovery courses during summer school or during the school-wide intervention block.
  
- ***Rigorous, learning opportunities*** – Research shows that among high- and low-income students, those students who take challenging courses while in high school are much more likely to go to college (Engle & Tinto, 2008). Although research indicates that students who take challenging courses during high school are more likely to attend college, low-income students are less likely to attend schools with advanced courses and many schools only offer advanced courses to the higher performing students (Quinton et al., 2014). At the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy, all arts and core academic courses are advanced level courses. Providing all high school students with a rigorous, advanced level curriculum gives them a realistic idea of college level requirements and a head start on college-level work. The rigorous curriculum at FPC VPAA increases low-income and first-generation students' chances of attending and succeeding in higher education institutions (Engle & Tinto, 2008).
  
- ***Make learning relevant and engaging*** – Disengagement in school is linked to increasing dropout rates among secondary student populations (Azzam, 2007). In “The Silent Epidemic” report on high school dropouts, approximately 47% of the student population reported that they dropped out of school because classes were not interesting, which led to boredom and disengagement (Bridgeland et al., 2006). According to the National Center on Safe Supportive Learning (2016), students are engaged in school when they are able to take classes that are interesting and important to their future endeavors. Engaged students come to class prepared and eager to learn, have good attendance and behavior, and are able to navigate daily challenges (National Center on Safe Supportive Learning, 2016). These behaviors, in turn, improve course pass rates and helps students to establish positive relationships with teachers and peers, which reinforces students' sense of belonging (Dary et al., 2016). At FPC VPAA, student learning is made relevant, meaningful, and engaging through real-world application. Students at FPC VPAA engage in multiple academic projects and arts-related projects, including performances and exhibitions that connects their learning to the real-world.
  
- ***Create a small, personalized learning community*** – At-risk students within large classes are more likely to disengage, rather than thrive. Schools with a small number of students in each class are able to provide students with personalized attention and the support needed to improve learning (Institute

of Education Sciences, 2017). Grouping students into smaller learning communities allows faculty and staff to manage and monitor students' progress more effectively. At the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy, the anticipated student-to-teacher ratio is 15:1. The small, personalized community at FPC VPAA allows staff to check in with students more frequently to meet their individual needs and to form strong, meaningful relationships (National Association of Secondary School Principals, 2004). Through strong positive relationship building, students feel more connected to the people within the school, which in turn, helps them to develop a sense of belonging in the school community. Students who develop a sense of belonging are more likely to overcome challenges and persevere to graduate (Lee & Burkam, 2003).

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## Attachments

### Section 4: High School Graduation Requirements (High Schools Only)

4.1	<a href="#">Attachment 5.5 Course Offerings and Electives</a>	Williams, Krista, 2/19/22 8:20 PM	DOCX / 22.791 KB
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## 5.School Calendar and Schedule

**1. Discuss the annual academic schedule for the school. Explain how the calendar reflects the needs of the educational program. In Attachment 6 , provide the school’s proposed calendar for the first year of operation, including total number of days/hours of instruction.**

The Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy proposed calendar reflects our commitment to ensuring that all students are successful beyond the middle and high school level. Students at the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy are provided with 181 days of instruction, including 10 days during the January Early Intervention Program for students struggling to meet academic requirements for grade promotion. In addition to the January Early Intervention Program, students are provided with an additional 10 days of instruction during our Summer Academy. The Summer Academy consists of two programs, the Summer Arts Institute and the Summer Enrichment Program. The Summer Arts Institute provides students from across the community with the opportunity to study with world-renowned artists and musicians in their chosen field of study. Our summer visual and performing arts program allows students to cultivate their skills and creative talents in art, dance, drama, and music. Our summer programs offer unique experiences such as private lessons, artistic collaboration, masterclasses, seminars, and performances in dance, drama, winds, piano, strings, and voice. The Summer Enrichment Program provides students with hands-on learning experiences within areas of Math, Science, and English. The Summer Enrichment Program is a unique learning experience that goes beyond the middle and high school classroom by blending academic enrichment with college and career exploration. Through hands-on projects, interactive virtual and in-person field trips, students develop valuable skills in their field of interest while improving their learning. The Stanford 10 testing window for incoming students starts on August 1<sup>st</sup> and ends on August 4<sup>th</sup>. The Stanford 10 test data are analyzed during the Summer Institute and used to make



instructional and curricular decisions before the start of school, which is necessary for maximizing student learning and growth in all subject areas. In addition, faculty are provided with 10 days of Professional Development during the Summer Institute, which is necessary for data analyzation, classroom preparation, scheduling, instructional preparation, and lesson planning. At the end of each quarter, teachers are provided with Professional Development days for grading and data analysis. In addition, teachers are also provided with an additional four hours of PD each week throughout the year, which includes grade level, content level, and school-wide data analysis meetings. Further, the calendar has been designed to coordinate with community events, such as Mardi Gras. Breaks are also coordinated to align with surrounding school districts, which is helpful for parents who have students in other schools within the county. In terms of hours of instruction, see **Question 2** and **Attachment 7** for details of weekly and daily schedules for middle and high school students.

**2. Describe the structure of the 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. Your response should include, in Attachment 7 , a sample daily and weekly schedule for each division of the school.**

The academic program at the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy is organized on an alternating block schedule, where each class meets every other day. Middle and high school students take three 90-minute block classes daily on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. Alternating block scheduling at the middle and high school level increases inquiry, hand-on instruction, and time spent on in-depth study and understandings in the classroom (Markham, 2008). Further, block scheduling at the middle and high school level also provides educators with more time for content, grade level, individual, and school-wide data analysis and planning time (Markham, 2008). In addition to the academic program alternating block schedule, the arts intensive specialty program consists of one or two 60-minute blocks, four days a week. Middle school students attend one block each day while high school students attend two blocks. These pre-professional arts courses vary in content and day of the week, based on students chosen arts specialty track. To ensure that student needs are met throughout the school year, all students at FPC VPAA are provided with additional instructional time for academic support or enrichment during our school-wide intervention block. The intervention program consists of one 40-minute block, four days a week. During this block, students engage in small group or one-on-one tutoring, mentoring sessions, study hall, or other electives, depending on need. The daily schedule for high school students on Monday–Thursday starts at 8:00AM and ends at 4:10PM. For middle school students, classes start at 8:00AM and ends at 3:05PM. On Friday, middle and high school students take six 50-minute block classes to allow for ongoing, targeted professional development and collaborative inquiry for all staff. Ongoing professional development and collaborative inquiry provides a structure for educators to accurately interpret and analyze data sources and research, verify causes and generate solutions, and test hypothesis for improving student learning (Love et al., 2008). Therefore, school dismisses at 2:00PM for both middle and high school students on Fridays.

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## Attachments

### Section 5: School Calendar and Schedule

5.1	<a href="#">Attachment 7 School Schedule</a>	Williams, Krista, 2/19/22 6:54 PM	DOCX / 108.537 KB
5.2	<a href="#">Attachment 6 School Calendar</a>	Williams, Krista, 2/19/22 7:17 AM	DOCX / 41.524 KB

## 6.School Culture

***1. Explain how you will create and implement this culture for students, teachers, administrators, and parents starting from the first day of school. Describe the plan for enculturating students who enter the school mid-year.***

At the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy, we believe that the school's culture is vital for creating a safe, orderly, supportive, inviting, and positive learning environment. The school's culture consists of many variables, including attitudes, beliefs, norms, perceptions, traditions, values, and traditions of administrators, faculty, staff, and students (Todd, 2009). Culture can affect what teachers discuss or feel about the school and the instruction that takes place in the classroom (Seifert & Vornberg, 2002). A positive school culture is where staff and students understand that their opinions matter and they can feel comfortable about taking risks, receiving feedback, making mistakes, and trying innovative techniques and methods for improving learning. It is well documented that a positive school culture positively affects student achievement, motivation, and the productivity and satisfaction of teachers (Erdem & ba, 2001). Students, parents, and community members are able to gain an understanding of expectations, policies, procedures, values, and meanings of both symbolic and concrete aspects of the school through acquisition of the school's culture (Todd, 2009). However, a positive school culture can only emerge from the direction of leaders who understand the importance of a school's culture and see the school's organization from a holistic point of view. Seeing the school from a holistic potin of view allowed leaders at FPC VPAA to gain an understanding of the social and economic contexts of where the school is located, which is necessary for developing and implementing an appropriate action plan that fosters a positive school culture.

At FPC VPAA, positive culture building is embedded in the hiring process, recruiting events, student orientation, community engagement events, summer academy, and faculty summer institute before the start of each school year and throughout the school year. All of our professional development opportunities and engagement events involve culture building activities that are geared towards fostering collaboration, building positive relationships between teachers, leaders, students, and the community, and improving communication. During these culture building opportunities, the school staff, students, and the community are able to set goals, develop action plans for achieving those goals, and engage in exercises to articulate and understand the school's mission and vision.

Positive culture building is critical for fostering positive relationships among staff and students. It is well documented that students' primary motivation for success lies in the relationships that they form at school (Payne, 2003). Learning can take place when teachers have positive relationships with students and staff members within the school environment (Karns, 2005). When teachers have positive relationships with the students that they teach as well as an understanding about the students' backgrounds and interests, teachers are able to create effective lessons and activities that connects to students' backgrounds and prior knowledge— thus making instruction more responsive to students. At FPC VPAA, teachers and staff are provided with many opportunities to build positive relationships with students. One component of the school's model that allows teachers and staff to build positive relationships with students is through our college and career mentorship program. As discussed in Section 1 of this application, the college and career mentorship program at FPC VPAA provides teachers and other staff members with the opportunity to

support and assist students throughout their journey at the school. As mentors, teachers and faculty are not only able to provide students with words of encouragement, college and career assistance, and other supports needed to be successful in life, but also able to serve in the capacity as a positive role model through leading by example. In addition to creating opportunities for students to form positive relationships with teachers, students are also provided with multiple avenues to form positive relationships with their peers. Through our project-based learning approach in the arts and academics, students learn to work together to increase each other's success. In a project-based learning environment, students must engage in collaborative inquiry to plan, create, and determine the criteria for a successful presentation or performance. Working together to complete a project helps to strengthen students' relationships with each other.

It is not only necessary for students to form positive relationships with adults and other students, but also for teachers to form positive relationships with other educators and staff members. At FPC VPAA, educators are provided with weekly data team planning time and professional development opportunities to build positive relationships with each other. During data team planning, educators are able to view and discuss achievement data, seek assistance for meeting students' needs, brainstorm solutions, and engage in real application of research-based instructional strategies and methods for improving student achievement. Creating strong professional learning communities that fosters the development of positive relationships among school staff and teachers have shown to increase efficacy, content knowledge, collective responsibility for student learning, morale, job satisfaction, and learning (Habegger, 2008). Providing opportunities for educators to work together as a team is necessary for their professional growth and students' academic growth (Habegger, 2008).

Building positive relationships goes beyond the interior walls of the school environment, but rather involves all stakeholders, including the community and parents. At FPC VPAA, we believe that parents/guardians and community members must be involved in the process to create a positive school culture. Leaders at FPC VPAA have already begun the process of developing positive relationships with community members, including potential parents/guardians through community events and door-to-door networking. Leaders plan to create multiple opportunities throughout each school year for families and community members to engage with leaders and educators and to solicit input about various educational decisions (e.g., future events for students and parents; performance and concert dates; best ways to communicate with parents concerning their children's social and academic growth; field trip opportunities for students; calendar suggestions; and fundraising opportunities) that can move the school in a positive direction. These opportunities for building positive relationships with families and communities include needs assessment surveys, family and community engagement events, one-on-one family engagement with teachers and leaders, performances and concerts, and the school-wide orientation event for new students. Positive relationships and connections to the school community is necessary for the overall achievement of the school and students (Habegger, 2008). Multiple researchers have noted that the amount of parent/community involvement directly impacts how parents view the school, which in turn directly impacts how the student views the school and their learning (Sanders & Sheldon, 2009; Seifert & Vornberg, 2002). According to uriši and Bunijevac (2017), community and parental involvement has been shown to result in increased student achievement, enhanced parent and teacher satisfaction, better student behavior, and improved school culture. Therefore, parent and community involvement are essential to building and sustaining a positive school culture.

To create a sense of belonging among staff and students in the school, leaders at FPC VPAA understand that staff and students must also be celebrated and recognized for their heroic actions and victories. At FPC VPAA, we understand that celebrating students and staff accomplishments are key for fostering a positive school culture. Celebrating staff and students makes them feel that they are a valuable member of the school community. At FPC VPAA, students and staff are celebrated in various ways, including through our weekly assemblies, weekly newsletter, social media sites, and during class meetings and professional development. When students see staff celebrate other members of the school community, they learn to become caring and passionate human beings at school and beyond the school environment. Celebration and recognition not only help to build long-lasting positive relationships between staff, students, and the community, but also to maintain a positive school culture.

To enculturate students who enter the school later in the year, leaders strategically assign these students with mentors to help them with understanding and to learn the norms and values of the school community. Classroom teachers also help students to learn and engage in the school environment as they would with any other student. Classroom teachers along with student peers engage in conversations with newcomers about classroom expectations, rules, consequences for breaking rules, and school norms. Because all new incoming students are required to take the Stanford 10 exam or teacher-created diagnostic exam for each course, educators are able to use the data to determine necessary supports needed for the student's success. More specifically, the data reveals the types of interventions that the student needs to be successful at the school and to meet the requirements for moving towards graduation. Based on the student's area of need, the student will be assigned to a small group or one-on-one session during the school-wide intervention block to address the learning gap. Educators also use restorative practices and the School-Wide Positive Behavior and Supports (SWPBS) model to teach newcomers about appropriate behaviors, to reinforce positive behaviors, to build a positive relationship with the student, and to collect behavior data to determine if the student needs any additional behavioral supports beyond the classroom.

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

Educators and leaders at FPC VPAA use various strategies to serve students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and students at risk of academic failure in the school culture. One important component of the school's culture is that leaders and staff at FPC VPAA have high expectations for all students, regardless of their background, language, or ability. According to the Education Commission of the States (2012), the expectations a teacher sets for an individual student can significantly affect the student's academic performance and behavior. When educators have high expectations in terms of academic achievement and appropriate behavior for students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and students at risk of academic failure, they are more likely to exhibit positive behaviors and put more effort into schoolwork. If students are viewed as capable and intelligent beings, then they will see themselves in that manner. At FPC VPAA, all students are challenged, supported, and encouraged to take risks to reach their full potential. Creating a positive school culture also involves engaging in actions to help students and faculty to build positive relationships with each other. Educators at FPC VPAA develop and implement various cooperative learning activities to help students to build positive relationships and to gain an understanding of and knowledge about students with disabilities and English Language Learners. Building positive relationships with peers and teachers translates into increased engagement in the classroom, which is necessary for supporting students' academic success. In addition to building positive relationships, educators encourage ELLs and their families to share photographs, visuals, meaningful artifacts, information about holidays and celebrations that represents their culture with the class and school. A positive school culture involves the celebration and representation of all student cultures, traditions, and victories. Students feel that they belong when they are celebrated, valued, and represented within the school culture.

At FPC VPAA, students with disabilities, ELLs, and students at risk of failure are provided with multiple support systems to maximize student learning. To serve students with disabilities and English Language Learners, educators model behaviors and use visuals such as pictures, symbols, and reward systems to communicate classroom and school expectations in a positive and direct manner. English Language Learners, students with disabilities, and students at risk of failure are provided with one-on-one and small group instruction during the school-wide targeted intervention block for improving academic achievement. In addition to the school-wide targeted intervention program, English Language Learners are also supported through the school's iLitELL program, which provides students with lessons and activities that further develops their skills in phonics, word recognition, and vocabulary in the English language.

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

**A Day in the Life of a Student.** Keyshia is an energetic 8<sup>th</sup> grader at the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy. At 7:40am, Keyshia’s mother pulls up in the 2<sup>nd</sup> carpool line to see community volunteers and staff members greeting students as they arrive. There are multiple volunteer and staff members supervising the carpool lines for proper line behavior and safety. All parents are instructed about carpool procedures and given hangtags for identification before the start of the school year during the one-on-one family engagement meetings and information sessions. Once Keyshia’s carpool line number is called, Keyshia double checks to ensure that she has all of her homework, books, laptop, and sheet music for her classes. After exiting the car, Keyshia is greeted by Dr. Williams (Head of School) with a bright smile and a warm welcome, “Good morning, Keyshia! Remember that you are smart, valued, and loved at the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy. I would also like to say congratulations on winning the first chair clarinet spot for the Alabama All-State Orchestra Association, Keep Up the Good Work!” “Thank you, Dr. Williams,” replies Keyshia as she beams with a big smile on her face as she enters the school building and hear other students clapping and congratulating her on the accomplishment. After entering the school building, Keyshia grabs a snack out of the pantry because her mother was busy and did not have time to stop by to get breakfast. After grabbing a snack, Keyshia is greeted again by Mr. Sullivan, one of the 8<sup>th</sup> grade ELA teachers, who says, “Good Morning, Keyshia and Congratulations! Keyshia replies, “Thank You, Mr. Sullivan!” Keyshia walks through the main hallway and passes walls rich with motivational thoughts, upcoming concerts and bulletin boards filled with faculty and student accomplishments and highlights, including her recent win and spot in the Alabama All-State Orchestra Association. Once at her classroom, Keyshia’s 8<sup>th</sup> grade math teacher, Dr. Smith says, “Good Morning, Keyshia! It is going to be a great day!” Keyshia replies, “Good Morning, Dr. Smith” as she gives him her math homework. After Keyshia gets settled in and sits down in her seat, the bell rings and the announcements start promptly at 7:55am via the school’s live broadcast. Students view the morning announcements on their assigned laptops and via the class assigned Vibe All-In-One Whiteboard. Announcements are led by students and Dr. Williams. During the announcements, Dr. Williams reminds everyone about the school’s norms and introduces the student leaders for the school-wide broadcast. Student leaders, Clark and Sasha provides highlights from around the school. On this day, student leader Clark congratulates Keyshia on winning 1<sup>st</sup> chair for the Alabama All-State Orchestra Association. After highlighting student and faculty accomplishments, Clark reminds everyone about upcoming shows, including dates, times, and admission policies for visitors. Sasha recites the pledge and pauses for a moment of silence; inspirational music plays and both Sasha and Clark recite an inspirational quote to start everyone’s day. At 8:00am, class starts for all students. Since this is a Blue Day, after Math, Keyshia transitions to ELA for second block with Mr. Archard. At 11:05am, Keyshia, along with her class transitions to lunch. Once in the lunchroom, Keyshia along with her peers walks in line toward the lunch pick-up table. With lunch in her hand, Keyshia follows her classmates to their assigned table, which can be clearly identified with a laminated sign that reads, Mr. Archard’s Class. Keyshia also learned the procedures and rules for lunch during the school’s new student orientation. After lunch, Keyshia transitions to Block 5 at 11:45am for Symphonic Band (60 min.). After Symphonic Band, Keyshia goes straight to P.E. for 30 minutes. Since Keyshia has been staying up on her classwork and maintaining all A’s, she gets to go to the rehearsal hall during the school-wide intervention block—which is monitored by Mr. Holt—for 40 minutes to practice on a complex clarinet piece that was assigned to her by the Clarinet Instructor, Mr. Dailey. At the conclusion of the intervention block, Keyshia transitions to her Music Theory course with Mr. Alvin at 2:05pm. At 3:05pm, the bell rings for middle school dismissal. Keyshia along with her peers walk to the carpool dismissal line. Around 3:10, Keyshia sees her mother pull up in the 2<sup>nd</sup> car line as she did that morning. The volunteer or staff member on duty calls out the numbers on the provided hangtags for cars in the 2<sup>nd</sup> carpool line. Keyshia’s mother’s hangtag number, 36, is called. Once given the clear by volunteers and staff outside for duty, Keyshia walks to her mother’s car. Volunteers and staff say to Keyshia, “Have A Great Day!”

**4. Describe a typical day for a teacher in a grade that will be served in your first year of operation.**

**A Day in the Life of a Teacher.** Mr. Long, the middle grades Math teacher arrives at the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Campus at 7:20am on a regular basis to get classroom materials ready, connect

and configure the Vibe All-In-One Whiteboard, refer to the day's schedule, email parents (which he does every day to touch base, and then add additional calls if necessary), read and respond to any in-house emails from the Head of School or Director of Operations and Student Affairs. At 7:40am, Mr. Long walks to his door and stands next to the door to greet students as they enter the classroom. Mr. Long greets every child with a warm and welcoming smile, direct eye contact, and says "Good Morning, today is going to be a great day!" As students walk into the classroom, Mr. Long collects students' math homework. At 7:55am, Mr. Long closes his classroom door and directs every student to watch the live morning broadcast via the Vibe All-in-One Whiteboard. At 8:00am, he teaches his first math cohort, which is a 7<sup>th</sup> grade group. At 9:30am, he dismisses his first block and welcomes his second Math cohort of 8<sup>th</sup> graders. At 9:35am he teaches his second Math cohort. At 11:05am, he takes his second Math cohort to lunch. During this time, Mr. Long eats his lunch. At 11:40am, students in Mr. Long's second block math cohort transition to their next class. Mr. Long also leaves the lunchroom and walks to the faculty conference room for a data team meeting/curriculum development meeting. The data team/curriculum development meeting starts at 11:45am and ends at 12:35pm, which allows for vertical planning time. At 12:35pm, Mr. Long walks to his classroom for individual planning time to further analyze data, plan tutoring or small-group instruction, and to articulate what he learned in the data team meeting for modifying his instruction to improve student learning. After collaborative and individual planning, at 1:20pm, Mr. Long begins his targeted tutoring and small group instruction for students struggling with proportional relationships and percentages on yesterday's exit assessment. At 2:05pm, Mr. Long provides homework support and one-on-one tutoring until 3:05pm. At 3:05pm, middle school students dismiss. Mr. Long walks outside for afternoon duty to supervise and direct carpool traffic. As each student exits the building and proceeds to the carpool line, Mr. Long smiles and calls each child by name and says, "Have a Great Evening!" At approximately 3:20pm, Mr. Long walks back into the building to prepare his classroom and to ensure that he has all the necessary materials and supports ready for class the next day.

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## Attachments

### Section 6: School Culture

– No Attachments –

## 7. Supplemental Programming

***1. 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 resource and staffing needs for these programs?***

Researchers have shown that strong summer programs can achieve several important goals: (1) reverse summer learning loss; (2) improve student achievement; (3) give students an opportunity to master material that they did not understand during the school year (McCombs et al, 2012); (4) and provides students with additional opportunities to cultivate their talents. At the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy, students are provided with multiple summer programs, depending on need and interest. Summer Academy at FPC VPAA consists of three programs: the Summer Arts Institute, the Summer Enrichment Program, and the Summer Intervention Program. Each of the summer programs at FPC VPAA consists of three-weeks of intensive instruction, real-world application of concepts, and exploration for four hours each day.

The Summer Arts Institute is designed for students (grades 7-12) at an intermediate or advanced level of study in their discipline. Our summer arts program allows students to cultivate their skills and creative talents in art, dance, drama, and music. Students are provided with unique experiences through private lessons, artistic collaboration, masterclasses, seminars, and performances in dance, drama, winds, piano, strings, and voice. The Summer Arts Institute also provides students with the opportunity to attend professional performances, visit arts and music museums, and to explore careers. This program offers a unique opportunity for students to work with arts and music specialists, cultural organizations, and world-renowned guest artists. The experienced team helps students to sharpen their artistic and musical skills with lessons on effective techniques and guides students in building a portfolio or audition skills for early professional careers and arts-focused universities or conservatories. After the initial enrollment of students from the school community and depending on available funding, the program becomes open to students across the Mobile County area. Through our community partnership with the University of South Alabama (USA), students are also provided with the opportunity to apply and participate in the USA Summer Piano Camp and the Jaguar Marching Honor Band.

In addition to the Summer Arts Institute, FPC VPAA also plan to implement the Summer Enrichment Program. The Summer Enrichment Program is a unique learning experience that goes beyond the middle and high school classroom by blending academic enrichment with college and career exploration, hands-on projects, and interactive virtual and in-person field trips. Through this program, students are able to develop valuable skills in their field of interest while improving their learning. The Summer Enrichment Program is also ideal for students who may have entered into the school mid-year below grade level and need additional assistance for grasping the concepts needed to perform well in the next grade. Through our partnerships and use of resources in the community, students are also able to apply for off-campus enrichment programs with the University of South Alabama. These programs include the *Summer Engineering Academy*, which is for any high school student who wants to discover various engineering fields and get hands-on engineering experience; the *USA STEM Enrichment Program*, which is designed to provide middle grades students with high quality math, science, and engineering instruction that prepares them for competing in our emerging global economy; and the *Summer Literacy Camp*, which is designed to engage 6<sup>th</sup> grade students in the process of reading, writing, creating, and publishing their work.

The Summer Intervention Program provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate mastery

(cumulative score of 70% or greater) in one or more courses, but no more than two courses, to be promoted to the next grade. During the program, students are provided with small group and one-on-one instruction, depending on the student's skill gap or need for special education or ELL services. Similar to the summer enrichment program, the summer intervention teachers create lessons and activities that are hands-on, enjoyable, and have real-world applications for gauging student interests. For the summer intervention program, teachers use the end-of-quarter summative assessments to determine students' specific areas of need in order to provide them with the necessary supports for improving learning and completing the course(s) with a passing score.

**Note:** Resources and staffing needs for each of the aforementioned in-house programs will depend on student enrollment and interests.

***2. Describe the extra- or co-curricular activities or programming the school will deliver, how often they will occur, and how they will be funded.***

Unlike traditional schools across Mobile County, the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy offers students enrichment opportunities throughout the summer as discussed earlier in this section and during the school day, rather than only after-school. Throughout each school day, students at FPC VPAA engage in unique learning experiences through hands-on projects that involve real-world application of concepts and interactive virtual and in-person field trips. For example, 7<sup>th</sup> grade science teachers at FPC VPAA incorporate educational robotics into instruction for teaching kids the fundamental aspects of engineering design and programming skills while allowing them to see and interpret code results in real time. Enriching activities during class increases student engagement, which is necessary for improving student achievement. In addition, students at FPC VPAA are provided with multiple opportunities throughout the school year to perform or present their completed artworks in front of a live audience. Through these performance and exhibition opportunities, students are not only able to share their talents and skills, but also able to express their feelings, experiences, and thought processes. Many of the performances and exhibitions will be held at the University of South Alabama Laidlaw Center, the Mobile Saenger Theatre, and other local venues. Although the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy offers students a plethora of enrichment programming, focus groups with community members and proposed school personnel have been created for developing more enrichment opportunities that can improve student learning and overall success beyond high school.

***3. Describe the programs or strategies to address student mental, emotional, and social development and health.***

To address students mental, emotional, and social development and health needs, the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy plan to partner with multiple local mental health services. We will partner with local community organizations, such as AltaPointe to provide students with the necessary services to address their social and emotional needs. AltaPointe provides students with various treatments, including cognitive behavioral therapy, systemic family therapy, social skills training, play and expressive therapy, coping skills training, and interpersonal training. At AltaPointe, students are provided with personalized treatment to meet their specific needs. Along with local services, the FPC VPAA staffing model also includes a full-time school counselor with experience and skills for supporting the mental health needs of students. In addition to having a full-time school counselor, FPC VPAA uses the School-Wide Positive Behavior Support framework to improve social, emotional, behavioral, and academic outcomes for students.. The implementation of the SWPBS framework coupled with the development and sustainment of a positive school culture promotes positive and supportive teacher-student and peer-to-peer relationships. Positive relationship building allows students to be more accepting of each other's differences, to celebrate each other's victories and accomplishments, to solve conflicts and communicate in a positive manner, and fosters practices of how to manage emotions. Students with mental health needs at FPC VPAA are also provided with additional supports to master content through our January Early Intervention Program, school-wide intervention block, and summer enrichment program. In addition to programs, educators and leaders regularly collect and analyze data to address the mental health needs of students. Data informs



decisions and helps educators, leaders, and counselors with determining the specific supports that a student needs to be successful and productive at school and outside of the school environment.

**4. If applicable, describe any other student-focused activities and programs that are integral to the educational and student-development plans.**

In addition to on-campus programming, high school seniors at FPC VPAA are provided with the opportunity to interact with professionals in their chosen field of study and to receive on-the-job training for success beyond high school through the local Summer Youth Employment Internship Program (STEP) and Summer Scrubs program. The STEP program was created to respond to the ongoing needs for workforce development initiatives and summer employment for high school seniors in the Mobile County area. The program lasts for six weeks and includes intensive classroom training and on-the-job performance. The interns engage in virtual job readiness training at the University of South Alabama. The training modules include customer service, telephone etiquette, business etiquette, business writing, Microsoft office, conflict management, time management, and business math. Various employers across Mobile County participate in this workforce initiative. Further, the Summer Scrubs program, a project of the Bay Area Healthcare Coalition, is an intensive three days of career exploration experience for rising high school seniors in Mobile County. These students have expressed a desire to explore careers in healthcare and have the opportunity to spend each day of the program at different healthcare facilities throughout the county. Students are able to interact with health professionals and observe in a real-world environment. Students are able to discuss and ask questions about healthcare jobs and the education paths available.

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## Attachments

### Section 7: Supplemental Programming

– No Attachments –

## 8. Special Populations and At-Risk Students

**1. Describe the overall plan to serve students with special needs, including but not limited to students with Individualized Education Programs or Section 504 plans; English Language Learners; students identified as intellectually gifted; and students at risk of academic failure or dropping out. Identify the special populations and at-risk groups that the school expects to successfully serve, whether through data related to a specifically targeted school or 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 diverse needs of students.**

FPC VPAA is committed to identifying and meeting the academic needs of students with special needs, ELLs, gifted students, and students at-risk of failure or dropping out. At FPC VPAA, special student populations are educated within a Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) and alongside their peers, to the extent appropriate and allowed by each student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 plan. The collaborative nature of project-based learning, contextual learning, and our arts intensive program provides all students with the opportunity to engage in interactive and hands-on learning experiences for improving achievement and overall success throughout school. Educators, leaders, and staff at FPC VPAA are

committed to educating all students regardless of ability and comply with all state and federal statutes regarding special populations, including the Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the Alabama Administrative Code 290-8-9. The Chief Executive/Head of School at FPC VPAA oversees the planning and implementation of school-wide structures and ensures compliance with all state laws and regulations. At FPC VPAA, leaders and educators do not discriminate in admission and enrollment practices nor deny access to students with special needs, ELLs, gifted students, and students at risk of academic failure or dropping out.

Based on local school data, FPC VPAA anticipates serving an ELL population of 4.34% and a special education population of 9.14% (ALSDE, 2021). The data also indicates that more than 50% of the student populations in the Mobile County schools are economically disadvantaged (ALSDE, 2021). At the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy, we believe that all students, regardless of language or ability can achieve academic success when they are provided with appropriate support systems to meet their specific needs. The Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy is committed to providing all students with the necessary resources and supports needed to excel academically. To ensure that all students achieve at high levels, leaders at FPC VPAA considered the needs of special student populations during the development of the course scope and sequence, school's daily schedule, staffing plans, and support strategies and resources. The course scope and sequence for each subject at FPC VPAA provides teachers with a guide for ensuring that projects, interactive learning experiences, assessments, and all aspects of instruction are aligned with state standards. Along with the course scope and sequence, educators use differentiated instruction to improve achievement among all learners, including students with IEP plans, 504 plans, ELLs, and gifted students. For effective differentiated instruction, teachers concentrate on tailoring or modifying the content (what is learned), process (how the content is taught), and product (how the learning is observed and evaluated) of instruction to meet the needs of each learner (Bender, 2012). Effective modification of instruction relies on continuous, ongoing progress monitoring. Progress monitoring informs instructional practices, curricular choices, flexible grouping, and the types of interventions required to address each students' specific areas of need. Through progress monitoring, educators are able to use student performance data as a means to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional programs or interventions and to determine student progress toward specific skills or general outcomes, and to identify specific areas of need among student populations. To ensure that all students are successful, leaders at FPC VPAA included a targeted intervention block into the daily schedule. The targeted intervention block was created to not only reduce the potential need to pull-out special student populations during core class instruction, but also to provide them with additional supports during the school day for improving learning. During the targeted intervention block students are provided with one-on-one or small group instruction in their specific areas of need. The flexible grouping during the school-wide intervention block not only helps struggling students, but also provides an opportunity for high-performing and gifted students to extend their learning. The targeted intervention blocks, continuous progress monitoring, and implementation of differentiated instruction aligns with the Response to Intervention (RtI) framework for meeting the needs of struggling students. Through the RtI model, educators and leaders at FPC VPAA are able to address potential failure before they occur, identify students with disabilities, and determine the appropriate research-based interventions and supports for improving student success. The RtI model allows educators to address students' specific areas of need as it is occurring without waiting for a special education evaluation. With the RtI model, students have access to three levels of support: Tier 1 – students are provided with high quality instruction in the general classroom by qualified personnel to ensure that their difficulties are not due to inadequate instruction, Tier 2 – students are provided with intensive instruction matched to their needs, and Tier 3 – students receive individualized, intensive intervention that targets the students' skill deficits (National Center for Learning Disabilities, 2011). Students at FPC VPAA who do not achieve the desired level of progress in Tier 3 are then referred for a comprehensive evaluation and considered for eligibility for special education services. Data collected during Tiers 1, 2, and 3 are included in the comprehensive evaluation and used to make the special education eligibility decision.

In addition to the implementation of strategies and methods for ensuring that students' needs are met, we hire highly qualified and appropriately licensed Special Education teachers, ELL teachers, and Gifted teachers. For students who need support from additional special education providers, such as Speech and

Language, Physical, and Occupational Therapists, we plan to contract with an external entity such as AltaPointe Health to provide the aforementioned licensed and qualified professionals. All contracted providers are overseen by the CEO/Head of School and shall provide services within the school building as part of the regular school day. All of the special education providers and faculty at FPC VPAA work closely with teachers to provide accommodations and modifications as needed and to establish responsive classroom practices that can meet the needs of all learners.

**2. Explain more specifically how you 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 supports you will provide, including the following:**

**a. 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.**

At the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy, we are committed to ensuring that all students, including those with disabilities are provided with an enriched learning experience for their success in school and beyond. Teachers and leaders at FPC VPAA engage in ongoing data analysis to identify any students who are struggling academically. If Tier 3 interventions of the RTI process does not prove successful for meeting the student's needs, an evaluation for special education may be conducted. The evaluation functions as a pertinent step in the special education process for a child who may have a disability. Before a child can receive special education and related services at FPC VPAA, a full and individual initial evaluation of the child must be conducted. Before conducting an evaluation to determine the student's eligibility for special education services, the school shall notify the parent/guardian in writing and receive consent from the parent/guardian. Once the parent signs for an evaluation, the FPC VPAA shall have sixty (60) calendar days from the date of the signed consent to complete an initial evaluation. Once the evaluation is completed, the FPC VPAA shall have thirty (30) calendar days to determine the student's initial eligibility and 30 additional days from the eligibility determination date to develop an IEP. The IEP team at FPC VPAA shall consist of the parent, special education teacher, and regular education teacher. If the student already has an IEP plan, the school shall request for transfer of the information in a timely manner. The school's lead special education teacher and administrative team shall collaborate to monitor all special education cases, to ensure compliance with all state and federal regulations, delivery of instruction in accordance with each student's IEP, and to determine the services required for each student's success at FPC VPAA. The special education lead teacher shall maintain files demonstrating the school's compliance with all applicable special education requirements, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Alabama Administrative Code (AAC) chapter 290-8-9, and applicable provisions of the Alabama School Choice and Student Opportunity Act (Act 2015-3) concerning special education services.

**b. 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;**

At FPC VPAA, we educate students with disabilities in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) and with their non-disabled peers, to the extent appropriate and allowed by each student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP). General education teachers at FPC VPAA are responsible for implementing the student's IEP

for the delivery of instruction. The general education teacher shall have access to the document. The lead special education teacher at FPC VPAA is responsible for engaging in collaborative inquiry with the general education teacher for ensuring that they have an understanding about their role in providing accommodations during the general education class setting. If a student's needs and IEP require a different program, we shall meet the student's needs with appropriately licensed staff or contract services. To ensure that students with disabilities are successful within the general education setting, teachers use a variety of proven instructional strategies for meeting the needs of special populations (Louisiana Department of Education, 2020):

- *Begin a lesson with a short review of previous learning*
- *Present new material in small steps with student practice after each step*
- *Ask many questions and incorporate multiple opportunities for student response*
- *Think aloud and provide models*
- *Guide students as they begin to practice*
- *Check for understanding and provide systematic feedback and corrections*
- *Provide scaffolds for difficult tasks*
- *Provide ongoing opportunities for review and practice*
- *Teach skills and strategies that increase self-determination so that students can achieve their goals with greater independence*

Engaging in differentiated instructional practices is necessary for meeting the unique learning needs of students with disabilities. In addition to using effective instructional strategies, educators and faculty at FPC VPAA also engage in the following school-wide practices to improve achievement among special populations: (a) weekly content and grade level meetings; (b) ongoing data analysis; (c) ongoing learner-centered professional development opportunities; (d) use of high-quality curriculum and assessments to monitor progress of all students toward grade-level standards; (e) flexible grouping and one-on-one tutoring during school-wide intervention block; and (f) review of multiple sources of data to determine progress towards IEP goals. The practices, structures, and strategies utilized at FPC VPAA are pertinent for meeting the learning needs of every student, including those with disabilities.

***c. 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)***

At FPC VPAA, continuous monitoring and evaluation of student progress and special education program is necessary for improving the success of students with disabilities. Students with a disability at FPC VPAA are monitored on an ongoing basis to ensure progress towards goals outlined in the student's IEP. The lead special education teacher at FPC VPAA is responsible for monitoring, consulting, and teaching with general education teachers in a collaborative role to ensure that accommodations are being provided for students with a disability. Special education teachers and general education teachers at FPC VPAA work collaboratively to continually review, revise, and create appropriate accommodations as needed to provide FAPE to students with disabilities. The special education program at FPC VPAA and services provided to students with disabilities are evaluated annually through parent surveys and analysis of academic results among our special populations. Parents surveys and academic results provides the school with in-depth

information about needed improvements, progress, and successes of the special education program and learning growth among our special populations. Feedback and identification of program progress is necessary for the continuous improvement of student achievement among our special populations. The CEO/Head of School, lead special education teacher, and other pertinent staff review parent surveys annually to improve the special education program. Ongoing parent/family engagement meetings are also conducted to ensure that parents/guardians are informed about special education laws, regulations, and strategies for supporting the needs of their child.

***d. Plans for promoting graduation for students with special education needs (high school only)***

At the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy, we believe that all students, regardless of ability, are capable of graduating and reaching their highest potential. We are committed to ensuring that all students are prepared for the rigors of college and careers in the visual/performing arts. To ensure that special education students are on track for graduation, all teachers maintain high expectations, build positive relationships with students, and use differentiated instructional strategies to meet students' needs. Further, all students, including our special populations are assigned a college and career mentor. The mentor helps the student with job applications, college applications, internship assistance, college campus tours, job tours, and nonacademic supports throughout their journey at the school. Mentorship programs have shown to be successful in keeping students with disabilities from dropping out of school and for promoting graduation (Bell, 2017). Mentors at FPC VPAA are able to provide students with disabilities with guidance and support for their future dreams. Mentoring programs not only help to promote graduation among special education populations, but also in the areas of academic and career development, employment, psychosocial health and quality of life, transition, and life skills (Lindsay & Munson, 2022). In addition to the college and career mentorship program, educators ensure that they have high expectations for all students, including special populations. Students with disabilities are more likely to succeed and graduate if they are held to high expectations and provided appropriate encouragement and support (PACER, 2015). At FPC VPAA, educators are trained to create a classroom environment that promotes student motivation, student ownership, empowerment, and a growth mindset for the improvement of student achievement among special populations. Blackburn and Witzel (2021) articulated that a student who is labeled with a learning disability does not mean that he/she is incapable of learning. Moreover, the success of students with a disability is not a matter of inability, but rather a matter of finding the appropriate teaching strategies and motivation tools to help the student to learn at higher levels (Blackburn & Witzel, 2021).

***e. Plans to have qualified staffing adequate for the anticipated special needs population.***

The Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy is committed to addressing the needs of all special populations. As a pertinent part of our school model, all teachers at FPC VPAA must be highly qualified with a state recognized certification in area of specialization. The special education teachers at FPC VPAA must have a certification with a special education endorsement. All teachers working with our students with special needs are hired based on their credentials, experiences, and demonstrated success with special populations. At FPC VPAA, we plan to add more special education teachers as the school grows. Providing our special students with highly qualified teachers is necessary for their success. For building special education staff professional capacity, all special education teachers and faculty at FPC VPAA are provided with learner-centered professional development opportunities throughout the school year and before the start of each school year to ensure that they are prepared to meet the needs of each student at FPC VPAA.

***3. Explain how the school will meet the needs of English Language Learner (ELL) students, including***

*the following:*

**a. *Methods for identifying ELL students (and avoiding misidentification)***

At the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy, we understand the importance of shaping policies and procedures for identifying the language and academic needs of ELL students for their success in school and beyond. To comply with state and federal policies regarding ELL identification and placement, leaders and educators at FPC VPAA have created a five-step process:

**Step 1: Home Language Survey**

As part of our registration process, all students are provided with a Home Language Survey (HLS). The Home Language survey will be included in each student's enrollment packet. All parents/guardians must complete the Home Language Survey (HLS) at the time of enrollment. The HLS shall remain in each student's permanent record. The Home Language Survey (HLS) function as a means for initially sorting the students who use a language other than English. The Home Language Survey consists of the following questions:

- What is the language most frequently spoken at home?
- Is your child's first-learned or home language anything other than English?
- Which language does your child most frequently speak at home?
- Which language do you most frequently speak to your child?

If an answer to any of the questions on the home language survey indicates that the child uses a language other than English (e.g., if the child uses another language when speaking with friends or a grandparent), the child must be assessed to determine whether the student is an ELL or not. However, the presence of a language other than English does not automatically signify that the student is not a competent and proficient speaker of English.

**Step 2: Parent/Engagement Meeting**

Although the home language survey and EL testing are necessary for identification and placement of EL students. However, the home language survey nor EL testing can provide information about a student's prior schooling and other relevant background information needed for providing students with the appropriate supports for improving learning and success. Therefore, a family/engagement meeting functions as a necessary step for gathering pertinent information about the child and prior learning experiences (Zacarian, 2011). During enrollment, parents/families are required to attend our one-on-one parents/family engagement meeting. Parents and students will be provided with bilingual translators, as needed, to conduct the meeting or to provide the needed interpreting support of the meeting. The meeting allows the school to learn about the parents/families, to review pertinent information about the school culture, policies, and procedures, and allows the EL committee to gain information that may be helpful in determining appropriate placement and programs that may be needed to ensure the student's success at FPC VPAA.

**Step 3: Identification Testing**

The identification test, where age-appropriate, assesses as student's ability to listen, speak, read, and write in English. The purpose of the assessment is to identify a student's need for EL services, to establish an EL's English proficiency, and to determine the number of ELs in the LEA their English Language and learning needs (Zacarian, 2011). A student with a Home Language Survey (HLS) that indicates the presence of a language other than English during the beginning of the school year registration process must be assessed within thirty (30) days of enrollment. A student who registers after the beginning of the school year must be

assessed within ten (10) days of enrollment. For assessing students who may need EL services, the FPC VPAA plan to use the state adopted World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA)-Access Placement Test (W-APT™) for ELLs. The assessment shall be used to determine students' eligibility for placement in the school's English language development program. The WIDA – ACCESS Placement Test assesses English language proficiency in all four domains of language development, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Further, the W-APT™ MODEL yields an overall composite score based on the language domains tested. Following state ELL guidelines, any student at FPC VPAA in grades 6-12 scoring an overall composite score of 3.9 or below on the WIDA – ACCESS Placement Test must be identified as limited-English proficient and will require placement in an English language instruction educational program.

#### **Step 4: Parent Notification**

After eligibility determination, FPC VPAA shall notify the students' parents or guardians regarding reasons for identification, child's level of English proficiency, parental rights, and instructional programs and supports available, no later than thirty (30) days after the beginning of the school year. Parents are encouraged to respond to a notification about EL determination and identification, which is a necessary step in their child's overall journey and success.

#### **Step 5: EL Services, Placement, and Supports**

The EL committee (i.e., classroom teachers of ELs, assessment specialists, school administrators, school counselors, ESL staff, and other members as appropriate) shall collaboratively work to analyze the WIDA ACCESS assessment results and gather information during the one-on-one parent/family engagement meeting to create and determine appropriate programs, staffing, and local services necessary for addressing EL students' individual needs and to ensure success. In addition, educators across grade levels and subjects also engage in ongoing data analysis beyond the WIDA ACCESS assessment to determine appropriate instructional practices and strategies needed to improve learning among ELL populations. ELA educators are provided with access to the iLitELL program to provide ELLs with supplemental support during class. The program supports grade-level reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills at the EL's individual proficiency levels. The iLitELL program helps to accelerate English language development through a mix of strategic scaffolding, interactive content, visual aids, and academic vocabulary.

#### ***b. 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***

The ELL program at FPC VPAA consists of the following instructional practices and strategies recommended by the Alabama State Department of Education for ensuring equitable access and success in the core academic program among ELL populations: *SDAIE* - a teaching approach intended for teaching various academic content using the English language to students who are still learning English; *Sheltered Instruction* - an instructional approach used to make academic instruction in English understandable to EL students through the use of modeling, visual aids, hands-on activities, and other research-based techniques, and *ESL Push-In* – in this process, the ELL teacher goes into the regular classrooms to work with ELs. The ELL program at FPC VPAA also includes supplemental instructional programs such as the Saavas iLitELL development program. The types of instruction and services provided for ELL students at FPC VPAA are based on their English proficiency levels. The ELL program at FPC VPAA is to assist students with developing proficiency in the English language through listening, speaking, reading, and writing, which functions as necessary components of their success in school. The ELL program at FPC VPAA involves collaborative inquiry among both general education, ELL teachers, and other pertinent faculty members appropriate for the improvement of ELLs achievement. The ongoing collaboration provides teachers and other faculty members with an understanding of their role in providing the necessary accommodations and supports for ELLs across subject and content areas. Further, FPC VPAA shall conduct a needs assessment

to select the most appropriate ELL program for meeting the needs of the EL students enrolled at the school. Once a program has been determined based on the needs of the EL student population, the ELL program at FPC VPAA shall be evaluated at least twice per year—once at the end of each semester. Evaluation of the program involves the collection and analysis of various forms of EL student data to determine whether or not the goals set forth during the comprehensive needs assessment was met and future goals or plans for improving the program for the following school year. In addition to conducting a needs assessment, all educators and faculty at FPC VPAA engage in ongoing data-driven dialogue, collaborative inquiry, and learner-centered professional development (e.g., research-based instructional strategies and practices, culturally proficient teaching, assessing learning, curriculum development) for the development and continuous improvement of our ELL program and the success of ELLs in the regular classroom settings. Faculty and staff, including our EL teachers engage in weekly data team meetings, grade and content level meetings, and school-wide meetings to inform instructional and curriculum decisions for meeting the needs of our ELL populations.

***c. Plans for monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of ELL students, including exiting students from ELL services***

EL teachers along with general education teachers monitor EL students on an ongoing basis to assess their progress towards English Language proficiency. EL students at FPC VPAA are required to remain in the EL program until they demonstrate English language proficiency. In accordance with the Alabama State Department of Education EL policy, EL students who make an overall proficiency level of 4.8 on ACCESS will exit the EL program (or continue to be immersed in the language in a regular classroom setting with support if necessary). If an EL student at FPC VPAA does not make an overall proficiency score of 4.8 or above, they must continue receiving core English language instruction and supplemental language acquisition services as determined by the EL teacher. Students who make the required score to exit from supplemental ESL services must be placed on monitoring status for two academic years. During the monitoring time, the EL teacher and the general education teachers communicate weekly to ensure that the exited student is performing on or above grade level without ELL support.

***d. Means for providing qualified staffing for ELL students.***

The Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy is committed to ensuring that all students are provided with high quality teachers. A high quality EL teacher possesses the knowledge and skills necessary for providing EL students with the supports, services, and appropriate instruction needed to become English proficient learners. At FPC VPAA, all secondary EL teachers must have an ESL certification recognized by the state of Alabama and be considered as a highly qualified teacher. In addition, EL teachers at FPC VPAA will receive ongoing professional development to meet the needs of our EL populations. In addition, we will also seek to hire teachers with a special education and ESL certification for meeting the needs of EL students with disabilities. Hiring high quality teachers is a pertinent part of the FPC VPAA educational model.

***4. Explain how the school will identify and meet the learning needs of students who are struggling academically or performing below grade level and monitor their progress. Specify the programs, strategies, and supports you will provide for these students.***

Through continuous, ongoing data analysis, educators at FPC VPAA are able to identify students who are struggling academically or performing below grade level. The data team, which consists of our EL teacher, special education teacher, counselor, academic teachers, arts teachers, leaders, and other key personnel at



FPC VPAA plan to meet on a regular basis throughout each school week to analyze data from various forms of assessments, including formative, interim, diagnostic, and performance-based assessments to identify students who may need additional assistance and to determine if they need special supports for their success. Leaders and educators at FPC VPAA also plan to use the Response to Intervention (RTI) framework to provide students with the appropriate levels of supports and assistance. Through ongoing data dialogue and analysis, and the implementation of the RTI framework, leaders and educators at FPC VPAA are able to address potential failure among student populations before they occur or compound. In addition to data analysis and the use of the RTI framework, the FPC VPAA also provides students who are struggling academically with a daily intervention block. The intervention program at FPC VPAA allows teachers to flexibly group students and to provide students with one-on-one instruction to meet their individual needs. In addition to our intervention program, teachers also use differentiated instructional techniques such as visuals, music, modeling, and other effective strategies during class to improve learning among student populations. Teachers at FPC VPAA also engage in data-driven instruction to identify students who are struggling, to determine specific areas of need and appropriate research-based strategies, and to modify instruction to meet the learning needs of individual students.

**5. Explain how the school will identify and meet the needs of highly capable students, including the following:**

The Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy is committed to ensuring that all students, including gifted students are prepared for the rigors of college and careers in the visual/performing arts. According to the Alabama Administrative Code, “[i]ntellectually gifted children and youth are those who perform or who have demonstrated the potential to perform at high levels in academic or creative fields when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment. These children and youth require services not ordinarily provided by the regular school program. Children and youth possessing these abilities can be found in all populations, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavor.” Whether giftedness is inherited, developed, or manifested, it is imperative for classroom teachers, leaders, and pertinent members of the school environment to be cognizant of the fact that high ability students are present within schools. At FPC VPAA, we are committed to creating a learning environment conducive for maximizing learning among our gifted student populations.

To ensure the success of our gifted populations, leaders and educators at FPC VPAA plan to follow a systematic, multi-phased process for identifying gifted students and to determine services needed beyond the general education program: (1) Nomination or identification phase; (2) Screening or selection phase; and (3) Placement phase. Typically, a nomination triggers the screening and identification process. A student may nominate him or herself, or be nominated by an educator, parent, or peer. At the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy, we recognize that a student may be gifted not only in academics, but also in the arts. To eliminate bias, quantitative (i.e., numerical scores or ratings) and qualitative (interpretive and descriptive information about certain attributes, characteristics, behaviors or performances) measures shall be used at FPC VPAA to determine if a student meets the criteria for gifted identification and to build a student profile of strengths and interests. These measures include the use of instruments such as nominations (self, peers, teachers, administrators, and parents), portfolio/performance evaluations, behavioral checklist, teacher observations/ratings, tests/assessments, and student cumulative records. Although portfolio/performance evaluation and tests/assessments shall be used to meet the criteria for gifted identification, other data or information such as teacher observations/ratings and a student cumulative record shall be used to build a learner profile.

If a student is nominated, permission shall be obtained from the student’s parents to screen the student before beginning the behavioral checklist (e.g., Gifted and Talented Evaluation Scales - GATES), student cumulative records evaluation (e.g., grades, state and national standardized tests), portfolio/performance evaluation (e.g., works of arts created in class, works of arts created outside of class, artistic photographs, performance of complex work, original dance, original musical composition, original animations, digital

drawing, paintings, or photographs of 3-dimensional works), and review of teacher observations/ratings. If a student is nominated by his or her parent, permission for the school to screen/assess the student in this area is implied. If a parent signs the nomination form, a separate permission form is not required. To be identified as gifted in the academics or visual/performing arts, a student must score in the identification range on an approved behavioral checklist and on the student cumulative records evaluation or portfolio/performance evaluation. If a student scores in the identification range on his or her first evaluation using the behavioral checklist, multiple evaluations using the checklist are not required. If a student scores below the screening score range on the behavioral checklist, the student will not be identified, and the school may stop the screening/assessment process for the student. If a student scores within the screening score range on his or her first evaluation using the behavioral checklist, the student should be evaluated a second time by a different rater using the same behavioral checklist or be evaluated a second time by the same rater using a different behavioral checklist. If the student scores in the identification range on the second evaluation, he or she has satisfied this requirement for identification, and must be identified if he or she also scores in the identification range on the cumulative records evaluation or performance/portfolio evaluation.

***a. Specific research-based instructional programs, practices, strategies, and opportunities the school will employ or provide to enhance their abilities;***

Although the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy provides all students, including gifted students with an advanced academic and visual/performing arts curriculum, we recognize that our gifted students may need more accelerated opportunities for their continuous improvement. With this in mind, the FPC VPAA offers students the opportunity to enroll in our LEAP program. The LEAP program is a research-based intervention that matches curriculum to a student's readiness to learn and is appropriate for students who demonstrate advanced knowledge of one or more content areas. Although the school's accelerated option does not require gifted identification, it is definitely an appropriate curricular option for students identified as gifted. In addition to the LEAP program, teachers also engage in differentiated instruction to meet the needs of every student, including our gifted student population. Through differentiated instruction, teachers use a variety of instructional methods, strategies, and resources to challenge all students, including students identified as gifted.

***b. Plans for monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of highly capable students***

As a data-driven school, a variety of achieving data, including content assessments, portfolio/performance rubrics, state and national standardized test shall be used to monitor and evaluate the progress and success of highly capable students at the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy. For the continuous improvement of the gifted program, leaders and teachers shall collect and analyze achievement data at the end of each quarter. The gifted teacher shall also ensure that he/she work collaboratively with general education teachers for ongoing monitoring of gifted students progress throughout the school year. Continuous progress monitoring allows administrators and teachers to gain in-depth information about the successes and future plans of the gifted program for the following school year.

***c. Means for providing qualified staffing for intellectually gifted students***

The Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy is committed to providing all students, including our gifted students with high quality teachers. As an important part of our school model, high quality teachers possess the skills and knowledge for meeting the needs of each learning within our school community. To ensure that we have qualified staff, we will hire a highly qualified teacher with a state

recognized gifted certification. At FPC VPAA, all educators, including our gifted teachers are provided with ongoing learner-center professional development to build their capacity for the improvement of student learning.

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## Attachments

### Section 8: Special Populations and At-Risk Students

– No Attachments –

## 9. Unique/Innovative Program Offering

At the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy, we provide multiple unique/innovative program offerings for improving and accelerating achievement among all student populations. More specifically, the program offerings at FPC VPAA were created to close the achievement gap that exists between student populations across the Mobile County area, to prepare students for the rigors of higher education institutions, and to provide students with the opportunity to cultivate their interests and reach their highest potential. The following unique/innovative program offerings at FPC VPAA are not offered at local school systems:

### Advanced Academic Program

At many schools across the Mobile County area, advanced level courses are typically reserved for only the highest performing students. Further, many disadvantaged student populations attend schools where advanced level courses are not offered. The continuous practice of exclusion and inequity within schools widens the achievement gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged student populations. To break the continuous cycle of inequity and exclusion, all students at FPC VPAA are provided with advanced academic and arts courses. At the middle school level, students learn more than grade level standards each

year to be prepared for Advanced Placement and dual enrollment courses at the high school level. An accelerated curriculum is an effective method for improving student achievement and preparing students for the rigors of college (Gavin et al., 2009).

### **Arts Intensive Program**

Unlike traditional schools, the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy provides students with multiple advanced level course offerings. The school schedule at FPC VPAA allows students to engage in different advanced arts courses throughout each school day to gain opportunities in the professional arts world and to be prepared for competitive conservatories and universities. Many of the arts courses at FPC VPAA are noted offered at any of the local school systems. The course offerings include, but not limited to, 3-D Animation, 2-D Animation, AP 2-D Art and Design, AP 3-D Arts and Design, Game Design, AP Music Theory, Piano Masterclass, Piano Ensemble, Jazz Composition and Improvisation, Hip-Hop Dance, Modern Dance, Ballet Dance, Symphony Orchestra, Vocal Masterclass, Vocal Technique-Jazz Voice, and Vocal Technique-Classical Voice. In addition to many course offerings, students are provided with multiple opportunities for artistic collaboration with peers, faculty, and guest artists/musicians. Unlike traditional schools that only allow students to perform or present once or twice per year, students and faculty at FPC VPAA are provided with multiple opportunities throughout the school year to perform or exhibit their work during community events and school-related events.

### **Learners Exploring Advanced Possibilities (LEAP)**

At FPC VPAA, we understand that some students are prepared for higher level courses and may be ready to move at an even faster pace. At many schools across the Mobile County area, students who want to move at a faster pace are not provided with the opportunity to challenge themselves, to fulfill their educational goals, or to reach their highest potential. Requiring students with the potential to exceed at higher levels to take only grade level courses can stifle their achievement growth and negatively affect their interest and motivation in school. To provide students with the opportunity to challenge themselves and to move forward through the program at a faster pace, which increases participation for the AP Capstone Diploma Program and unlocks doors for students to take multiple challenging courses such as AP Physics C: Electricity and Magnetism, AP Physics C: Mechanics, AP Computer Science Principles, and multiple advanced level dual enrollment courses before graduation, students at FPC VPAA are offered LEAP courses. To be eligible for admission to the school's LEAP program, students must apply to show interest. Teachers are also able to recommend students with an Advanced Learning Plan (ALP) for the LEAP program.

### **January Early Intervention Program**

The January Early Intervention Program at FPC VPAA is an initiative for addressing academic gaps among student populations in a timely manner for purposes of preventing academic failure and ensuring that students stay on track for graduation. In schools across the Mobile County area, students are not provided with early supports that addresses their academic needs. More specifically, traditional schools wait until students fail a course before providing them with additional supports needed to be promoted to the next grade. Instead of waiting until the end-of-the-year during summer school, students who are flagged for possible course failure (cumulative average in the course is below 70%) of one or more courses at the end of 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter are required to attend the school's two-week January Early Intervention Program. During this program, students are provided with one-on-one and small group instruction in specific areas of need. Educators and leaders at FPC VPAA use data to drive instruction during the January Early intervention Program and to determine the types of supports that the student needs to get back on track. Providing intervention supports to students earlier in the school year rather than waiting until the end-of-the-year prevents possible course failure and exacerbation of identified learning deficits among student populations.

The Advanced Academic Program, Arts Intensive Program, Learners Exploring Advanced Possibilities, and the targeted intervention program have proven successful for improving achievement among diverse populations. The college and career readiness arts education model at Floretta P. Carson Visual and

Performing Arts Academy is unique compared to traditional schools. Similar to the Basis Charter approach, which has proven successful by countless measures, including a 99% graduation rate across all campuses, a 90% pass rate on state assessments, and a 94% passing score of 3 or higher on AP exams (U.S. News, 2021), all high school courses at the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts academy will be Advanced Placement and Honors level courses. Further, researchers have noted that students who engage in intensive arts programs in high school and middle school have higher overall GPA's, higher acceptance and attendance at competitive colleges, and are three times more likely to earn a college degree than students who do not participate in a rigorous arts school (National Endowment for the Arts, 2012). IN addition to our unique arts intensive program, we also offer students targeted intervention to meet their individual needs. According to Xu et al., (2020), schools with a targeted intervention program significantly reduced the likelihood of disadvantaged students enrolling in remedial courses in both 2- and 4-year postsecondary institutions (Xu et al., 2020). Evidence also shows that targeted intervention increases students' enrollment and achievement in college level courses (Xu et al., 2020).

#### References

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## Attachments

### Section 9: Unique/Innovative Program Offering

– No Attachments –

## 10. Student Recruitment and Enrollment

### 1. Provide, as Attachment 8, the school's Enrollment Policy:

See *Attachment 8* for the school's enrollment policy.

### 2. In the event that there are more students interested in a school than spaces are available, Washington State law requires admission to be based on a lottery. Please describe your lottery process and explain how you will ensure a fair and equitable process for students and families.

If the number of applicants in the enrollment cycle exceeds the number of available spaces, the school will conduct a random selection process. To ensure a fair and equitable process for students and families, the school plans to implement the SchoolMint Management Lottery system. Through the SchoolMint system,

each student applicant is issued an identification number. The parent receives a confirmation email and/or text indicating the lottery identification number assigned to their child during the application process. Parents needing assistance can also visit the school to submit the application. At the conclusion of the lottery, the SchoolMint system sends each parent a notification about lottery results, the deadline to accept the offer, and other next steps via email and/or text. Acceptance and waitlist letters are also sent via certified mail within 72 hours of the lottery. Parents/guardians will be given ten (10) calendar days to submit a completed enrollment packet. If the enrollment packet is not submitted by the specified date, the student may be removed from the enrollment list and the seat will be offered to the next student on the established waiting list. Once all enrollments are confirmed, students on the waitlist will be contacted to fill any open spots.

**3. 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.**

The Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy is committed to identifying and meeting the learning needs of all students, including students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), Section 504 plans, English Language Learners, economically disadvantaged students, and students at risk of academic failure or dropping out. To ensure outreach to all students, school leaders plan to highlight the programs implemented at the school that serve the needs of students who require special services during community events, neighborhood association meetings, meet-and-greet with residents, door-to-door networking, parent and engagement meetings, school information sessions, social media, and via radio, televised, and newspaper advertisements prior to the enrollment process. There are multiple programs offered at the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy that serves students who require special services, including the iLit ELL, January Early Intervention Program, Summer Academy, and Targeted Intervention.

## Attachments

### Section 10: Student Recruitment and Enrollment

10.1	<a href="#">Attachment 8 Enrollment Policy</a>	Williams, Krista, 2/24/22 4:00 PM	DOCX / 19.134 KB
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## 11. Student Discipline Policy and Plan

**1. Practices the school will use to promote good discipline, including both penalties for infractions and incentives for positive behavior.**

At the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy, we believe that a strong positive school culture is necessary for promoting good student discipline. A positive school culture is a multifaceted concept that involves many aspects of the student’s overall educational and social experience. A positive school culture helps to enhance, promote, and encourage students to behave in a positive manner in academic and social settings. To achieve a positive school culture conducive for promoting positive student behaviors, leaders and faculty at FPC VPAA use the School-Wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS) model. The overarching goal of establishing behavioral supports is to reduce the occurrence of behavior problems and increase the social and academic outcomes of all students (Bosworth & Judkins, 2014). SWPBS is a set of systems that are utilized to define and teach appropriate behaviors to students, reinforce positive behaviors, promote positive student-teacher relationships, discourage problem behaviors through consistent consequences, and collect behavior data for making decisions about next steps and corrective actions (Bosworth & Judkins, 2014). The three-tiered intervention model of SWPBS allows leaders and educators at FPC VPAA to provide students with Tier 1 (universal interventions), Tier 2 (targeted interventions), and Tier 3 (intensive interventions) behavior supports (Caldarella et al., 2011). In Tier 1,

positive expectations, rules, and classroom management strategies are introduced to students to prevent challenging behaviors and encourage prosocial behaviors. After Tier 1 has been implemented, students in need of additional support are provided with Tier 2 intervention. In Tier 2 intervention, students with similar needs are grouped for more targeted supports. Students who do not respond to targeted interventions are provided with individualized support through Tier 3 (Noltmeyer et al., 2018). Through the SWPBS model, educators and faculty use a variety of strategies to promote positive behaviors among students, which includes student conferences, verbal warnings when misbehavior occur, redirection, detention, loss of privileges, parent involvement/parent conferences, reward/praise students who exhibit positive behaviors, modeling of appropriate behavior, out-of-school suspension, and in-school suspension. Along with the SWPBS model, leaders and educators at FPC VPAA also engage in restorative practices, which are proactive approaches to preventing harm and conflict and developing activities that repair harm where conflicts have already arisen (Hopkins, 2015). Hopkins (2015) outlines five steps of restorative interactions for promoting good discipline among student populations:

1. Following initial introductions and explanations, students share their experiences of the scenario.
2. Students share how their thoughts impacted their emotional responses.
3. Educators and students reflect on the impact of the behavior.
4. Educators and students reflect on what needs had been unmet or ignored during the time of the incident.
5. Educators and students collaborate to find mutually acceptable ways to move forward in a positive direction.

Restorative practices in schools place an emphasis on respect, dialogue and fair process, structure, and relational perspective on behavior (Macready, 2009). Through the use of the five-step process of restorative interactions and the SWPBS model, educators and leaders at FPC VPAA are able to foster a positive school culture, which in turn, promotes good discipline among student populations.

***2. 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.***

At FPC VPAA, we want to ensure that the school is a safe, orderly, and positive learning environment where all students can fulfill their educational and artistic goals. Therefore, we have created a detailed discipline policy as a response to inappropriate behaviors. The school's student disciplinary policy includes codes that range from Class A offenses (minor infractions) to Class E offenses (extremely serious infractions). Students with Class A offenses, which include minor behaviors that disrupt the classroom environment must receive office referral with the possibility of suspension with two or more subsequent offenses. Students with Class B offenses, which includes any serious behaviors that disrupt the classroom or school environment may be suspended or expelled with two or more subsequent offenses. Students with a Class C offense, which includes any illegal behaviors that seriously disrupt the school or classroom environment must be suspended with the possibility of expulsion. Students with Class D and E offenses, which involves the possession or use of a weapon or illegal substances must be expelled. See ***Attachment 9*** for the school's sample student code of conduct handbook and the following list and definitions of codes for which students may or must be suspended or expelled:

- Class A offenses are minor behaviors that disrupt the educational process or learning in the classroom or other areas of the school environment. Class A offenses involve the following actions:
  1. Non-participation in class: no books, materials, etc.
  2. Public display of physical affection.
  3. Being improperly dressed or out of approved uniform.
  4. Cheating/or copying the work of other students.
  5. Minor acts of disobedience.
  6. Tardiness to class and/or school.
  7. Other infractions that the CEO/Head of School deem as minor in nature and disrupts the orderly

educational process.

- Class B offenses are serious behaviors that disrupt the educational process or learning in the classroom or other areas of the school environment. Class B offenses involve the following actions:
  1. Using aggressive obscene/profane language-whether spoken, written or by gestures, including verbal confrontation.
  2. Leaving the classroom or campus without permission.
  3. Acts of physical aggression.
  4. Acts of willful disobedience.
  5. Using the Internet for other than approved academic reasons, which includes posting incidents on Facebook, Twitter, You Tube, or other websites or media outlets that that initiates an act of physical aggression to be completed on school grounds or at school sponsored events.
  6. Cheating on tests, including Standardized Assessments.
  7. Possessing and/or using electronic cigarettes and related devices.
  8. Any other offense that the CEO/Head of School may deem reasonable within this category of misconduct.
  
- Class C offenses are illegal behaviors that disrupt the educational process or learning in the classroom or other areas of the school environment. Class C offenses involve the following actions:
  1. Trespassing
  2. Discharging fireworks in an area that creates a threat to the security, safety or well-being of students, faculty, or other school personnel or that disrupts the orderly educational process.
  3. Possessing and/or using tobacco products or related products.
  4. Disorderly conduct
  5. Theft of Property
  6. Possessing BB, pellet, or paint ball guns.
  7. Using a realistic toy, replica, look-a-like BB, pellet, or paint ball gun to scare, frighten, intimidate, threaten, rob, or to otherwise disrupt the orderly educational process.
  8. Any other offense that the CEO/Head of School may deem reasonable within this category of misconduct.
  
- Class D offenses are illegal behaviors such as the use or possession of substances that disrupt the educational process or learning in the classroom or other areas of the school environment. Class D offenses involve the following actions:
  1. Possessing, selling, furnishing, giving away, distributing, transferring, obtaining, using, consuming, alcohol in any form, in any quantity, or admitting to any of those activities.
  2. Possessing, obtaining, using, consuming, or admitting to any of the same, in any quantity, counterfeit, imitation, look-a-like substances, (including any synthetic drugs and/or substances) over-the-counter medications, vitamins, and food supplements, represented to be a controlled substance and/or a prescription medication.
  3. Possessing, selling, giving away, distributing, transferring, obtaining, or using, drug paraphernalia or admitting to any of those activities.
  4. Possessing, using, consuming, or admitting to possessing, using, or consuming, a legitimate prescription.
  5. Any time the offender is under the influence of any drug, deliriant, or alcohol.
  6. Any other offense that the CEO/Head of School may deem reasonable within this category of misconduct.
  
- Class E offenses are illegal behaviors such as the use or possession of a weapon that disrupt the educational process or learning in the classroom or other areas of the school environment. Class E offenses involve the following actions:



1. Firearms- Using or admitting to using a firearm.
2. Explosives – Using or admitting to using an explosive.
3. Other Weapons – Using or admitting to using a knife, razor blade or any other edged instrument of like kind or description.
4. Non-Weapons Used as a Weapon – Using threatening to use, or admitting to possessing, selling, giving away, transferring, distributing, or obtaining any article, object or substance as a weapon.
5. Any other offense that the CEO/Head of School may deem reasonable within this category of misconduct.

***3. An explanation of how the school will take into account the rights of special education students and students with disabilities in disciplinary actions and proceedings.***

Before a student is placed on short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion, the administrative team shall contact the student's guardian about the student's misconduct and proposed suspension or expulsion and schedule an IEP team meeting. The IEP team shall determine if the behavior warranting suspension or expulsion is a direct manifestation to the student's disability. If the behavior is deemed as a direct manifestation of the student's disability, the student cannot be suspended unless the student poses an immediate threat to himself/herself or others, in which case the student may be temporarily excluded from school for up to ten (10) days. After determining that the behavior is a direct manifestation of the student's disability, the IEP team must develop a functional behavioral assessment plan and a behavioral intervention plan to address the inappropriate behavior. If a behavioral intervention plan has been developed, the IEP team must review the behavioral intervention plan and modify the plan to address the behavior. If the IEP Team recommends a change in placement, the student and his/her parent/guardian are entitled to notice of the proposed change, an opportunity to examine relevant records, an impartial hearing with an opportunity to participate or be represented by counsel, and a review of the IEP Team's decision about the proposed change in placement. If the student's misconduct is not a manifestation of the disability, suspension or expulsion may be recommended and approved. The parent of a child with a disability who disagrees with any decision regarding placement, or the manifestation determination, or the Head of School that believes that maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or others, may appeal the decision by requesting a hearing. The IEP team shall develop a plan to ensure that students with disabilities have access to a quality education that aligns with IEP goals. In special circumstances, the administrative team may remove a student from the educational setting for no more than 45 days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability, if the child (1) possesses or uses a weapon, (2) knowingly possesses or uses illegal substances, or (3) inflicts serious bodily injury upon another person at school, on school premises, or at a school function.

***4. 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.***

The Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts procedures for due process shall align with local, state, and federal regulations. Parents/guardians shall be notified about the student's misconduct and proposed suspension or expulsion. Students shall have the right to a fair hearing before being suspended or expelled. Students are provided with the opportunity to present their version of events that led to the suspension or expulsion hearing, defend their action, and written evidence and/or exhibits to support their case. Students and parents shall have the right to appeal any expulsion, suspension, or referral to an alternate school setting recommended by the Head of School or Director of Student Affairs. The student may be allowed to remain at school until the due process hearing unless that student presents a threat to the safety of other students, teachers, or staff, or if the student is presenting a significant obstacle to the teacher's ability to teach and the other students' ability to learn. When a student is not allowed to attend school pending a due process hearing, whenever possible that student will receive assignments, homework, and make-up work.

**1. Provide as Attachment 9 the school’s proposed discipline policy. Discuss how students and parents will be informed of the school’s Discipline Policy. If already developed, provide as Attachment.**

During the one-on-one family and engagement meeting, which is held at the beginning of each school year, parents/guardians are provided with the *Student Code of Conduct* handbook. During the one-on-one family and engagement meeting held with the administrative team, counselors, and teachers, the parents/guardians and students are provided with a detailed overview of the code of conduct, including expectations, consequences for violations, and procedures, sign the student/parent responsibility contract, and sign that they have received and understand the behavior policy. Each year, the Head of School shall also provide an overview of the Student Code of Conduct handbook, expectations, consequences for violations, and procedures that students must follow each and every day while at school, on school premises, or at school functions during the new student orientation. In addition, teachers also provide students with a detailed review of the Code of Conduct, expectations, classroom rules, and consequences for breaking rules.

See *Attachment 9* for the school’s proposed *Student Code of Conduct* handbook.

**References**

Bosworth, K., & Judkins, M. (2014). Tapping into the power of school climate to prevent bullying: One application of schoolwide positive behavior interventions and supports. *Theory into Practice, 53*(4), 300-307. <https://doi:10.1080/00405841.2014.947224>

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**Attachments**

**Section 11: Student Discipline Policy and Plan**

11.1	<a href="#">Attachment 9 Student Code of Conduct</a>	Williams, Krista, 3/14/22 2:28 AM	DOCX / 155.247 KB
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**12. Family and Community Involvement**

**1. Describe the role to date of any parents and community members involved in developing the proposed school.**

Multiple organizations and individuals have contributed to the design and development of the proposed school. Parents and community members have engaged in one-on-one information sessions, door-to-door networking, and zoom meetings. During the engagement process, parents and community members were

provided with surveys, which provided the leadership team with valuable insight and information about the educational needs of parents and students within the community. Through the surveys and meetings, the leadership team learned that many of the students living within disadvantaged neighborhoods in Mobile, AL attend schools that do not provide them with an advanced, high-quality education or the resources needed to be successful in school. Community members and parents have articulated their frustration that students are lacking the training and resources needed to cultivate their gifts in the arts or to be college and career ready after graduation. Further, parents and community members also articulated their frustration of how many of the schools within their neighborhoods are considered as low performing schools and little has been done to change the outcomes. The information and insights provided by parents and community members were used in the development of school plans, curricula, and programs of the proposed school. Though the efforts of community members and parents, the leaders at FPC VPAA were able to create a model to address educational inequities through our advanced academic and arts curriculum, ongoing college and career mentoring program, school-wide interventions, and ongoing professional development for ensuring that educators engage in culturally proficient practices each and every day.

**2. Describe what you have done to assess and build parent and community demand for your school and how you will engage parents and community members from the time that the school is approved through opening.**

The leadership team at FPC VPAA created multiple engagement opportunities through one-on-one and group information sessions, door-to-door networking, and parent surveys to determine interest and to gain valuable information for the development of the proposed school. Retired and current teachers/leaders have also provided powerful insight into the types of professional development, teaching practices and techniques, and culture needed for building teachers and leaders' capacity, which is necessary for maximizing student learning. Local businesses, leaders, and community organizations have helped our team with locating local resources useful for supporting the non-academic and academic needs of the students and the school as a whole. The leaders of FPC VPAA continues to attend various local business meeting, organization meetings, and neighborhood meetings for purposes of informing community members and residents about the school's plans, goals, and to develop relationships across the Mobile County area. We have also continued our efforts in building positive relationships and spreading the word of the school through electronic school information surveys shared among community members. At the point of application submission, approval, and opening of the school, leaders at FPC VPAA plan to continue efforts of engaging community members and parents through ongoing information meetings, neighborhood and local organization meetings, social media, televised advertisement, radio advertisement, and door-to-door networking. See *Attachment 9.2* for community letters of support and interest in the proposed school.

**3. Describe how you will engage and provide opportunities for parents in the life of the school (in addition to any proposed governance roles described in Section 2 below). 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.**

At FPC VPAA, parents/guardians are encouraged and provided with multiple opportunities to be involved in every aspect of the school community, which is necessary for improving student learning and the continuous success of the school. Leaders at FPC VPAA understand that importance of parental involvement in the school community; therefore, we plan to have a Parent/Guardian Advisory Council. The Parent/Guardian Advisory Council will be composed of parent representatives who meet regularly to discuss and make suggestions regarding rules and regulations, academic and enrichment programs, support programs for all students, including students at-risk for academic failure, ELL students, and students with mental health needs, and to engage local community leaders in the continuous improvement of the school. In addition to the Advisory Council, parents/ guardians are encouraged to participate and volunteer for student recitals, concerts, ArtWalks, and other school-related events. School related events at FPC VPAA allows parents/guardians to engage in responsible roles such as, but not limited to, concert programming, staging, transportation, scheduling, production, promotion, advertisement, ticketing, and other roles needed

for smooth running of school events. The school also encourages parents to become a member of the governing board. Through parent involvement on the governing board, leaders at FPC VPAA are able to gain insight about parents' views on school rules and regulations, challenges facing families and the community, and ways the school can combat challenges that students and families face through particular school programs. As an integral part of the school community, leaders at FPC VPAA plan to involve parents in the day-to-day operation of the school through our Parent Volunteer Program. At FPC VPAA, we encourage parents to volunteer for concerts and other school-related events, carpool duty, tutoring sessions, front office support, to become a teacher's aide, and other roles that are vital for the smooth operation of the school and continuous improvement of student learning. The Parent Volunteer Program at FPC VPAA ensures that families and parents feel welcomed and respected in the school community. When parents and families are involved in the school community, they become proactive supporters of their child's education. Teachers and leaders also communicate with parents on a weekly basis via the school's newsletter, email, and phone message. Semi-quarterly meetings are also held between teachers and parents to provide valuable information about a child's progress in class and accomplishments. At FPC VPAA, we have created programs that intentionally invites parents and families to become involved in the school on a day-to-day basis, which is necessary for the continuous improvement of the school and student success.

**4. Please describe any expectations for parents that are part of your educational plan or model. Explain clearly how parent expectations will support your educational plan.**

At FPC VPAA, we have engaged in door-to-door networking, surveys, and ongoing information sessions to learn about parents' expectations. At FPC VPAA, we expect parents to be involved in every aspect of the school community. Parents and families are strongly encouraged to attend a one-on-one/group meeting with leaders and educators of the school after receiving their child's enrollment welcome letter. During these meetings, parents are provided with in-depth information about their role in ensuring that students complete daily homework assignments, classwork, and follows the school's procedures and rules. We also expect parents to volunteer at the school on a regular basis and attend all parent/community meetings. Having high expectations for parents can increase parental involvement, which in turn, can increase student achievement (Yamamoto & Holloway, 2010). In addition to the expectations that the school has for parents, leaders at FPC VPAA engaged in multiple engagement opportunities to learn about parent expectations and to gain information about programs, practices, and techniques that would improve learning and success among disadvantaged populations in Mobile County and surrounding areas. During the engagement meetings, parents expressed the importance of the development of a school that appreciates and cultivates their children's artistic and musical gifts while providing them with an advanced academic education that prepares them for the rigors of competitive colleges across the country. Parents expectations of the type of school that they desire for their child as well as for students living within the most impoverished areas of Mobile County has been the driving force of the development of the school's educational model and plan. Based on parents articulated expectations, the leaders at FPC VPAA created a school model that includes the following programs and efforts: (1) an *arts intensive program* that provides students with multiple unique course offerings in music, theatre, art, and dance; (2) an *advanced academic program* that ensures that all students are provided with a high-quality education, regardless of ability or language; and (3) the development of a *positive school culture and environment* that embraces, celebrates, and encourages all students to reach their highest potential regardless of the challenges that they may experience in life. Through our continuous efforts of parent and community engagement, leaders at FPC VPAA plan to use the information to inform our educational model and decisions. Parent input and expectations provides vital insight into the challenges and needs of families and the community that the school serves.

**References**

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## Attachments

### Section 12: Family and Community Involvement

12.1	<a href="#">Attachment 9.2 Letter of Support</a>	Williams, Krista, 3/14/22 4:35 AM	PDF / 124.835 KB
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## 13. Partnership or Contractual Relationships

*1. Discuss the community resources that will be available to students and parents. Describe any partnerships the school will have with community organizations, businesses, or other educational institutions. Specify the nature, purposes, terms, and scope of services of any such partnerships including any fee-based or in-kind commitments from community organizations or individuals that will enrich student learning opportunities. Include, as Attachment 10, existing evidence of support from intended community partners such as letters of intent/commitment, memoranda of understanding, and/or contracts.*

The Board of Directors and leaders of the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy have collaborated with multiple church organizations, community organizations, and businesses to determine the community resources that may be available for the school as a whole, students, and parents. The dynamic conversations that we have had with local businesses and community organizations have helped with illuminating various local resources for the school community. Through our efforts and engagement, we were able to obtain a partnership with Sunny Side Theatre in Mobile, AL. Sunny Side Theatre has served disadvantaged students in the Mobile area for over 20 years. Sunny Side Theatre plans to provide the FPC VPAA with multiple resources and services, including but not limited to theatre and music materials, arts instructors, after-school lessons, and ongoing recruitment services. The partnership agreement with Sunny Side Theatre will be finalized upon charter approval (*see Attachment 10 for community partnership letter* ). In addition to our partnership with Sunny Side Theatre, we plan to continue our efforts in obtaining a formal agreement and contract with AltaPointe Health, the University of South Alabama, and other businesses/educational institutions needed for ensuring the success of student achievement and overall well-being.

*2. If you are interested in partnering with businesses, provide an explanation of the purposed partnership agreement if any, between the school and the business. Include the specific nature of the purposed partnership in this section.*

The leaders at FPC VPAA plan to obtain a formal partnership agreement with AltaPointe Health, Alabama State Council on the Arts, and the University of South Alabama. Through our engagement meetings, the leaders at FPC VPAA learned that AltaPointe Health could be a great asset to the school because of the mental health services that are provided to any student living within Mobile, AL. The services at AltaPointe Health includes, but not limited to, school-based therapy, case management, In-Home Intervention, acute crisis management, and other pertinent services for improving the well-being of students and their families. In addition to AltaPointe Health, leaders at FPC VPAA plan to also partner with the University of South Alabama Center for Academic Excellence to provide students with undergraduate tutors during the school day. We also plan to partner with the University of South Alabama Music Department for contractual services of the Laidlaw Performing Arts Center. The Performing Arts Center at USA provides the school with a state-of-the art auditorium for hosting concerts, recitals, theatre productions, and art exhibitions necessary for student success and engagement with the local community. In addition to the planned conversations with AltaPointe Health and the University of South Alabama, the leadership team and Board of Directors plan to continue our efforts of partnering with local businesses and education institutions for meeting the needs of our student populations.

3. *Provide explanations of any other partnership or contractual relationships central to the school’s operations or mission. Include documentation of these relationships in Attachment 10.*

N/A

## Attachments

### Section 13: Partnership or Contractual Relationships

13.1	<a href="#">Attachment 10 Community Partnership</a>	Williams, Krista, 3/7/22 2:00 AM	DOCX / 13.902 KB
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## 14. Educational Service Providers (ESP) and Other Partnerships

N/A

## Attachments

### Section 14: Educational Service Providers (ESP) and Other Partnerships

– No Attachments –

## 15. Educational Program Capacity

1. *Identify the key members of the school’s leadership team. Identify only individuals who will play a substantial and ongoing role in school development, governance and/or management, and will thus share responsibility for the school’s educational success. These may include current or proposed governing board members, school leadership/management, and any essential partners who will play an important ongoing role in the school’s development and operation.*

*Describe the team’s individual and collective qualifications for implementing the school design successfully, including capacity in areas such as:*

- *School leadership, administration, and governance;*
- *Curriculum, instruction, and assessment;*
- *Performance management; and*
- *Parent and community engagement.*

*Describe the group’s ties to and/or knowledge of the target community.*

The Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy has a leadership team with a wealth of knowledge and experience in education. The individuals of the leadership team at FPC VPAA have been selected for their expertise, knowledge, and unique contributions within areas of school leadership,

administration, governance, curriculum, instruction, assessment, performance management, and parent and community engagement. Collectively, the leadership team of the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy has over 70 years of experience serving in the public education sector. Key members of the leadership team include Dr. Krista Williams, Dr. Anthony Morris, Dr. Benterah Morton, and Dr. Hannah Hart. Dr. Hannah Hart serves as the President of the Board of Directors. Dr. Hannah Hart is a certified principal-coach for the Alabama State Department of Education with over 20 years of experience as a principal. As a leader, she maintained the designation as an Alabama top-ranked school. Dr. Krista Williams, the founder and head of school, has over 10 years of experience as an educator and leader. As the 2021 Boston University SOM Award Winner, Dr. Krista Williams has earned the respect and admiration of mentors, colleagues, students, and the community through her dedication and commitment to arts education. As a recent principal-in-residence for the Mobile County Public School System, Dr. Williams successfully managed the organization, facilities, and financial resources for multiple schools across the district; ensured that each student had equitable access to effective leaders, learning opportunities, academic and social support, and other resources necessary for success; strategically managed staff in a manner that optimized their professional capacity; and engaged parents, faculty, and the community in developing and maintaining a shared vision for the continuous improvement of student learning. Dr. Anthony Morris has over 30 years of experience in finance, instructional leadership, and operations. Dr. Anthony Morris, the Director of Operations and Student Affairs, has over 30 years of educational experience. Dr. Morris has served as a school principal for the Escambia County School District in Brewton, AL, and in the capacity as a superintendent and director of human resources. Dr. Morris' unique expertise and leadership led to his accomplishment as the Superintendent of Year in 2009. As a superintendent, Dr. Morris supervised approximately 650 faculty and staff members, 30 administrators, and approximately 4,000 students. Dr. Benterah Morton serves as a Board of Director and key member of the leadership team. Dr. Morton is an Assistant Professor of Educational Leadership at the University of South Alabama. Prior to his appointment as an Assistant Professor, Dr. Morton served in the capacity as school principal. During his tenure, Dr. Morton was able to maintain the designation of a TEA Recognized Campus. Moreover, Dr. Morton served as chairperson of the District Wide Educational Improvement Committee for several years and actively supported the development and implementation of the nearly \$50 million physical and instructional overhaul of a local school district.

***2. 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.***

N/A

***3. 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 Attachment 13, the qualifications, resume, and professional biography for this individual. Discuss evidence of the leader's ability to effectively serve the anticipated population.***

Dr. Krista Williams, founder and Head of School for the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy has over 10 years of experience in public education. Dr. Williams' commitment and continuous work towards equity, inclusion, and the improvement of student achievement in the arts and academic across the country led to her accomplishment as the 2021 Boston University SOM Distinguished Award Winner. For years, Dr. Williams has worked within schools with a large population of disadvantaged students. Through her experience and continuous work within schools in impoverished areas, she has learned first-hand about the need of a school that provides all students, regardless of ability or language with an advanced, high-quality education. As a recent principal-in-residence for the Mobile County Public School System, Dr. Williams engaged in ongoing efforts of creating culturally proficient and

learner-centered professional development for teachers and a positive school culture at each of her assigned schools for the continuous improvement of student learning and overall success. As a leader, Dr. Williams successfully managed the organization, facilities, and financial resources for multiple schools, including Murphy High School, Hankins Middle School, and Collins Rhodes Elementary; ensured that each student had equitable access to effective leaders, learning opportunities, academic and social support, and other resources necessary for success; strategically managed over 2,000 students and approximately 75 staff members across the district; and engaged parents, faculty, and the community in developing and maintaining a shared vision for the continuous improvement of student learning through multiple school-related events. Through her equitable and inclusive leadership practices, Dr. Williams witnessed an increase in student achievement among disadvantaged populations within her assigned schools. More specifically, she noted that the achievement gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students closed during her leadership. Dr. Williams also had a 100% pass rate for all assigned students during the Mobile County Public School's recent (2020-2021) 5<sup>th</sup> quarter summer school program. Dr. Williams' expertise and unique/innovative approach to creating inclusive and equitable structures for all students has proven successful.

***If no candidate has been identified, provide as Attachment 13 the job description or qualifications, and discuss the timeline, criteria, and recruiting and selection process for hiring the school leader.***

The proposed Head of School has been identified.

***4. 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 and provide, as Attachment 14, the qualifications, resumes, and professional biographies for these individuals. If these positions are not yet filled, explain the timeline, criteria, and process for recruitment and hiring.***

Dr. Anthony Morris has been hired to serve as the schools' Director of Operations and Student Affairs. Dr. Morris has over 30 years of experience in public education, including over 7 years of experience as superintendent and more than 15 years of experience as a campus leader. Over the span of his career, he has successfully managed over 13 schools, 1,000 faculty and staff members, and ensured the improvement of achievement of more than 7,000 students. Dr. Anthony Morris has an extensive amount of experience in educational leadership, operations, and finances. He has been a residence hall counselor, teacher, assistant principal, principal, personnel director, superintendent, and adjunct professor. Dr. Morris holds a Bachelor of Arts in education (mathematics), a Master of Arts in education (educational administration and supervision), and Doctor of Philosophy (educational leadership) from the University of Mississippi. Additionally, he has an Educational Specialist (educational leadership) degree from Mississippi State University. Throughout his tenure, Dr. Morris dedicated his time and efforts to professional development, civic duty, and community involvement, which functions as necessary components of effectively improving student achievement among all populations. Dr. Morris has held leadership positions in the following organizations in Mississippi and Alabama: Associations for School Administration, Rotary Club, Boys and Girls Clubs, and Chambers of Commerce. As a distinguished leader, Dr. Morris attended the Harvard Principals' Institute and was named Superintendent of the Year in 2009. Through his commitment to student achievement and community involvement, Dr. Morris has received many other awards and recognitions during his educational career.

***5. Explain who will work on a full-time or nearly full-time basis following assignment of a location to lead development of the school and the plan to compensate these individuals.***

As innovative/unique leaders, Dr. Williams and Dr. Morris will both work as full-time employees of the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy. Dr. Williams and Dr. Morris have applied for the



NewSchools Venture Fund Grant to ensure compensation. Once awarded, part of the grant will be used to compensate both Dr. Morris and Dr. Williams as full-time employees. Both leaders also plan to apply for the CSP grant for new charter schools.

## **Attachments**

### **Section 15: Educational Program Capacity**

– No Attachments –

# OPERATIONS PLAN AND CAPACITY

## 18. Legal Status and Governing Documents

As stated in the attached Certificate of Formation, the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy is organized as an Alabama nonprofit Corporation exclusively for charitable, religious, educational, and scientific purposes, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code and shall not inure to or otherwise provide private gain of any person. Specifically, the Corporation is organized to open and operate a school that provides a positive learning environment for a diverse community of students in grades K-12 that not only promotes academic excellence by encouraging students to engage in rigorous, college and pre-professional coursework that will prepare them to become productive citizens, but also nurtures and inspires students to fulfill and discover their creative abilities in the visual or performing arts.

As a nonprofit corporation, the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy has applied for recognition of exemption under section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code (see *Attachment 15*). Additionally, the governing Board of Directors have also adopted a conflict of interest policy, which is included in *Attachment 15*. As stated in Article I, the purpose of the conflict of interest policy is to protect Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy (Organization) interest when it is contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interest of an officer, director or member of the Organization or might result in a possible excess benefit transaction. This policy is intended to supplement but not replace any applicable state and federal laws governing conflict of interest applicable to nonprofit and charitable organizations.

### Attachments

#### Section 18: Legal Status and Governing Documents

18.1	<a href="#">Attachment 15 Articles of Incorporation</a>	Williams, Krista, 3/3/22 5:46 AM	PDF / 3.235 MB
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## 19. Organization Structure and Relationships

**1. Submit, as Attachment 17, organization charts that show the school governance, management, and staffing structure in: a) Year 1; and b) at full build-out.**

At the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy, we recognize that the organizational structure is a vital component of student achievement. With this in mind, we are committed to ensuring that all students are provided with the necessary instructional and support staff who are knowledgeable and possess the skills necessary to improve student learning. The attached organization chart (see *Attachment 17*) provides a clear view of the anticipated positions to be filled for each school year until full build-out. The organization chart clearly delineates the CEO/Head of School role and responsibility for overseeing advisory bodies, partnerships with community organizations, business operations, management, school culture, instructional and noninstructional staff for ensuring the success of the school's anticipated student populations. The organization chart also shows the Director of Operations/Student Affairs role in supporting the Head of School. In addition to the roles of the CEO/Head of School and the Director of Operations and Student Affairs, the school plans to hire multiple arts/academic directors who specialize within their field of

study to ensure that students can meet and exceed arts/core state standards for the state of Alabama. The unique/innovative organizational structure of the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy provides all students, regardless of background, language, or ability with the opportunity to achieve at high levels, which is necessary for their success.

## Attachments

### Section 19: Organization Structure and Relationships

19.1	<a href="#">Attachment 17 Organization Chart</a>	Williams, Krista, 3/12/22 12:54 AM	PDF / 43.188 KB
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## 20. Governing Board

***1. Explain the governance philosophy that will guide the board, including the nature and extent of involvement by key stakeholder groups. As Attachment 18 , provide the governing bylaws that for the proposed school.***

The governance philosophy of FPC VPAA is to advance best practices for closing the achievement gap, delivering an excellent education to a diverse community of students, and to ensure diversity among leadership and teaching. The Board of Directors recognize that the success of students is necessary for the success of the community as a whole. With this in mind, the Board of Directors shall ensure that parents and community members are involved in every aspect of the school community. In an effort to involve key stakeholder groups, the bylaws provide opportunities for the creation of committees (e.g., academic, recruitment, and development). The committees provide community members and parents with the opportunity to be involved in various key aspects of the school community. We will also amend to include parent, community, and student advisory councils. The advisory councils shall consist of parents and community members who are leaders in the community and have a desire to support the Corporation’s efforts in ensuring that every student has the opportunity to reach their highest potential. Parents and community members on the advisory councils shall provide their expertise in areas such as college and career readiness, parent-teacher organization, academic and nonacademic supports for students, recruitment, workforce internships for students, curriculum, and the visual and performing arts.

***2. Describe clearly the governance structure of the proposed school, including the primary roles of the governing board and how it will interact with the principal/head of school and any advisory bodies. Describe the size, current and desired composition, powers, and responsibilities of the governing board. Identify key skills, areas of expertise, and constituencies that will be represented on the governing board. Explain how this governance structure and composition will help ensure that a) the school will be an educational and operational success; b) the board will evaluate the success of the school and school leader; and c) there will be active and effective representation of key stakeholders, including parents.***

The governing Board is comprised of local/regional leaders, parents, and community members with experience in the educational sector and the improvement of high poverty communities. The Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy is governed by Board of Directors who have expertise, knowledge, and skills in areas of finance, operations, leadership, instruction, community development, and school law. With the expertise and skills of the governing board, FPC VPAA will be able to operate as a high performing public charter school. The Board sets policies, evaluates the CEO/Head of School, leads strategic planning processes, and provides financial oversight. The Board also ensures that all curricula align

with the school's mission and vision and accountability goals. The governing Board of FPC VPAA is responsible for approving an annual budget to support curricular purchases and development for ensuring student growth and achievement. The Board delegates all personnel decisions to the CEO/Head of School, including hiring, evaluating, and dismissing employees. The Board and the CEO/Head of School work collaboratively to ensure effective operations of the school.

***3. List all current and identified board members and their intended roles. Describe the responsibilities and qualifications of the governing board. If known, identify the individuals who will fill these positions. 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 and hiring. In Attachment 19 provide a completed and signed Board Member Information Sheet for each proposed Board member.***

Dr. Hannah Hart is a lifelong community resident of Mobile, AL who has served with many local organizations to ensure the success of students across the county. She is a certified principal-coach for the Alabama State Department of Education with over 20 years of experience as a school principal. As a school principal, she managed all school operations, finances, technology, instructional, extracurricular, and community and parent programs. She also maintained the designation as *an Alabama top-ranked school* during her tenure as principal. Dr. Benterah Morton is an Assistant Professor of Educational Leadership at the University of South Alabama. His research examines the role K-12 leaders play in meeting the needs of diverse populations. He explores this topic through mentoring practices and programs, leadership training, and implementation of curriculum and instruction. Dr. Morton served as an assistant principal for over three years and as a campus principal for over four years. Dr. Morton had the luxury of coordinating all instructional, technological, operational, financial, actively supported development and implementation of the nearly \$50 million physical and instructional overhaul of our school district. As a collaborative instructional leader, Dr. Morton worked with campus and district administrative teams and faculty to develop, promote, implement, and maintain visibility of our Mandarin Chinese and Vietnamese language immersion programs. Dr. Morton is also a parent representative brings a wealth of knowledge and experience with working with schools and school boards. Dr. Sandra Moore was born and raised in Mobile, AL and brings to the board deep expertise in school finance and operations. Dr. Moore has twenty-seven years of experience working with P-16 schools in various capacities, thirteen years' experience managing the federally funded Elementary and Secondary Act program, Reading Excellence Act Family Literacy Program, and several years of experience as a Program Coordinator/Special Programs Coordinator. Dr. Sandra Moore set-up and implemented 54 family literacy sites that included preschool - adult education components; wrote and managed contracts, grants, and curricula; wrote multiple articles on family literacy that were published in national journals; and conducted workshops/technical assistance on preschool, parenting, and grant writing. Dr. Dyann Ryans has over 25 years of experience in arts education. For several years, Dr. Ryans served as the Director of Bands for Stillman College. During her tenure, she formed the school's first marching band program; taught undergraduate music education classes while managing purchases of instruments/equipment and advising undergraduate music education majors; recruited band members; planned, implemented, and coordinated summer band camp and travel plans; and served on various collegiate level committees. As the former commander of the 116th Army Band, Dr. Ryans conducted the ceremonial, marching, and symphonic bands while implementing musical and military training for guardsmen; conducted quarterly and annual evaluations of all soldiers while preparing unit budget; maintained inventory in excess of \$500,000 and determined eligibility for music program entry while hiring, promoting, and instituting appropriate disciplinary action as needed. Dr. Ryans brings a wealth of knowledge and skills to the Board in areas of arts financing, development, and effective implementation of high arts programs.

***4. 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.***

N/A, the current applicant team does include the initial board.

**5. If this application is being submitted by an existing non-profit organization respond to the following:**

**a. Will the existing non-profit board govern the new school, or has the school formed a**

**new non-profit corporation governed by a separate board?**

**b. If the non-profit'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.**

**c. If a new board has been formed, describe what, if anything, its ongoing relationship to the existing non-profit's board will be.**

This application is not being submitted by a pre-existing non-profit organization.

**6. Explain the procedure by which board members have been and will be selected. How often will the board meet? Discuss the plans for any committee structure.**

The Board Members of the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy have been strategically selected for their expertise in areas of instruction, finances, operations, and success in serving a diverse community of students. The Board shall hold at least six (6) meetings per year, including any special called meetings. FPC VPAA Board members are elected at the annual meeting of the Board of Directors in June of each year. During the June meeting, the Board of Directors shall receive recommendations from various members of the school community, including parents, faculty, and staff to fill a Board vacancy. Upon approval, the school plans to develop the following committees for ensuring student success: (a) Academic committee of the Board provides support to the school in establishing and meeting academic performance goals; (b) development committee sets policies and strategic goals for fundraising. The committee shall also assist Board of Directors and staff in identification and evaluation of potential donors in the solicitation of grants; and (c) recruitment committee sets strategic goals and plans for student and faculty recruitment.

**7. Describe the board's ethical standards and procedures for identifying and addressing conflicts of interest. Provide, as Attachment 20, the board's proposed Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest policy. Identify any existing relationships that could pose actual or perceived conflicts if the application is approved; discuss specific steps that the board will take to avoid any actual conflicts and to mitigate perceived conflicts.**

FPC VPAA Board of Directors have established a formal policy to prevent and disclose conflicts of interest. Any member, director, principal officer, or member of a committee with governing board delegated powers at FPC VPAA shall not have a direct or indirect financial interest. All Board of Directors and employees of the school shall abide by the board approved conflict of interest policy (*see Attachment 20*). The Board shall adhere to the following procedures for identifying and addressing any conflicts of interest:

#### **1. Duty to Disclose**

In connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest, an interested person must disclose the existence of the financial interest and be given the opportunity to disclose all material facts to the directors and members of committees with governing board delegated powers considering the proposed transaction or arrangement.

## **2. Determining Whether a Conflict of Interest Exists**

After disclosure of the financial interest and all material facts, and after any discussion with the interested person, he/she shall leave the governing board or committee meeting while the determination of a conflict of interest is discussed and voted upon. The remaining board or committee members shall decide if a conflict of interest exists.

## **3. Procedures for Addressing the Conflict of Interest**

- a. An interested person may make a presentation at the governing board or committee meeting, but after the presentation, he/she shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and the vote on, the transaction or arrangement involving the possible conflict of interest.
  
- b. The chairperson of the governing board or committee shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person or committee to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement.
  
- c. After exercising due diligence, the governing board or committee shall determine whether the Organization can obtain with reasonable efforts a more advantageous transaction or arrangement from a person or entity that would not give rise to a conflict of interest.
  
- d. If a more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably possible under circumstances not producing a conflict of interest, the governing board or committee shall determine by a majority vote of the disinterested directors whether the transaction or arrangement is in the Organization's best interest, for its own benefit, and whether it is fair and reasonable. In conformity with the above determination, it shall make its decision as to whether to enter into the transaction or arrangement.

## **4. Violations of the Conflicts of Interest Policy**

- a. If the governing board or committee has reasonable cause to believe a member has failed to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest, it shall inform the member of the basis for such belief and afford the member an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose.
  
- a. If, after hearing the member's response and after making further investigation as warranted by the circumstances, the governing board or committee determines the member has failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action.

**\*There are no existing relationships of current Board of Directors that could pose actual or perceived conflicts if this application is approved.**

***8. Describe plans for increasing the capacity of the governing board. How will the board expand and develop over time? How and on what timeline will new members be recruited and added, and how will vacancies be filled? What are the priorities for recruitment of additional board members? What kinds of orientation or training will new board members receive, and what kinds of ongoing development will existing board members receive? The plan for training and development should include a timetable, specific topics to be addressed, and requirements for participation. If there will be a network-level board, identify any board development requirements relative to the organization’s proposed growth and governance needs.***

As the school increases, the Board of Directors shall expand its members. New Board of Directors shall be elected at the annual meeting by the then serving Board. The Board of Directors may accept recommendations from current and past board members, school faculty or staff, and members of the community to fill a Board vacancy. To ensure parental involvement, at least twenty percent (20%) of the Directors shall be parents of students attending the school. The Board of Directors shall use its reasonable efforts to ensure that the Board is reflective of the diverse community of students served by the Corporation. During the recruitment of new Board of Directors, special consideration shall be given to those with deep rooted community involvement and expertise within areas that meets the needs of Board.

All new Board of Directors shall receive training no later than their second board meeting. Topics covered during the Board of Directors training shall include, at minimum, Alabama Ethics Law, Alabama Open Meetings Law, Conflict of Interest Policy, and the Board Policy. Current Board of Directors shall receive continuous, ongoing training in areas of finance, facilities, school administration, and operations. The trainings and professional development for Board of Directors shall be conducted during the summer months of each school year by external experts and the CEO. All Board of Directors are required to participate in Board trainings and professional development meetings.

## Attachments

### Section 20: Governing Board

20.1	<a href="#">Attachment 19 Board Information Sheet</a>	Williams, Krista, 3/14/22 3:47 AM	PDF / 1.025 MB
20.2	<a href="#">Attachment 20 Conflict of Interest Policy</a>	Williams, Krista, 3/12/22 2:56 PM	PDF / 77.626 KB
20.3	<a href="#">Attachment 18 Bylaws</a>	Williams, Krista, 3/12/22 2:51 PM	DOCX / 33.483 KB

## 21. Advisory Bodies

***1. Describe any advisory bodies or councils to be formed, including the roles and duties of that body.***

*Describe the planned composition of the advisory body; the strategy for achieving that composition; the role of parents, students, and teachers (if applicable); and the reporting structure as it relates to the school's governing body and leadership.*

The school advisory bodies at FPC VPAA provide parents, faculty, staff, community members, and students an opportunity to participate in the development of educational priorities, assessment of a school's needs, and identification of local resources. Each school advisory council shall maintain minutes of its meetings, a record of which shall be maintained and shared with the school board. The minutes shall include copies of the notices of meetings, the agenda, record of attendance, and any reports or supplemental materials used during the meeting. There will be multiple Advisory Councils formed at FPC VPAA, including the Student Advisory Council, Parent/Guardian Advisory Council, and the Community Advisory Council. The Student Advisory Council is composed of student selected representatives who meet regularly to discuss and make suggestions regarding student rules and regulations, academic and enrichment programming, and other items pertinent to improving student success. The Parent/Guardian Advisory Council is composed of parent representatives who meet to discuss and make suggestions regarding rules and regulations, academic and enrichment programs, and support programs for students at-risk for academic failure, ELL students, and students with mental health needs. The Community Advisory Council is composed of leaders of community organizations within the Mobile area who meet regularly to discuss and make suggestions about various community supports available for students. To form and sustain effective Advisory Councils, the CEO/Head of School is responsible for the following tasks: (a) assures that the membership of the School Advisory Council is representative of the community served by the school; (b) develops and promotes a culture of trust and positive relationship building among members; (c) facilitates the distribution of the School Advisory Council minutes and agendas; (d) encourages leadership from within the council; (e) serves as a resource who provides information regarding local school educational programming and supports; (f) assists in training members in leadership skills; and (g) ensures open communication among all members.

## **Attachments**

### **Section 21: Advisory Bodies**

– No Attachments –

## **22. Grievance/Complaint Process**

At the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy, we want all members of the school community to understand that they are valued, appreciated, and heard. When a member of the school community has a problem, complaint, suggestion, or question about any of the school's procedures, policies, or practices, we are committed to responding to those individuals in a timely manner. We have committed our time and efforts to creating a school atmosphere that fosters open, honest, and respectful communication. To ensure that the school culture is inviting to all members of the school community, we encourage all members of the school community to discuss their concerns with the CEO/Head of School in order to reach a resolution or clarification of the situation before filing a formal grievance/complaint form. However, individuals are not required to discuss the matter with the Head of School before filing a formal complaint. A parent/guardian or student may initiate the grievance procedure to appeal any final decision of a school personnel. A person may also file a grievance/complaint form to resolve complaints of harassment or discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. If a student or parent/guardian disagrees with the established policies or practices, rules, or feel that he/she has been treated unfairly, the individual may follow the grievance/resolution procedures set forth by the Board of Directors of the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy. The grievance/complaint procedures below outline how complaints will be investigated and resolved at the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy:



## **Formal Grievance Procedures**

If the parent/guardian or student has addressed his/her concerns with the Head of School and feel that the issue has not been resolved or wishes to present his/her concerns in a manner to request a formal review and response, the following procedures must be followed:

**Step 1:** The parent/guardian or student should submit a completed Parent/Student Grievance Form to the CEO/Head of School to initiate the review. Complaints about alleged discrimination or harassment must be filed within ninety (90) days of the alleged discrimination or harassment. The completed grievance/complaint notice must include the nature of the complaint, the date(s) of the occurrence, the desired results, and must be signed and dated by the person making the complaint.

**Step 2:** The CEO/Head of School will investigate the complaint using various procedures, and investigating techniques, including but not limited to interviews, phone contact, data reviews, and witness reports. After the review, the reporting parent/guardian or student will be informed of the remedial action being suggested and/or taken. A verbal or written response will be provided to the parent/student within ten (10) school days of the receipt of the grievance form by the CEO/Head of School. If a parent/student wishes to move to the next step of the process, written notice must be given within three (3) days of receiving a response for the current step.

**Step 3:** If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision of the Head of School, he/she may appeal through a signed written statement to the Board of Directors within ten (10) business days of the receipt of the Head of School's response. A statement of appeal to the Board may be submitted to the Head of School who will provide the statement to the Board. In an attempt to resolve the grievance, the Board shall review all relevant information and meet with the concerned parties and their representatives within thirty (30) calendar days of the receipt of such an appeal. A copy of the Board's disposition of the appeal shall be sent to each concerned party within fifteen (15) business days of this meeting. *The decision of the Board of Directors is final in the grievance process.*

## **Attachments**

### **Section 22: Grievance/Complaint Process**

– No Attachments –

## **23. Staff Structure**

1. *Provide, as Attachment 21 , a completed staffing chart for the school.*
2. *The staffing chart and accompanying notes or roster should identify the following:*
  - a. *Year 1 positions, as well as positions to be added in future years;*
  - b. *Administrative, instructional, and non-instructional personnel;*
  - c. *The number of classroom teachers, paraprofessionals, and specialty teachers; and d. Operational and support staff.*
3. *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.*

The attached staffing chart provides an overview of the anticipated positions necessary for meeting students' academic and nonacademic needs in Year 1 and at full build-out. At FPC VPAA, the CEO/Head of School oversees business operations, school culture and student achievement to ensure academic and organizational integrity. More specifically, the CEO/Head of School oversees management, operations, and school performance; leads public relations, finances, fundraising activities, and operations; and manages the administrative team, instructional, and noninstructional staff. The CEO/Head of School reports to the Board of Directors. The Director of Operations and Student Affairs work alongside the Head of School and engages in shared responsibilities of operations, finances, facility, and student academic needs and supports. The Director of Operations and Student Affairs is evaluated, reports to, and is hired by the CEO/Head of School. The Office Manager at FPC VPAA is responsible for maintaining student records; ensures the readiness and distribution of progress reports to parents and students; welcomes all students, families, staff, and visitors whether in person, telephone, email, or otherwise with professionalism and efficiency; and directly reports to the CEO/Head of School. Arts Directors (e.g., Music Director, Theatre Director, Visual Arts Director, and Dance Director) develop, coordinate, and assist with the implementation of the arts curriculum; teach a variety of arts courses within their field of expertise; develop, implement, and monitor the acquisition of materials for the arts department; recommend purchases of equipment and materials for arts department; work collaboratively with arts directors for the development of approved events, concerts, and activities. Academic Directors (e.g., Math Director, Science Director, Social Studies Director, and ELA Director) coordinate the planning, development, implementation and evaluation of curriculum and instructional practices within area of expertise to ensure that all students meet and exceed the state content standards; teach multiple courses in field of expertise; works collaboratively with the administrative and instructional staff; remain current in the research that support curriculum development, instructional program design and delivery, professional development, and assessment in content area; engage in ongoing data analysis to identify needed supports and strategies; and assist adjunct/full-time content area teachers with the implementation of effective instructional planning, teaching practice, small-group instruction and the use of data, assessment, and instructional technology. Academic Directors are evaluated by, and reports to CEO/Head of School in partnership with the Director of Operations/Student Affairs. Instructors prepare lessons that reflect accommodations for individual student differences; plan and use appropriate instructional strategies, activities, materials, and equipment for optimal student learning; work collaboratively with department directors; engage in ongoing data analysis to improve instruction; manage student behaviors in the classroom and administer discipline according to board policies and regulations; and participate in ongoing professional development opportunities; and works directly with the Director of their division. All instructors are evaluated by the CEO/Head of School in partnership with the Director of Operations/Student Affairs. The Special Education Coordinator directs, coordinates, and supervises the special education process, including screening, identification, IEP development, and placement to ensure school compliance with state and federal regulations; maintains special education student records and filed in accordance with state and federal timelines and guidelines; implement effective and innovative special education services to meet students' diverse needs; and assist the administrative staff with training general education teachers and special education teachers. The Special Education Coordinator reports to the CEO/Head of School in partnership with the Director of Operations/Student Affairs. The School Counselor provides individual and group guidance to help students to effectively cope with personal, social, academic, career, and family concerns; consult with parents, teachers, and administrators and support agencies in regard to student needs; schedule opportunities for students to visit with college and career mentors; monitor student progress to ensure effectiveness of counseling; and collaborate with educators and administrators to ensure that student needs are met. The School Counselor reports to and evaluated by the CEO/Head of School in partnership with the Director of Operations/Student Affairs.

As part of the school model, FPC VPAA ensures a small student-teacher ratio (Y1-16:1, Y2-15:1, Y3-15:1, Y4-15:1, Y5-15:1) for optimal learning growth among student populations. In addition, the low total adult-student ratio (Y1-11:1, Y2-11:1, Y3-12:1, Y4-12:1, Y5-12:1) at FPC VPAA allows faculty and staff to provide students with the supports and guidance needed to meet their individual needs.

## Attachments

### Section 23: Staff Structure

23.1	<a href="#">Attachment 21_Staffing Chart</a>	Williams, Krista, 3/12/22 3:28 AM	DOCX / 19.298 KB
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## 24. Staffing Plans, Hiring, Management, and Evaluation

- 1. 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 will use contracts, explain the nature and purpose of the contracts. Provide, as Attachment 22 , any personnel policies or an employee manual, if developed.*

All employees at the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy shall sign a one-year contract. The proposed employee contract is included in the sample employee handbook (*see Attachment 22* ).

- 2. 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.*

All employees at FPC VPAA shall enroll in the state retirement system and PEEHIP for health insurance. The school's participation in the state retirement system and PEEHIP allows all employees to receive the benefits needed for their health and wellness. To ensure that the school is able to attract and retain highly qualified staff, the proposed salary schedule in the below table for teachers at FPC VPAA shall be more than the minimum state range:

### TEACHER SALARY

	Yrs Exp	Bachelor/Non-Degree				Master			
		9-Month	10-Month	11-Month	12-Month	9-Month	10-Month	11-Month	12-Month
NEW	0	43,555	47,049	51,708	56,367	50,088	54,106	59,463	64,820
Step 1-2	1-2	43,555	47,049	51,708	56,367	50,088	54,106	59,463	64,820
	3-5	47,909	51,752	56,907	62,034	55,097	59,517	65,409	71,301
	6-8	50,008	54,020	59,369	64,718	57,510	62,123	68,274	74,422
	9-11	50,995	55,086	60,541	65,996	58,652	63,357	69,269	75,422
	12-14	52,020	56,193	61,758	67,332	59,819	64,618	71,015	76,788
	15-17	53,060	57,316	62,993	68,668	61,015	65,910	72,345	78,543
	18-20	54,118	58,459	64,249	70,037	62,235	67,227	73,883	79,810
	21-23	55,200	59,628	65,533	71,438	63,442	68,531	75,316	81,358
	24-26	56,306	60,823	66,846	72,869	64,749	69,943	76,868	83,034
	27	57,436	62,044	68,188	74,331	66,049	71,347	78,411	84,701

	Yrs Exp	6-Year				Doctoral			
		9-Month	10-Month	11-Month	12-Month	9-Month	10-Month	11-Month	12-Month
NEW	0	54,011	58,343	64,119	69,896	57,928	62,580	68,775	74,972
Step 1-2	1-2	54,011	58,343	64,119	69,869	57,928	62,580	68,775	74,972
	3-5	59,407	64,172	70,526	76,880	63,720	68,837	75,652	82,468
	6-8	62,025	67,001	73,635	80,269	66,510	71,851	78,964	86,079
	9-11	63,257	68,330	75,095	81,861	67,831	73,278	80,532	87,788
	12-14	64,518	69,692	76,592	83,493	69,183	74,738	82,137	89,538
	15-17	65,805	71,083	78,120	85,158	70,565	76,231	83,778	91,327
	18-20	67,123	72,506	79,684	86,864	71,975	77,755	85,452	93,152
	21-23	68,463	73,954	81,275	88,598	73,419	79,315	87,167	95,020
	24-26	69,841	75,442	82,911	90,381	74,885	80,898	88,907	96,918
	27	71,235	76,948	84,566	92,185	76,387	82,521	90,690	98,612

Position	Salary
Head of School	\$125,000
Director of Operations	\$90,000
CSFO	\$70,000
Special Education Coordinator	\$32,000
Office Manager	\$36,000
IT Manager	\$61,800

A top priority of the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy is to recruit and retain highly qualified educators. As noted in our school model, a highly qualified educator is necessary for the improvement and sustainment of student achievement across all student populations. One key aspect of FPC VPAA is to hire and recruit educators who specialized within their field of study. We also want to ensure that we keep a low student-to-teacher ratio to effectively meet the needs of each learner. To meet the school's goals, we shall hire and recruit professors from local colleges who are experts within their field of study. Unlike traditional schools who hire an academic director for the school as a whole, we will hire Directors who are highly qualified, experts within their field of study. The Directors at FPC VPAA shall bring their knowledge, expertise, and research to ensure success among our anticipated student populations.

**3. Describe your 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 your school design.**

The goal of the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy is to recruit and hire educators who are experts, highly qualified, and possess the skills and knowledgeable to improve student achievement among a diverse community of students. FPC VPAA shall engage in career fairs at local colleges, partnership with colleges, advertise via social media, job posting sites, television, and radio to recruit highly qualified educators.

The CEO/Head of School shall be responsible for the management of the interview process and the hiring of all staff. The hiring process at FPC VPAA has multiple engage steps that allows leaders to learn about the applicants, including their experience, qualifications, and work with diverse student populations:

**Step 1:** Interested applicants must complete an online application and upload pertinent documents such as transcripts, certifications, resume, and letters of recommendation.

**Step 2:** Following the review of all submitted applications, leaders shall contact those who move to the next round. During this round, applicants engage in a phone/virtual interview, which helps leaders to determine whether the applicant's philosophy and views align with the school's mission and vision. This particular round also allows leaders to learn about the applicants interests and personal characteristics.

**Step 3:** An in-person interview will be scheduled for each potential candidate. During this round, candidates must prepare a lesson that aligns with the school's standards for promoting learning growth among all learners.

**Step 4:** Applicants who successfully complete the in-person interview will be screened for background and reference checks in accordance with the Alabama state law for educators.

\*Recruitment and hiring of all staff shall begin immediately after charter approval.

**4. Outline the school's procedures for hiring and dismissing school personnel, including conducting criminal background checks.**

Leaders at the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy shall follow the below procedures for hiring school personnel:

1. Advertise the position for a minimum of five days.
2. Follow Steps 1-4 of the interview process as outlined in the above section.
3. Select the most qualified candidate and make an offer of employment.

4. Provide potential candidate with employment contract, enter into contract, and conduct new employee orientation.

In addition to the aforementioned hiring procedures, leaders at the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy have also adopted a disciplinary policy for the dismissal of an employees. The following process may be implemented for dismissing an employee:

**1. Verbal warning:**

- a. For minor infractions, there may be multiple verbal warnings.
- b. For serious infractions, there may be possibly only one verbal warning.
  - c. For major infractions, there may be no verbal warning; it may be an immediate written warning for a possible conference with the CEO/Head of School.
  - d. For willful misconduct, there may be no verbal warning or written warning, there should be an immediate review for suspension or termination.

**2. Written warning:**

- a. For minor infractions, there may be several written warnings.
- b. For serious infractions, there may be possibly only one written warning and/or referral for review for a possible conference with CEO/Head of School.
- c. For major infractions, there may be a written warning or a final written warning.
- d. For willful misconduct, there will be no written warning; there should be an immediate review for suspension or termination.

**3. Final warning:**

- a. For minor, serious and major infractions, there will be a review for a written final warning and possible conference with CEO/Head of School.
- b. For willful misconduct, there should be an immediate review for suspension or termination.

**4. Suspension:**

- a. For minor, serious, major or willful infractions there is a review for suspension or termination.
  1. Suspensions are for a period of time that is:
    - a. Up to twenty (20) days
    - b. Greater than twenty (20) days.

**5. Termination:**

- a. In all instances where there is a recommendation for termination, there is a review for possible termination. The CEO/Head of School makes the decision in regard to terminating

an employee. The employee shall have the right to appeal to the FPC VPAA Board of Directors.

The following definitions function as a guide for classification of major, minor, and serious infractions:

**Minor infraction:**

1. Failure to perform satisfactory work
2. Failure to follow established work procedures
3. Disruption of the school/work environment
4. Tardiness
5. Infrequent absenteeism without valid excuse
6. Abusive or foul language
7. Offensive conduct
8. Loafing or loitering
9. Conducting personal business on system time
10. Unauthorized solicitation or distribution during working hours
11. Gambling on system property or on system time
12. Failure to follow system guidelines and procedures
13. Violation of the Dress Code policy
14. Insubordination of a minor nature
15. Any other conduct of which the magnitude or consequences are considered a minor violation of conduct expected by the system

**Serious infraction:**

1. Failure to follow directives of supervisor
2. Excessive tardiness
3. Excessive absenteeism
4. Repeated disruption of the school/work environment
5. Restricting work or interfering with the work of other employees
6. Intentional waste of system resources
7. Unauthorized possession of system property

8. Violating safety procedures or regulations posing no threat of injury or damage to property
9. Creating or contributing to an unsanitary condition
10. Insubordination which rises to the level of a serious infraction or is infrequently repeated
11. Repeated violation of minor infractions
12. Any other conduct of which the magnitude or consequences are considered a serious violation of conduct expected by the system

**Major infraction:**

1. Disorderly conduct
2. Immoral conduct on system time
3. Verbal abuse of children
4. Absence without notification for three or more consecutive days
5. Failure to return from leave of absence as released by the provider
6. Failure to follow directives of supervisor, thereby endangering students or employees

**5. Explain how the school leader will be supported, developed, and evaluated each school year.**

***Provide, in Attachment 23, any leadership evaluation tool(s) that you have developed already.***

The FPC VPAA Board of Directors shall support and evaluate the CEO/Head of School each year. The delegates all personnel decisions, including hiring and dismissal of employee to the CEO/Head of School. The CEO/Head of School is responsible for management, finances, operations, and the effective organization of the school. The Board shall ensure that CEO/Head of School engage in efforts and makes decision aligned with the mission and accountability goals. The Board of Directors shall use the Council's Model Superintendent Evaluation to determine the CEO/Head of School effectiveness and overall performance (*see Attachment 23*). The CEO/Head of School shall evaluate all employees, including the Director of Operations and Student Affairs. The CEO/Head of School shall use the Marzano Focused School Leader Evaluation tool for Officers and all Academic/Arts Directors (*see Attachment 23*). Noninstructional and instructional staff shall be evaluated in partnership with the Director of Operations and Student Affairs.

**6. Explain how teachers will be supported, developed, and evaluated each school year. Provide, in Attachment 24, any teacher evaluation tool(s) that already exist for the school.**

The CEO/Head of School and Director of Operations and Student Affairs at FPC VPAA will teachers and directors through continuous, ongoing professional development. The school's schedule allows for continuous collaboration throughout each school week among all staff members at FPC VPAA. Through professional development and classroom observations, educators will be provided with ongoing feedback and supports necessary to improve their professional capacity, which is pertinent for improving student achievement. The school shall use the research-based Marzano Focused Teacher Evaluation Model as a tool to not only evaluate educators, but to improve their professional capacity in areas of instruction, collegiality, classroom management, cultural proficiency, and planning (*see Attachment 24 for teacher evaluation model*).



**7. Explain how the school intends to handle unsatisfactory leadership or teacher performance, as well as leadership/teacher changes and turnover.**

The mission of the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy is to educate a diverse community of students through a rigorous, pre-college and pre-professional level curriculum that will prepare them for post-secondary education and careers in the visual/performing arts. To achieve such a high goal requires ongoing collaboration among all staff, parents, and community members and commitment to the goals, mission, and vision of the school. In the event that a leader/teacher does not perform satisfactorily, a corrective plan must be in place to address the area of concern. The CEO/Head of School shall be responsible for developing a corrective plan for unsatisfactory leadership or teacher performance. Corrective plans shall be based on data and evidence and address the areas of concern in a detailed manner. The Corrective plan may include, but not limited to School Improvement Plan, Grade Level Corrective Plan, and subject/individual teacher plan. Educators or leaders may also be assigned mentors who shall provide additional supports and help to build the educators professional capacity for effectively addressing the areas of concern. Ongoing and rigorous professional development opportunities shall also be provided for all educators/leaders who need additional support to correct area of concern.

The leaders of FPC VPAA understand that there may be changes and turnover among educators and administrators. With this in mind, we are committed to ensuring that all newly hired educators/leaders are provided with effective learner-centered professional development that optimizes collaboration and relationship building among all staff and students; builds their professional capacity in areas of instruction, classroom management, and cultural proficiency; and collegiality. Through our ongoing professional development opportunities, the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy will be able to effectively address unsatisfactory educator or instructional/leadership performance and potential changes and turnover.

## Attachments

### Section 24: Staffing Plans, Hiring, Management, and Evaluation

24.1	<a href="#">Attachment 22 Sample Employee Handbook</a>	Williams, Krista, 3/14/22 3:27 AM	DOCX / 90.695 KB
24.2	<a href="#">Attachment 23 Leadership Evaluation Tool</a>	Williams, Krista, 3/13/22 4:17 PM	PDF / 3.42 MB
24.3	<a href="#">Attachment 24 Teacher Evaluation Tool</a>	Williams, Krista, 3/13/22 4:16 PM	PDF / 6.212 MB

## 25. Professional Development

**1. Identify the person or position responsible for professional development.**

Dr. Williams, CEO/Head of School, and Dr. Morris, Director of Operations and Student Affairs are responsible for the design, implementation, and effectiveness of professional development opportunities necessary for building faculty and staff capacity to improve learning among a diverse community of students. Dr. Williams and Dr. Morris have a wealth of experience in coordinating and designing effective professional development for instructional and noninstructional staff. Dr. Williams and Dr. Morris shall

work collaboratively to coordinate and manage weekly professional development opportunities. In addition to Dr. Williams and Dr. Morris' role in the development and implementation of school-wide professional development opportunities, Directors of each department (e.g., math, science, ELA, social studies, music, visual arts, theatre arts, and dance) shall collaborate with Dr. Morris and Dr. Williams to develop effective professional development aligned with best practices within their field of expertise. Directors are also responsible for assisting teachers within their field of expertise to ensure optimal professional growth among our teaching faculty. Professional development training for Arts and Academic Directors shall be conducted before the beginning of the school year during our Summer Institute.

***2. Discuss the 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.***

Dr. Williams and Dr. Morris importance of providing faculty and staff with the opportunity to engage in the ongoing process of evidence-based inquiry, learning, strategic goal setting, planning, implementation, and evaluation that aligns with the continuous improvement of student learning. To engage teachers in the aforementioned ongoing processes, they must be provided with meaningful professional development opportunities where they are considered as learners. Creating professional development opportunities that are learner-centered allows teachers to learn from their experiences, integrate knowledge, think reflectively, and use feedback for purposes of improving teaching skills and practices (Daley, 2003). When teachers are able to have learner-centered experiences in their professional development, they are able to engage in actions to develop learner-centered experiences for the students that they teach (Daley, 2003). When planning learner-centered professional development for faculty and staff, it is necessary to take into consideration the characteristics of the adult learner, the delivery process, and the context in which learning can occur (Lawler, 2003). Before the planning process begins, Dr. Williams, Dr. Morris, and the Directors of each department shall take into account the purpose of the professional development initiative, mission and goals of the organization, resources available to support the initiative, types of professional development activities that need to be designed, participants who will be involved, scheduling the program, and the promotion and delivery of the experience (Lawler, 2003). Engaging in deep thought about the planning process allows the professional developer to set the overall direction of the learning experience. Providing on-going support and feedback to faculty and staff functions as an important step for the continuous improvement of the school and student achievement. If the professional development environment provides opportunities for collaboration, on-going support, and feedback, educators are more willing to open up their frame of reference to engage in new ways of thinking and learning for the continuous improvement of student achievement (Gregson & Sturko, 2007). To ensure effective programming and transfer of learning during professional development sessions, Dr. Williams and Dr. Morris are responsible for the development and sustainment of a school climate where participants engage in learning for immediate application, respect and trust each other, actively participate, build on their experiences, share their knowledge, and engage in collaborative inquiry (Lawler & King, 2003). The aforementioned principles are necessary for creating a positive learning environment that respects and values teachers' experiences and knowledge, empowers teachers to engage in actions to become more reflective practitioners, and to engage in actions to work collaboratively with their colleagues for purposes of building a sense of community among themselves and others within and outside of their school environment (Gregson & Sturko, 2007). In addition to ensuring that processes are in place to support faculty and staff continuous learning, Dr. Morris and Dr. Williams will reflect on their role in this endeavor. For example, we will provide faculty and staff with evaluation forms to fill out at the conclusion of the professional development experience. As professional developers, we must take on the task to review the evaluations for purposes of obtaining valuable feedback from attendees. Feedback, whether positive or negative, provides school leaders and directors with an understanding about what needs to be changed or kept for future events and how to plan for similar professional development opportunities. Through this approach, professional developers not only learn about the attendees' strengths and weaknesses as it pertains to their delivery and implementation of instruction, but also the level/type of support needed as they

incorporate the information and skills gained during the professional development experience into their daily practices. Viewing faculty and staff through the lens as adult learners allows the leader to shift the focus of professional development to the needs of teachers and the different contexts in which they learn and teach (Gregson & Sturko, 2007). This level of focus allows leaders to effectively plan, deliver, and evaluate professional development processes for optimal learning among teachers, which functions as a necessary component for the continuous improvement of the school and student achievement.

The leaders of FPC VPAA understand the importance of aligning professional development with each component of the academic model. Leaders at FPC VPAA will ensure that all internal and external professional development opportunities are aligned with the school’s mission, vision, and goals. Dr. Williams and Dr. Morris plan to partner with local universities (e.g., University of South Alabama), non-profit organizations, and professional development vendors to ensure optimal learning among faculty. Leaders at FPC VPAA plan to engage faculty in the following professional development opportunities for maximizing capacity and student learning:

- Differentiated Instruction
- Project Based Learning Training with Buck Institute of Education
- Understanding by Design (UbD) backward designing
- Effective Strategies for Classroom Management
- AP Course Training
- Data-Driven Instruction, Dialogue, and Collaborative Inquiry
- Optimizing Technology in the Classroom
- LearnZillion Illustrative Math Training
- MyPerspective ELA Training
- School-Wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS)
- Accommodating and Maximizing Learning Among Special Populations

***3. 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.***

FPC VPAA anticipate providing a wealth of learner-centered professional development during its founding year for building educators professional capacity. By providing our educators with specific, targeted professional development, we will be able to successfully meet the needs of our students. Below is an outline and description of the professional development experiences that will occur before the start of the school year.

<b>Sample Summer Institute</b>	
<b>Week 1</b>	
	<b>Using Data Process: Creating a High Performing Using Data Culture</b>

<p>Days 1, 2, 3, and 4</p>	<p>The Using Data Process places emphasis on learning communities with many change agents; ongoing data driven dialogue and collaborative inquiry; using feedback for continuous improvement of student learning; aligning learning goals, instruction, and assessment; engaging in culturally proficient dialogue with the belief that all students can achieve at high levels; and building relationships among staff and faculty based on trust, candid talk, and openness. Further, the UDP process allows educators to engage in building a foundation for a high performing using data culture; identifying a student learning problem; verifying causes; generating solutions; and implementing, monitoring, and achieving results (Love et al, 2008).</p>
<p>Day 5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance Expectations</li> <li>• Review of Faculty Handbook</li> <li>• Student Discipline Procedures</li> <li>• Performance Expectations</li> <li>• Review of Faculty Handbook</li> <li>• Student Discipline Procedures</li> <li>• Classroom Management</li> <li>• Parent Communication</li> <li>• Reporting</li> <li>• School Safety (e.g., Vector Training)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Week 2</b></p>	
<p>Day 1, 2 and 3</p>	<p><b>UbD Curriculum and Instructional Design Process</b></p> <p>During this training, educators learn to engage in the three-stage approach to backward designing: Stage 1 – identify desired results; Stage 2 – determine acceptable evidence; and Stage 3 – plan learning experiences and instruction. The backward design process will be used to help develop learning experiences that can deepen students understanding about concepts and to improve their learning. During this process, educators will engage in lesson planning, activity, and assessment planning based on the backward design process.</p>
<p>Day 4 and 5</p>	<p>Analyze Stanford 10 Student Assessment Results</p>

**4. 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.*

At FPC VPAA, we emphasize the importance of professional development and collaborative inquiry among faculty in our school model. We have dedicated optimal time within our school model for faculty to analyze and create action plans for student growth and mastery. Unlike traditional schools, the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy provides faculty with a schedule that is conducive for ongoing data analysis and collaborative inquiry during each school day. In other words, professional development occurs weekly for a minimum of eight hours. Daily, faculty and staff are provided with two hours to engage in data-team meetings, grade level meetings, content area meetings, and common planning for ongoing data analysis, feedback, and collaboration. On Fridays, students are dismissed at 2:00pm for the school-wide professional development. During this time, educators across subjects and grades are able to collaborate to discuss future plans, successes, to review and analyze data, and to engage in a variety of professional development opportunities that are aligned with the school's improvement plan. Further, faculty at FPC VPAA are provided with hand-on, learner-centered professional development opportunities during our Summer Faculty Institute. During the two-week institute, faculty members are introduced to practice, systems, and structure that defines the school's culture of achievement; engage in the UbD design process to create lessons plans, units, and assessments that are aligned with advanced state standards; and analyze Stanford 10 assessments for newly enrolled students to determine appropriate placement within our school-wide intervention block and supports needed.

## **Attachments**

### **Section 25: Professional Development**

– No Attachments –

## **26. Performance Management**

The mission of the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy is to educate a diverse community of students through a rigorous, pre-college and pre-professional level curriculum that will prepare them for post-secondary education and careers in the visual/performing arts. We believe that all students, regardless of background, language, or ability can achieve at high levels. Our advanced curriculum places all students on a path of success. To ensure effectiveness of the school's programs, the leadership team at FPC VPAA drafted an accountability plan with rigorous and measurable goals for academic success, financial success, and organization viability. The goal of our accountability plan directly supports the mission of the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy.

### **Academic Performance Standards**

To assess progress towards performance standards, educators and leaders at FPC VPAA engage in ongoing data analysis. Educators and leaders assess student progress and success through observations, performance-based assessments, diagnostics, interim assessments, formative assessments, summative assessments, state and national standardized tests, attendance, and discipline data. The following performance management metrics are used at FPC VPAA to track progress towards meeting the goals of the academic program:

#### **STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT Measure:**

*Goal 1.1 - 5% yearly increase of students performing proficient or above on state accountability tests (e.g.,*

*ACAP, ACT Workkeys.*

*Goal 1.2 – 100% of college bound students are accepted into college of choice.*

*Goal 1.3 – 100% graduation rate among all student populations.*

*Goal 1.4 – 100% of student population earn at least 6 dual enrollment course credits.*

*Goal 1.5 – 100% of student population earn a score of 3 or higher on at least one AP exam.*

*Goal 1.6 - 5% yearly increase of student population proficient in mathematics.*

*Goal 1.7 – 5% yearly increase of student population proficient in science.*

*Goal 1.8 – 5% yearly increase of student population proficient in English.*

*Goal 1.9 – 80% of the student population will be promoted to the next grade.*

*Goal 1.2 – 10% or less of student population suspended*

### **Organization Performance Standards**

The Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy understand the importance of the development and sustainment of an effective organization. FPC VPAA shall seek to apply for Cognia (formerly known as AdvancED) accreditation. Cognia is a rigorous comprehensive research-based program that examines program, practices, policies, resources and support systems, learning conditions, and cultural aspects of an organization. In addition to an external accountability system, the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy also uses a variety of internal measures for the continuous improvement of the school and students.

**BOARD Measure:** 100% compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, and terms of charter contract.

**SCHOOL LEADERSHIP Measure:** Receive an “effective” or higher rating in each category evaluation category.

**TEACHER Measure:** Receive a rating of 3 or higher in each category of the evaluative tool.

**ENROLLMENT Measure:** Student enrollment will be at 100% of projected enrollment described in the charter application at the beginning of each year.

**STUDENT RETENTION Measure:** 85% of students who complete the school year at FPC VPAA will re-enroll for the following school year.

**TEACHER RECRUITMENT Measure:** 100% of the educators of FPC VPAA are highly qualified, experts.

**PARENT INVOLVMENT Measure:** 75% or more of parents will be involved in the school.

**ATTENDANCE Measure:** FPC VPAA will average 95% or higher daily student attendance in each school year.

### **Financial Performance Standards**

The leaders at FPC VPAA understand the importance of the development, sustainment, and management of finances in a manner that optimizes school capacity and effectiveness. FPC VPAA shall use following measures to ensure financial success of the organization:

**AUDIT Measure:** External, annual audit reports will demonstrate that FPC VPAA meets or exceeds professional accounting standards.

**BUDGET Measure:** Budgets for each academic year will demonstrate effective allocation of financial resources to ensure effective delivery of the school's mission as measured by annual budgets approved by the Board.

Teachers at FPC VPAA shall be trained on how to analyze, interpret, and use performance data tools to improve student achievement and their professional capacity. The Using Data Process (Love et al., 2008) provides educators with extensive practice and training in analyzing performance data to improve student learning. The UDP framework helps to guide teachers in five levels of data analysis: (a) aggregated data; (b) disaggregated data; (c) strand data; (d) item-level data; and (e) student work. The CEO/Head of School shall be responsible for managing academic data and building educators capacity in becoming data literate. The CEO/Head of School shall work collaboratively with Academic/Arts Directors to develop professional develop opportunities throughout each week for data analysis. To ensure effective data analysis, facilitators shall focus on equity, support norms of collaboration, build data teams, lead data experiences, and develop data literacy as well as their knowledge and skills for high-capacity data use and engagement (e.g., cultural proficiency, content knowledge, leadership and facilitation skills), facilitate data-driven dialogue, assess and respond to context, apply change theory, ensure learning for all, develop powerful habits of minds, build broad support, and understand school wide systems and structures (Love et al., 2008).

In addition to providing educators with ongoing professional development on drilling down into performance standards, leaders at FPC VPAA understand that corrective actions must be taken if performance standards are not met. The CEO/Head of School shall monitor and communicate information regarding student learning and progress toward improvement goals. The CEO/Head of School, along with department Directors shall facilitate meetings to review goals, progress, and interventions that were put in place to meet the goals. If the school's goals are not met, the Head of School shall immediately develop and implement a corrective plan. Based on the data, the corrective plans can be for an individual teacher, grade level, or content area teachers and directors. The corrective action plans at FPC VPAA may include:

- Teacher/Grade Level/Content Area coaching conference session with CEO/Head of School
- Department Director coaching conference with CEO/Head of School
- Providing educators with expert mentors to help them with improving their capacity
- Providing more targeted professional development opportunities to address the area(s) of concern
- Placement on a School Improvement Plan
- Suspension/Termination

#### References

Love, N., Stile, K., Mundry, S., & DiRanna, K. (2008). *The data coach's guide to improving learning for all students: Unleashing the power of collaborative inquiry*. Corwin Press.

## Attachments

## Section 26: Performance Management

– No Attachments –

## 27. Facilities

1. *Describe the process for identifying and securing a facility, including any brokers or consultants you are employing to navigate the real estate market, plans for renovations, timelines, financing, etc.*

Working with the Bender Real Estate Group of Mobile, AL, the board of directors and leaders have identified two potential facilities for the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy. The Board of Directors and leaders of FPC VPAA completed a walkthrough of each proposed site and determined that the locations and buildings were suitable for meeting the needs of a diverse community of students within the Mobile County and surrounding areas. Although the Directors of FPC VPAA have found two potential facility locations, only one will be chosen for the charter school. Upon charter approval, the Directors of FPC VPAA shall make a final decision on facility location. The school plans to obtain an arts facility grant to complete any necessary renovations for the chosen proposed location.

2. *If you currently hold a facility or have an MOU or other proof of intent to secure a specific facility, please provide proof of the commitment as Attachment 25 . Briefly describe the facility including location, size, and amenities. You may provide, as Attachment 26 , up to 10 pages of 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.*

FPC VPAA currently hold a proof of intent to lease/purchase for securing a facility for the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy. The first proposed facility is located at 828 Downtowner Loop, Mobile, AL, former campus of Remington College. This site consists of 29 classrooms for students in grades 6-12, a science lab, a media center, a student lounge, faculty lounge, multiple offices for educators, administration, and support staff, as well as spaces that can be turned into rehearsal and studio rooms for arts students. The facility is approximately 32,157 sf with a large parking area to accommodate student and faculty vehicles. The property was purchased through Education America and will be leased or sold to the board of operation of a charter school. In addition, the second facility, located at 3100 Cottage Hill Road, Mobile, AL, consists of three available buildings that can be renovated to accommodate a charter school: Building 2 - 18, 846 sf (former HPC Specialty Pharmacy), Building 3 - 18,744sf (former Accel Day & Evening Academy), and Building 4 - 12,160sf (former Gulf Regional Early Childhood Services).

## Attachments

### Section 27: Facilities

27.1	<a href="#">Attachment 26 Facility Descriptions</a>	Williams, Krista, 3/12/22 4:55 AM	PDF / 17.996 MB
27.2	<a href="#">Attachment 25 Proof of Intent</a>	Williams, Krista, 3/12/22 4:54 AM	PDF / 1.155 MB

## 28. Start-Up and Ongoing Operations



**1. Provide, as Attachment 27, a detailed start-up plan for the school, specifying tasks, timelines, and responsible individuals. This plan should align with the Start-Up (Year 0) Budget in the Financial Plan Workbook (be sure to complete all pages in the Financial Plan Workbook, and provide it as Attachment 28 ).**

*See Attachment 27 and 28.*

**2. 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.**

At the time of this charter application, FPC VPAA does not anticipate providing daily transportation to students because of the school's easily accessible centralized location. If a student enrolls at FPC VPAA and is in need of transportation, the school shall contract with a local transportation agency to meet the student's needs. For field trips, out-of-school concerts and events, the school shall contract with a local transportation service. We will also work with Wave transit bus service to provide students living near a bus stop with discounted or free bus passes.

**3. 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.**

The Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy shall adopt a comprehensive school safety plan that consist of safety and security, health, risk management procedures, technology equipment, and security personnel. The safety plan shall be designed to prevent or minimize the effects of incidents and emergencies. The school shall develop plans in coordination with the local fire department and law enforcement to ensure optimal school safety. To ensure effective planning, heightened awareness, training and technology, FPC VPAA shall use the following safety checklist to develop the school's safety plan:

## **I. Prevention and Curriculum Plans**

- Discipline plan
- Conflict resolution
- Peer meditation
- Student assistance program
- Alcohol and other drug programs
- Stranger safety
- CPR
- First aid
- Personal safety
- Bicycle safety
- Bus safety
- Community safety
- Self-esteem and communications skills
- Blood borne pathogens training

## **II. Buildings and Grounds Security**

Safety committee members should walk through the building and conduct an inspection for adequacy and safety.

- Alarm systems
- Playgrounds and playing areas
- School location, traffic patterns & protective barriers (fences)
- Parking lot lights and exterior lights
- Visual access inside and outside
- Limitations of building design
- Door and window security
- Fire extinguishers
- Electrical & mechanical hazard
- Signage (directions to office, tornado safe areas)
- Dangerous foundations or equipment
- Protective devices on dangerous machinery (OSHA standards)

### **III. Communications and Security Technology.**

Identify the communication and security technology in the building.

- Two-way intercoms in all areas of the building including portables
- Sufficient number of walkie-talkies
- Fire alarms to all building sections
- Burglar alarms for vulnerable areas
- Student records on computer
- Keys to all doors
- Door lock buzzers
- Closed circuit TV
- Fax machines

### **IV. Safety Information**

Collect, review and include current school safety information for your school.

- District office safety plan
- District-wide safety procedures
- Emergency phone numbers
- Inclement weather procedures
- Duty rosters
- Dismissal precautions
- Emergency medical procedures
- Crisis response follow-up manual
- Phone trees
- Emergency signal codes
- Fire drill, escape routes
- Describe fire evacuation areas
- Plan for evacuating handicapped
- Describe tornado safe areas
- Evacuation areas on campus
- Alternative shelters
- Plan if school is named Red Cross
- Emergency Shelter

- Describe community evacuation plans

## **V. Responsibility for Supervision of Students**

- Hallways
- Play areas
- Classrooms
- Cafeterias, auditoriums and restrooms
- Extracurricular events
- Field trips
- Early dismissal

## **VI. District-Wide Emergency Procedures**

Emergency procedures for school to support the district-wide emergency procedures include:

- Lock down procedures and drills
- Fire, earthquake and tornado drills
- Visitor procedures
- School crime reporting
- Assigned roles for staff
- Emergency kits – contents
- Reporting intruders

## **VII. Crisis Response Team Training and Follow-up**

Describe the crisis response teams for your school including:

- Names of team members
- Team roles - how they will function during the crisis and afterwards
- Training
- Crisis response follow-up – who's responsible
- Resources (personal and material)
- Documents for communication to parents and public
- Counseling and debriefing activities

***4. Provide, as Attachment 29, 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, liability, property, indemnity, directors and officers, automobile, and other.***

***See Attachment 29***

***5. Provide, as Attachment 30, the meal delivery plan including a wellness plan. See the attachments for reference.***

See Attachment 30

## Attachments

### Section 28: Start-Up and Ongoing Operations

28.1	<a href="#">Attachment 30 Meal Delivery and Wellness Plan</a>	Williams, Krista, 3/14/22 1:31 AM	DOCX / 15.456 KB
28.2	<a href="#">Attachment 29 Sample Insurance Coverage</a>	Williams, Krista, 3/14/22 1:06 AM	DOCX / 13.493 KB
28.3	<a href="#">Attachment 27 Start-Up Plan</a>	Williams, Krista, 3/14/22 12:45 AM	DOCX / 31.276 KB
28.4	<a href="#">Attachment 28 Financial Plan Workbook</a>	Williams, Krista, 3/14/22 12:37 AM	XLSX / 1.29 MB

## 29. Operations Capacity

1. Describe the applicant team's individual and collective qualifications for implementing the Operations Plan successfully, including capacity in areas such as the following:

- *Staffing;*
- *Professional development;*
- *Performance management;*
- *General operations; and*
- *Facilities management.*

### Staffing

Dr. Williams, Dr. Morris, Dr. Hart, and Dr. Morton each have a wealth of experience with staffing an educational program. As a Superintendent, Human Resource Director, and Principal, Dr. Morris has a wide range of experience with education staffing at the campus and district level. Dr. Morris' expertise is valuable in developing a strategic plan for staffing educational program at the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy. As a principal-in-residence for multiple large-scale schools, Dr. Williams has experience in hiring, recruiting, and retaining highly qualified staff for maximizing students' academic success. Dr. Williams' approach to staffing consists of the establishment and sustainment of a professional culture of engagement and commitment to the shared vision, goals, and objectives pertaining to the education of a diverse community of learners; high expectations for professional work; trust and open communication; collaboration; and collective efficacy. Through her expertise and staffing model, she maintained a high retention rate among qualified staff throughout her principalship. Dr. Morris and Dr. Hart also have a wide range of experience with staffing in public schools. Their expertise proved successful through student achievement and success.

### Professional Development

Dr. Williams, Dr. Morris, Dr. Hart, and Dr. Morton have each developed, coordinated, and delivered professional development opportunities to build staff professional capacity. As a campus leader and adjunct professor, Dr. Williams has led a variety of learner-centered professional development opportunities in the

arts and academics for maximizing student learning. As an assistant professor, Dr. Morton teaches courses in regard to the development and implementation of effective supervision and professional development as a campus leader. Dr. Morton's expertise and research places emphasis on leaders engaging in professional development opportunities for meeting the needs of diverse populations. As a principal-coach, Dr. Hart ensures that campus leaders are using best practices for providing their staff with effective professional development. Dr. Hart uses the delivery of actionable feedback through valid, research anchored systems of supervision and evaluation to support the development of campus leaders' professional capacity. As a superintendent, Dr. Morris has developed and coordinated funding for effective professional development for over 650 staff across a school district. His expertise and skills in professional development funding and implementation is valuable to the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy.

### **Performance Management**

As campus leaders, the team has a wealth of expertise in the area of performance management. As a campus leader, Dr. Williams developed and implemented various measures, including developing faculty capacity, positive school culture, administering systems of equity for the continuous improvement of student achievement. Through her effective leadership and engagement with the school community, Dr. Williams had a 100% pass rate for all assigned students during the Mobile County Public School (2020-2021) summer school program. Through the implementation of effective practices, Dr. Hart was able to maintain the designation of an *Alabama top-ranked school* during her tenure as principal. Her leadership skills involved having high expectations for faculty and students, developing the professional capacity of teachers through professional development, and acquiring resources to support student learning. With sound instruction, parental support and interaction, and high student expectations, Dr. Morton was able to reach his goals of success for all and maintained the designation of a high performing campus throughout his tenure as principal. As the Title I manager, Dr. Moore administered multiple programs designed to improve achievement among a diverse group of students. Schools under Dr. Moore's supervision experienced substantial academic growth among special populations. As the Superintendent of the Year, Dr. Morris developed and implemented rubrics, policies, and procedures that exceeded district-wide goals and objectives for improving student achievement.

### **General Operations**

Dr. Williams, Dr. Morris, Dr. Morton, and Dr. Hart all have experience in general operations of a school. As a superintendent, Dr. Morris managed the operations of a district that consisted of eight schools, 4,000 students, 650 faculty, and 30 administrators. As campus administrators, Dr. Williams, Dr. Morton, and Dr. Hart have a wealth of experience and knowledge in successfully managing school-level operations.

### **Facilities Management**

Dr. Morris has managed multiple facilities during his tenure as a superintendent. Dr. Williams, Dr. Hart, and Dr. Morton each have a wealth of experience in managing school operations as a campus leader. The leadership team of FPC VPAA have managed school and district level operations in a manner to promote students' academic success, safety, and well-being.

#### ***2. Describe the organization's capacity and experience in facilities acquisition and management, including managing build-out and/or renovations, as applicable.***

As Superintendent, Dr. Morris has a wealth of experience in facilities acquisition and management. Dr. Morris' expertise in this area will be valuable to the success of the proposed school.

## **Attachments**

## **Section 29: Operations Capacity**

– No Attachments –

## **30.Unique/Innovative Operational Aspects**

N/A

## **Attachments**

### **Section 30: Unique/Innovative Operational Aspects**

– No Attachments –

# FINANCIAL PLAN AND CAPACITY

## 31. Financial Plan

*1. Describe the systems, policies and processes the school will use for financial planning, accounting, purchasing, and payroll, including a description of how it will establish and maintain strong internal controls and ensure compliance with all financial reporting requirements.*

The CEO/Head of School, CSFO, and Director of Operations shall create an annual budget, with the support of the Board of Directors and Treasurer. Once the budget has been developed, it shall be submitted to the Board of Directors at a regular scheduled board meeting. The CSFO and CEO/Head of School shall also provide Board of Directors with yearly assumptions and budgets. The Board of Directors of FPC VPAA shall adopt financial and internal controls of the schools, and the CEO/Head of School and Director of Operations shall be responsible for implementing the plans to fidelity. A comprehensive financial management process shall be developed and implemented. The CSFO shall provide training, guidance, and technical support to the CEO/Head of School, and the Board of Directors in areas of budget analysis, financial management, and budget forecasting.

### **Accounting and Audit**

The Board of Directors at FPC VPAA shall cause and approve services of an independent, certified public accountant or auditor for an annual external audit of the corporation. The CSFO, in coordination with the Director of Operations and Head of School shall ensure that the annual audit of finances is completed in a timely and appropriate manner.

### **Purchasing**

Purchase orders within the approved budget shall be required for all expenditures and shall be reviewed and pre-approved by the CEO/Head of School and/or Director of Operations. The purchase orders must be presented to the Treasurer for final review and approval. Any purchase order that totals more than the limit set by the Board of Directors shall be require approval. Checks shall be signed by two designated individuals and approved by the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors are responsible for complying with all applicable state and federal laws.

### **Payroll**

In coordination with the Director of Operations and the CEO/Head of School, the CSFO shall prepare monthly payroll reports. Reports shall include salaries, wages, and other withholding summaries required. The CSFO shall issue monthly check and process federal, state, and local payroll taxes. The CSFO shall also prepare the state and federal tax forms for review by the CEO/Head of School for submission to appropriate agencies.

### **Financial Reporting**

In coordination with the CEO/Head of Schools, CSFO and Treasurer, regular financial reports shall be provided to the Board of Directors. The financial reports shall include budget comparisons, statement of income and expenditures, balance sheet, and other financial information. Financial reports shall be reviewed monthly or as needed by the Board of Directors. Financial statement shall be available to the public via the school's website.

***2. Describe the roles and responsibilities of the school's administration and governing board for school finances and distinguish between each.***

Below is a description of the preliminary roles and responsibilities of the school's administrative team and governing board at FPC VPAA:

**Instructional Leadership and Management Team (CEO/Head of School, CSFO, and Director of Operations)**

- Collaborate to develop financial goals and plans
- Prepares all required financial reports
- Manages day-to day operations
- Monitor budget and expenditures
- CEO/Head of School oversees finances
- CEO/Head of School, CSFO, and Director of Operations/Student Affairs manages accounts receivables/accounts payable, purchasing, and related operations
- CEO/Head of School authorizes purchases
- CEO/Head of School oversees bank accounts along with CSFO and treasurer
- Director of Operations oversee and manages all insurance policies
- CEO/Head of School and Director of Operations are responsible for applying and obtaining grants as approved by the Board

**Board of Directors**

- Monitor the school's financial management
- Approve capital expenditures in accordance with the financial policies adopted by the Board
- Adopt annual capital and operating budgets for the school
- Institute, promote, and direct major fundraising for the school
- Appoints an auditor
- Establish effective finance strategies and policies
- Reviews and approves annual budget
- Approves all contracts and agreements
- Establishes budget and internal controls
- Treasurer reviews monthly financial statements, balance sheet, income and expenditures per budget
- Board approves all compensation
- Board approves all employees

***3. Describe the school's plans and procedures for conducting an annual audit of the financial and administrative operations of the school.***

The Floretta P. Carson Board of Directors shall develop and maintain effective financial policies and administrative guidelines. It is the CEO and Board's responsibility to ensure that all funds are budgeted and maintained in an appropriate manner. The financial policies and procedures of the school shall be developed by the Treasurer in coordination with the CSFO, CEO/Head of School, and Director of Operations. The finance manual(s) shall describe specific practices and procedures that are to be followed in connection with all phases of financial administration, including, but not limited to such matters as accounting, bookkeeping, inventory maintenance, payroll, reconciliation, fund security, receipting, disbursement, purchasing, disposal of property, banking, and investments. The practices, procedures, and requirements set forth in the manual(s) will be disseminated or made available to all employees with administrative responsibilities involving the receipt, handling, or expenditure of school or school system funds, and training shall be provided by the CSFO regarding the contents of the manual(s). The financial policies developed must be approved by the Board of Directors. The CEO/Head of School shall be responsible for operations, finances,



management of the organization. Generally accepted accounting standards and procedures shall be employed in the administration of the Board and school finances. All school accounts shall be reconciled to financial records. All reports required by the state department of education shall be completed in a timely manner with copies provided to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall employ and retain an independent certified public accountant or auditor for the annual financial audit and management review. The auditor shall report directly to the Board of Directors in accordance with their fiduciary responsibilities. The CEO/Head of School in coordination with the CSFO shall collaborate with the Board of Directors to review the audit report and to ensure that audit findings and recommendations are addressed in an appropriate and timely manner.

***4. Describe how the school will ensure financial transparency to the authorizer and the public, including its plans for public adoption of its budget and public dissemination of its annual audit and an annual financial report.***

To ensure financial transparency to the authorizer, the Board of Directors of FPC VPAA shall prepare and submit all required annual financial and management reports to the Alabama Charter Commission and the IRS to maintain nonprofit status. To ensure financial transparency among the community, parents, and other key stakeholders, the FPC VPAA Board of Directors shall adopt its annual budget in an open public meeting. Notice of the meeting shall be provided to the public within a timely manner. The Board of Directors shall post copies of the budget, monthly financial statement, and annual audit on the school's website. Meetings of the Board of Directors shall be open to the public and appropriate notices shall be posted on the website.

***5. Describe any services to be contracted, such as business services, payroll, and auditing services, including the anticipated costs and criteria for selecting such services.***

FPC VPAA shall contract for audit services, payroll, and banking. FPC VPAA shall use well-known service providers who have an excellent record and works with charter schools. Based on budget assumptions, the costs of these services are approximately \$83,600. The Board of Directors shall assess all potential providers before obtaining a contract.

***6. Describe the school's plans for liability insurance to indemnify the school, its board, staff and teachers against tort claims.***

Upon charter approval, the Board of Directors and CEO/Head of School shall secure and maintain appropriate insurance coverages as required to protect against tort claims. FPC VPAA shall obtain insurance coverage and limits that are most appropriate for a charter school. The Board of Directors and CEO/Head of School shall monitor contractors, vendors, and partners for compliance with insurance policies. The Board of Directors have already identified a vendor for insurance policies and shall obtain coverage after charter approval.

***7. Submit the Charter Application Budget Form in the Financial Plan Workbook (provide the completed Workbook as Attachment 30, and be sure to complete all sheets in the Workbook). In developing your budget, please use the per-student revenue projections provided by ALSDE.***

*See Attachment 30*

**8. Budget Narrative:** *As Attachment 31, present a clearly stated description of assumptions and revenue estimates, including but not limited to 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).*

See Attachment 31

**a. Per-Student Revenue.** *Use the figures provided by ALSDE in developing your assumptions.*

**b. Anticipated Funding Sources.** *Indicate the amount and sources of funds, property or other resources expected to be available through banks, lending institutions, corporations, foundations, grants, etc. Note which are secured and which are anticipated, and include in Attachment 32 evidence of commitment for any funds on which the school’s core operation depends.*

Funding for the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy shall include state and federal. It is projected that the FPC VPAA shall receive approximately \$8,820 dollars in per student funding. At the time of this application, the leaders of FPC VPAA have applied for a grant (\$210,000) and will continue to search for addition grant opportunities. Upon charter approval, FPC VPAA shall also apply for the CSP grant of \$1.5 million. The anticipated revenue of FPC VPAA is evident in the financial workbook.

**c. Discuss the school’s contingency plan to meet financial needs if anticipated revenues are not received or are lower than estimated.**

If anticipated revenues are not received, the school plans to engage in rigorous fundraising and shall continue to seek for more grant opportunities.

**d. Year one cash flow contingency, in the event that revenue projections are not met in advance of opening.**

The Budget Attachment reflects the start-up budget that is supplemented with grants and philanthropic funding. With federal and state recourses, the Floretta P. Carson will still be able to maintain a positive cash flow.

**e. Please describe the school’s five year cash flow plan.**

As noted in *Attachment 30 and 31*, the school plans to obtain many grants and shall engage in various fundraising activities to ensure that the school has a positive cash flow from year to year. Based on budget assumptions, the school plans to maintain a cashflow of more than \$250,000 each school year.

## Attachments

### Section 31: Financial Plan

31.1	<a href="#">Attachment 30 Financial Plan Workbook</a>	Williams, Krista, 3/14/22 12:36 AM	XLSX / 1.29 MB
31.2	<a href="#">Attachment 31 Budget Narrative</a>	Williams, Krista, 3/14/22 12:33 AM	DOCX / 13.684 KB

## 32. Financial Management Capacity

1. Describe the applicant team's individual and collective qualifications for implementing the

*Financial Plan successfully, including capacity in areas such as the following:*

- a. *Financial management;*
- b. *Fundraising and development; and*
- c. *Accounting and internal controls.*

### **Financial Management**

Dr. Morris' financial management experiences were key as he served as superintendent. During Dr. Morris' tenure, he was responsible for managing an annual budget of \$45,000,000.00. He worked closely with the Director of Business and Finance, and the Director of Federal Programs to maximize the funding for students. As a campus leader, Dr. Williams managed the financial resources for multiple large-scale schools across the Mobile County School District. Dr. Williams managed finances in a manner to support curriculum, instructional, and assessment; student learning community; professional capacity and community; and family and community engagement. Dr. Morton served as chairperson of the District Wide Educational Improvement Committee (DWEIC) for several years and actively supported development and implementation of the nearly \$50 million physical and instructional overhaul of a school district. Dr. Moore's work experience entails planning, implementation funds, and direct responsibility of a \$7.5 million dollar budget and assisting with a \$27,000,000 dollar oversight of multiple programs, including Title I. As a local school principal, Dr. Hart managed all revenue, including Title I, Title II, local and state funds. As a current principal-coach, Dr. Hart uses her expertise to assist principals developing an effective budget.

### **Fundraising and Development**

As a member of the Chamber of Commerce for several communities, Dr. Morris has a wealth of experience in fundraising and development. During his tenure as superintendent, Dr. Morris developed policies and procedures for school-related fundraising activities to ensure compliance with state and federal laws. As a principal-in-residence, Dr. Williams oversaw multiple fundraising activities across multiple schools and wrote multiple grants to secure funds for the arts education department. Dr. Morton coordinated all fundraising activities and development as the campus leader of a large-scale school. As a school principal, Dr. Hart ensured the development of a PTA for generating external funds for optimizing student learning. Dr. Moore has written multiple proposals for program sustainability, soliciting funds from local, state, and national organizations.

### **Accounting and Internal Controls**

Dr. Morris has participated in audits performed by local, state, and federal authorities to ensure compliance with the requirements of the law. Dr. Morris has a wealth of experience in overseeing accounting and internal controls in public schools. As a manager of multiple federal and state programs, Dr. Moore has written several standard operations procedure manuals that has served as a footprint for organizational management, in particular internal controls. Dr. Morris, the Director of Operations and Student Affairs, and Dr. Moore will set up an effective and sustainable system for accounting and internal controls of the Floretta P. Carson Visual and Performing Arts Academy.

## **Attachments**

### **Section 32: Financial Management Capacity**

– No Attachments –

# EXISTING OPERATORS

## 33.Existing Operators

N/A

### Attachments

#### Section 33: Existing Operators

– No Attachments –